



Newsletter

August 2025

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President's Message

By AAVC President John Harvell

1. Join me and other club members for the next AAVC event, Thursday, August 28th, @ 7 PM, titled "Beyond the Bits: Taming Your Network for Superior Sound."

Ever wonder why CDs can sometimes sound better than 'lossless' streaming, even in a high-end digital audio system? The culprit is often electrical noise generated by the 'bursty' nature of standard network traffic at your streamer, which can veil detail and shrink the soundstage.

Club member David Snyder will present a powerful solution: the Diretta audio protocol. Diretta replaces this chaotic traffic with a constant, ultra-steady stream of audio data, dramatically reducing noise where it matters most. The result, as many users report, is a "blacker background," holographic imaging, and a startlingly natural sound.

This technology isn't tied to one platform. David's "AnCaolas Link" solution works with a wide array of popular media servers, including Roon, Lyrion (LMS), JPlay Album Player, Audirvana, and any player that can stream to a UPnP or AirPlay endpoint.

You'll hear the difference for yourself in a live listening comparison. We'll pit a Diretta-based AnCaolas Link against a standard Raspberry Pi streamer. While we'll use a single platform for a consistent A/B comparison, the sonic benefits of the Diretta protocol apply universally.

This isn't just theory—it's an accessible upgrade for almost any modern digital system. If you use a network media player, a USB DAC, and have a wired connection, you have the foundation. Come for the demo and stay for the great music and fellowship!

The event is hosted at Faith Lutheran Church | 801 East Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85014 | The meeting will start @ 7 PM

2. For those interested in participating in a club-sponsored speaker design and build project, please contact a member of the leadership team so we can get this project started.
3. For those interested in getting involved in the leadership and planning team, there are positions available on the leadership team. As a gentle reminder, the position of club president will be available beginning in January of 2026, so please identify yourself if you would like to move into this position or any other position on the club leadership team.
4. Finally, get out and mix it up with other club members, visit and listen to their systems, share your setup, talk about your experiences, and history living through this hobby. Invite a friend to a meeting, share the excitement. We all benefit from active participation, so be a contributor.

I'll see you out at the next club event, if not sooner...

John

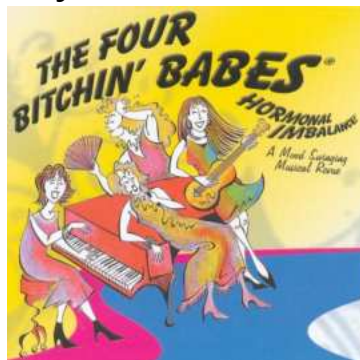
Dave's Record Reviews

Championing worthy albums from the past that should not be forgotten...

For the AZ Audio Club

#30

Four Bitchin' Babes ***Hormonal Imbalance*** (CD only, Hem and Haw, 2006)



My eclectic music tastes occasionally lead me onto paths that could be... well, outside the wheelhouse of some of our members. As I was casting around for a suitable album for this month's review, my eye fell upon this old favorite, and I thought, "Why not?" As in, why not review an album of feminist and comedy songs by truly talented women singer-songwriters that most people with a sense of humor should enjoy? Bear with me here – some of the content may not be appropriate for the easily offended. Mind you, it's not of the type that would call for a "Parental Advisory" label. (Some CDs of that type are offensive to me!) Rather, we're talking about topics and themes that you have to realize are satire and fun, not to be taken seriously. Or overly so. Mostly. With that understanding –

The Four Bitchin' Babes was formed in 1990 by Christine Lavigne, a singer/songwriter/humorist who currently has over 25 solo albums to her credit. She gathered three other women and began the group, which went through a number of personnel changes but lasted for 32 years. Their website shows no activity since 2022, so the members have either called it quits or are merely on hiatus; it's hard to say which. Over the 32 years, they produced nine albums and a DVD. I have the nine (I am a fan) and believe that this, their eighth, is their best one.

The album opens with "Oh No," a humorous a cappella song about absent-mindedness. Next is "Walk the Walk," a musical admonition to not worry too much and get on with life. "Cheerleader" is the first really funny, highly satirical song – I'd go so far as to call it hilarious – about wanting to be, well, reincarnated as one. I'd love to quote all the lyrics, but here's a small sample:

*"Cheerleading's a sport, now that's what they're callin' for
Though it's the only sport I know that you put your makeup on for
Some women say that it harms and demeans
Can you guess who didn't make their high school teams?"*

There are a few serious songs, such as "Pass It On," a beautiful song that opens with the solo notes of a Bodhran (Irish drum), and is a mother's telling her child how much she loves him/her and how important it is to pass that love on. Another such sentimental number is "Unconditional Love," wishing that wonderful gift to the listener. And there are serious songs with humorous takes to them, for example, "Hot Flash," a song about that pre-menopausal experience most women have.

Out-and-out humor bursts forth with "The Boob Fairy," in which the singer laments that this particular fairy never paid her a visit, "though the hip fairy came two times, and the thigh fairy came three." "Just Ask Your Doctor" is a diatribe in song, listing all the warnings of side effects of different medications. "Taxidermal Therapy" is the story of how a woman found happiness with a most unsatisfactory husband: "Taxidermal therapy, it's cutting edge – it worked for me" and "Prop him right, he holds the door, I'm driving HOV lanes evermore." (Hey – remember this is satire!)

And there's "Viagra In the Waters," a comedy highlight which is actually reprised from the Babe's fifth album (and done better here). An involved story about the results of a semitruck load of Viagra that winds up in the water supply of an unsuspecting Johnson City... I will forego quotes from it, but the song really is funny. And there are other songs as well; a total of 15 songs are listed for the album. The final cut is Debi Smith, one of the Babes, singing "Habanera," an aria from Bizet's opera **Carmen**. It's out of place here and almost jarring, so I'm not sure why it's included.

As well as the four women – each of them capable singers, songwriters, and musicians in their own right – a few session musicians provide occasional support as well. Though the production is not audiophile quality, it is quite adequate. This is good music, the songs are very well written and well performed, and it is a *most* entertaining listen that should not be consigned to the cutout bins of history. I have introduced it to many friends since its release. Male club members really ought to enjoy it themselves, but might – I stress *might* – possibly find it of more interest to spouses or women friends.

This CD is readily available on Discogs at a relatively low price. Streaming? Well, I only have Spotify (not the best, I know) and it has three earlier Babes albums, none of which are as good as this one... *Editor's note: The album is available on YouTube Music.*

ALSO RECOMMENDED: ***The Chenille Sisters*** – (self-titled, 1986, LP and CD). Another talented female musical-comedy group.

Achieving Studio-Quality Sound in Your Listening Room AAVC Event Review

by David Das

It was a pleasure to demonstrate the results of Digital Room Correction on a 2-channel playback system in front of all the Club Members who attended this event at the Faith Lutheran Church on Thursday, July 24th.

This event was put together by Club Secretary David Snyder, Club Secretary Paul Johnson, and me at the request of Club President John Harvell.

Typically, your room can cause +/- 20dB swings in the Frequency Response. Additionally, your listening experience is diminished by any background noise coming from your air conditioner, refrigerator, leaf blowers, lawn mowers, and sound leaks through the doors and windows.

	Typical Frequency Response	Benchmark (SOTA)
Room	+/- 20 dB	+/- 20dB
Speakers	+/- 10 dB w/ Limited Range	
Power Amplifier	+/- 1 dB	+0/-0.2 dB
Preamplifier	+/- 0.5 dB	+0/-0.001 dB
DAC	+/- 0.5 dB	+0/-0.015 dB
Speaker Cables	+/- 0.1 dB	+0/-0.1 dB
Just Noticeable Difference (JND)	About 1 dB	

Digital Room Correction software allows an economical way to address uneven response at the listening position due to room modes and nodes. All the necessary hardware and software can be purchased for around \$1,180.

We measured the impulse response curves of a pair of Neumann KH 150 active studio monitors.



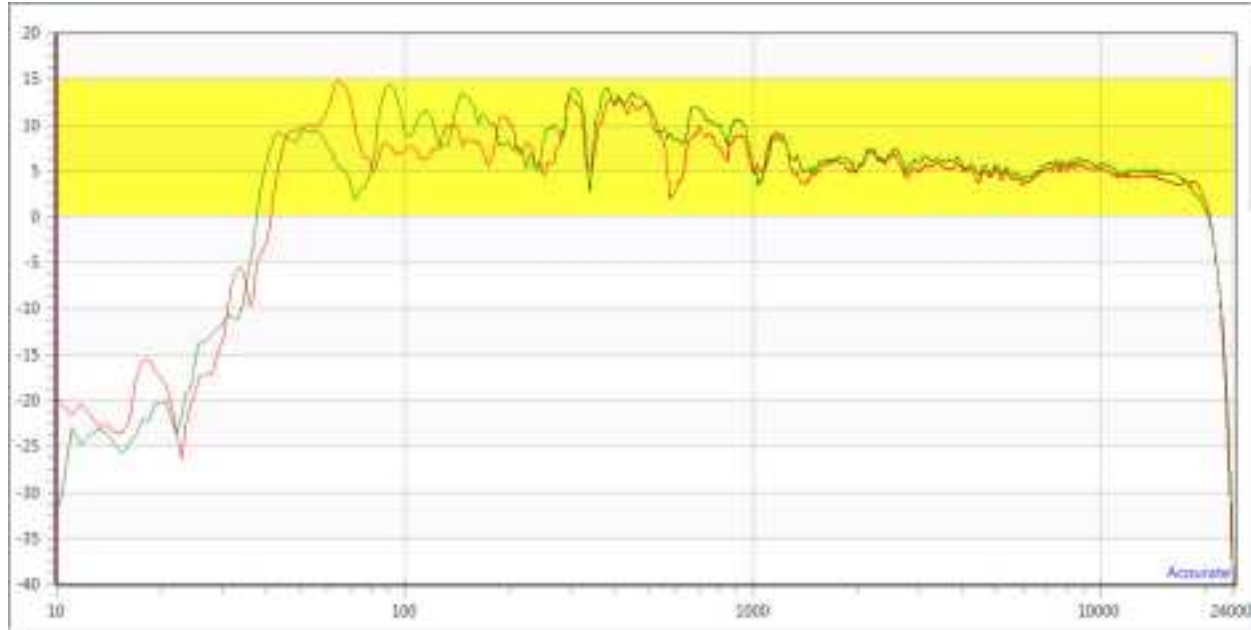
We designed a Target Curve and ran through a series of Macros in Acourate to build our FIR Filters, which were subsequently imported into Roon's Convolution Engine.



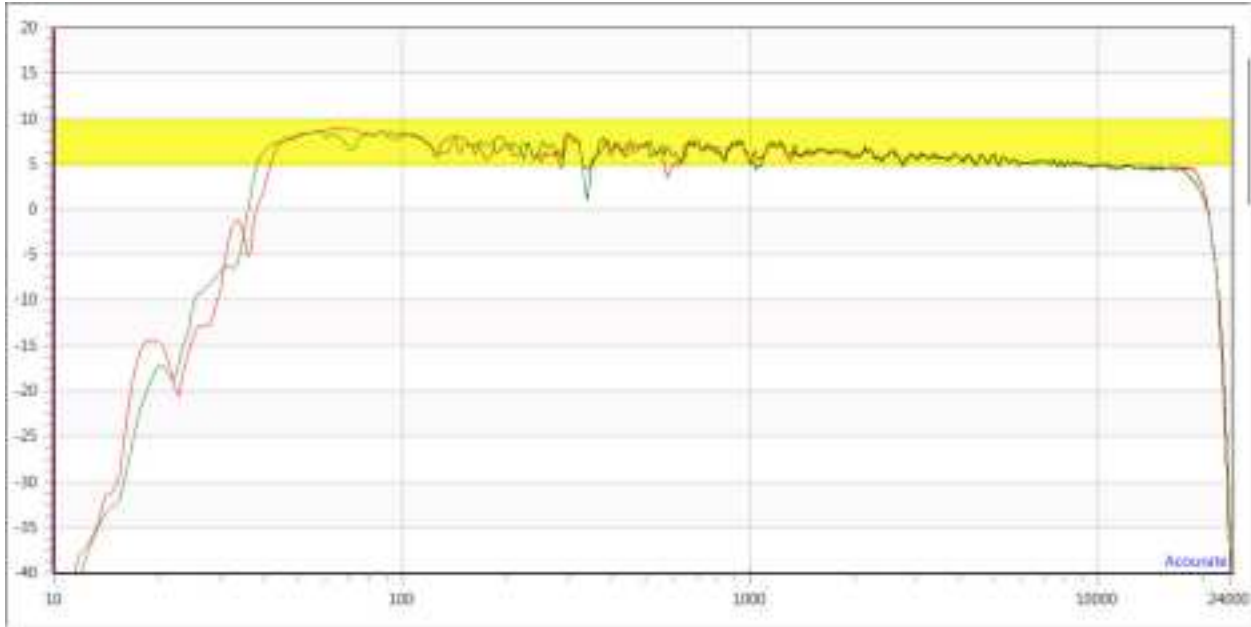
Achieving Studio Quality Sound 2

These were the Before and After Frequency Response Curves:

Before Room Correction.



After Room Correction.



Digital Room Correction allowed the frequency response to be flattened within +/- 2.5dB from 40Hz to 20kHz.

David Snyder brought in a Diretta Host/Target pair to feed the Neumann KH150 active studio monitors. He used this in place of the FiiO SR11 Music Streamer he normally deploys for his mobile setup.

David strongly recommends adding at least one Diretta-enabled endpoint to your dedicated Roon Server. It is the best-sounding Roon bridge solution by a significant margin.

The total cost for a Diretta build is \$495. This is insignificant compared to the price of a dCS, Wadax, or Linn DAC and can sound better by leveraging the power of a superior Network Architecture.

All the details with photos of the gear that were used in the demo are included in this

article: <http://bit.ly/44NqXyG>

What I Am Listening To

By Paul Johnson

Roger Waters: *This Is Not A Drill - Live From Prague* The CD and Blu-ray discs are superior audio and video releases; unfortunately, they were not a combined release. The multi-channel version is quite the workout for any audio system. I was fortunate to attend this concert tour, it was the first time I ever saw Mr. Waters actually enjoying himself on stage, not sneering at the audience, etc. (The band was sharing a bottle of Mescal, if that's what it took it should have been a tour requirement ages ago) If you are a fan, not to be missed. If not, the concert starts with a customer service message for those not so inclined...

Ethel Cain: *Willoughby Tucker, I'll Always Love You* Another strong release from this artist.

Robin Cardan: *Nosferatu (Original Motion Picture Soundtrack)* A well-recorded soundtrack for one of the best Vampire cinemas that I have ever seen. It won an Academy Award for Cinematography.

The Black Keys: *No Rain, No Flowers* Savant's practicing their art, their releases only get better.

Hayes Carll: *We're Only Human A* Texas Troubadour in the style of Jerry Jeff Walker and Ernest Tubb.

Charlie Crockett: *Dollar A Day* A relatively new artist that has an "old soul" country style, Hank Williams Sr. and Charley Pride were obvious influences. If you get the chance to see him live, don't pass that by.

The Devon Allman Blues Project: *Blues Summit* A collaboration between next-gen blues musicians; Christone "Kingfish" Ingram, Larry McCray, Jimmy Hall, and Robert Randolph add their considerable talent to this strong release.

The Wood Brothers: *Puff of Smoke* Brothers Chris (Medeski, Martin & Wood) and Oliver Wood have another well-recorded and thoroughly enjoyable release.

Rachael And Vilray: *West Of Broadway* Another synergetic release from the front woman of Lake Street Dive and a superior guitarist.

Minnesota AAVC Satellite "Play Date"

By Jim Welby

AAVC President John Harvell recently stated in our newsletter: "...*get out and mix it up with other club members, visit and listen to their systems, share your setup, talk about your experiences, and share your history living through this hobby.*" The club has been encouraging this behavior since I joined a few years ago. I have embraced this advice. My wife jokingly refers to these events as "*play dates.*" Club member Dave Hjortland and I, both snowbirds from the Twin Cities in Minnesota, have hosted listening sessions at his home and mine in Arizona. We recently had one at his home in the Twin Cities.

Dave and I initially met through the AAVC newsletter that I edit. Dave is a regular contributor with record reviews. About a third of Dave's reviews are about artists and LPs that I am a fan of, and the other two-thirds are unfamiliar to me. I appreciate Dave's recommendations, as I share a similar taste to his. I appreciate Dave's championing of worthy albums from the past that should not be forgotten. He has introduced me to unfamiliar artists that I have now become a fan of. He has introduced me to LPs of familiar artists that I had previously missed or didn't initially resonate with.

I recently visited Dave's Minnesota home on a sultry afternoon in the Twin Cities (yes, it can get hot in the Northland, and it's not a dry heat). After meeting his wife and admiring his whiskey collection (we also share an appreciation of Bourbon and Scotch Islays), we headed

into his listening room. Dave has a great stereo (more about that later), but the focus was not on geeking out about gear; instead, it was on listening to music.

As I entered the room, a CD of The Who's **Who** from 2019 was playing. This album is a later career masterpiece that I am a fan of. When it came out, I wrote a [raving review](#), but I had forgotten how much I like that album. As I looked around the room, I saw that all the wall art was related to The Who - Dave is a serious Wholigan. In the spirit of one-upmanship, I bragged that I had a vinyl copy of the album. The afternoon was off to a great start.



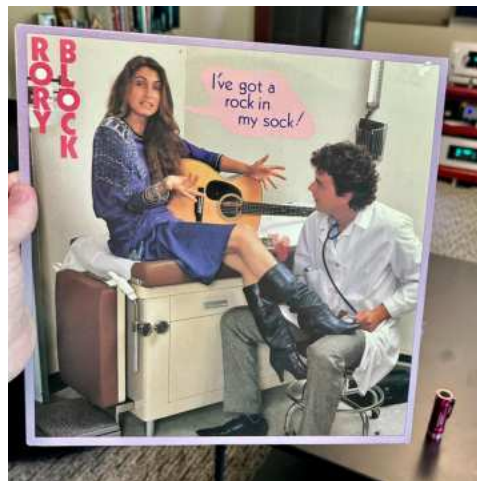
I know that Dave shares an interest in female country music singer-songwriters, and so I brought a few LP selections I thought Dave might like. I started things off with a couple of cuts from Angel Olsen's 2022 album **Big Time** - I have a pink vinyl 45 RPM version of the album with Angel's autograph on the cover. Dave was not familiar, but liked what he heard.



Dave had recently written a review of Heather Myles' 2002 **Sweet Talk, Good Lies** for the AAVC newsletter. This is what I like about Dave's record reviews: I had never heard of Myles, but I trust Dave's taste. I listened to it on a streaming service, and I was immediately hooked. At our play date, Dave played a CD of her 1995 album, **Untamed** —it was great—a perfect volley back from my Angel Olsen serve.



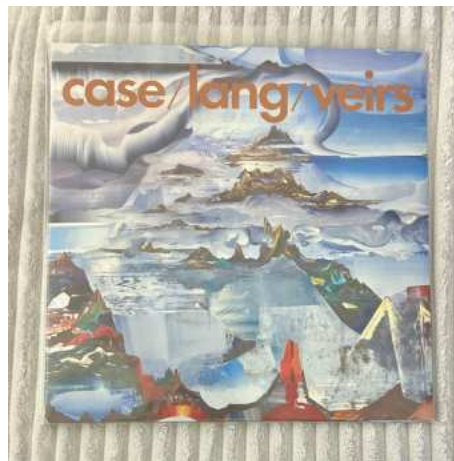
Dave then played an LP by Rory Block: *I've Got a Rock in My Sock!* (1986). I had never heard of the country blues guitarist and singer. I will be heading down the Aurora "Rory" Block rabbit hole now.



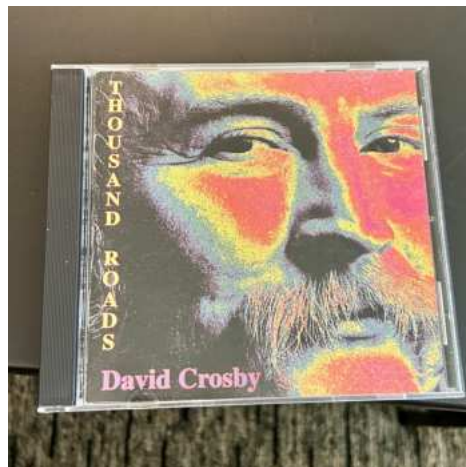
I have heard of Deborah Allen, but I have never heard Deborah Allen. Dave played me “Boys on the Wrong Side of Town” from her 1994 album *All That I Am* on CD—yet another revelation of an artist I need to get to know better. Allen’s commercial peak was in the 80s and 90s, and she has a country-rock vibe - right up my alley.



It was time for me to respond, and so I played the A side of the “supergroup” **case/lang/veirs**’ 2016 self-titled classic on LP. Dave liked it, and when he saw what it was, he told me it was on his wish list. Dave keeps a binder of his favorite artists, which includes a catalog of his collection and a wish list. case/lang/veirs’ was on the wish list, and so I felt I had delivered.



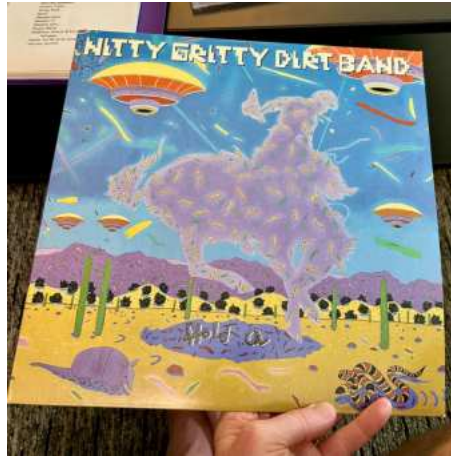
Dave cued up David Crosby’s “Hero” from his 1993 album **Thousand Roads** on CD. I am familiar with a lot of Croz’s catalog, but not this unlikely collaboration with Phil Collins. It sounded great.



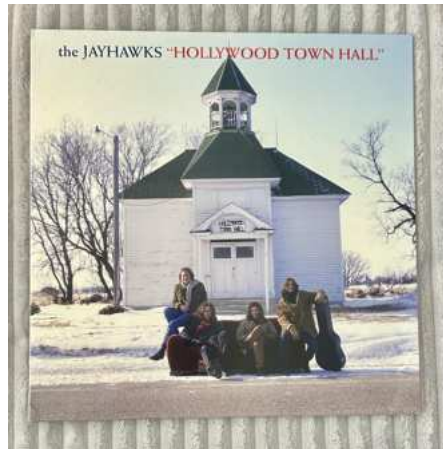
Dave knew I was a Rosanne Cash fan, so he played me the original of her 1988 #1 country hit, “*Runaway Train*,” by John Stewart from his 1987 album, ***Punch The Big Guy***, on vinyl. Dave is an ambassador for the underrated singer-songwriter John Stewart. I have been slow to take the bait, but he hooked me with this song. Dave then conducted an LP vs. CD faceoff of “*The Queen of Hollywood High*” from his 1982 album, ***Blondes***. The CD was distractingly crisp and sharp, whereas the vinyl version was soft and organic. It reminded me how fatiguing early CDs were and how thankful I am that, during my two-decade affair with CDs, I never got rid of my vinyl collection.



Dave dropped the needle on the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band’s “*Keppin’ the Road Hot*” from their 1986 LP ***Hold On***. I am unfamiliar with the band’s catalog beyond 1972’s ***Will The Circle Be Unbroken***, which is nothing like the country rock of “*Keppin’ the Road Hot*.” This is another band that deserves a deeper dive into their catalog, and Dave will be a great guide.



I responded with one of my favorite bands, The Jayhawks, and a vinyl reissue of their 1992 classic **Hollywood Town Hall**. This is an album I am intimately familiar with, and it was perfect for test-driving on Dave's stereo - the sound was stunning.



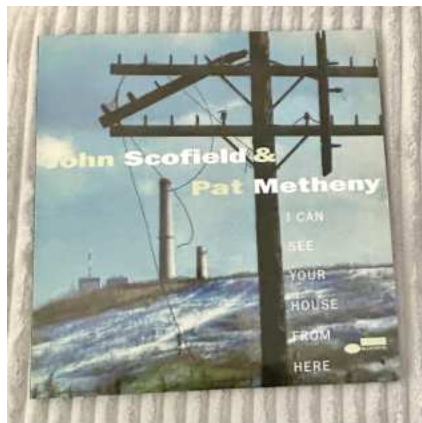
One of my favorite albums is Merl Saunders, Jerry Garcia, John Kahn, and Bill Vitt's **Live at Keystone** (1973). I have it on vinyl, as part of a CD box set, and a SACD. I brought the SACD to play at Dave's. Again, this is an album I am intimately familiar with, and so it was another great test drive of Dave's stereo.



My album of the year is Bruce Springsteen's ***Tracks II: The Lost Albums*** (see the July issue of the AAVC newsletter for a review, or check my [blog](#)). I figured Dave would appreciate Bruce's mid-90s country album ***Somewhere North of Nashville***. Sure enough, he loved it.



Next, I played the Blue Note Tone Poet LP version of John Scofield & Pat Metheny's ***I Can See Your House From Here***. I have a handful of Tone Poet reissues, and they are comparable to the best audiophile vinyl I have heard. I suspect that this style of music (jazz fusion) was not in Dave's wheelhouse, but he did have a few Metheny albums in his collection. Another great reference LP to test drive Dave's system.

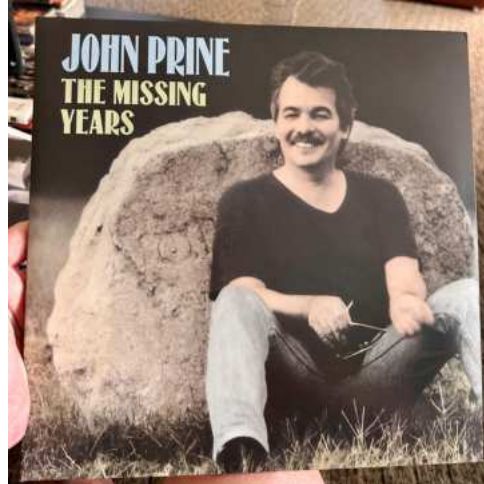


Dave has a Mobile Fidelity Sound Lab LP of Cat Stevens' *Tea for the Tillerman*. This was the star of the afternoon. The acoustic guitars on "Longer Boats" were stunning on Dave's stereo. I asked if he had a conventional copy of the LP, and sure enough, he did. We played that, and it also sounded great, but the MoFi version was special.

My wife and I are going to see Mary Chapin Carpenter later this year, but I'm not that familiar with her work (we're going with a friend who is a huge fan). Dave fortuitously pulled out her 1990 album *Shooting Straight in the Dark*. What a great album: the songwriting, the arrangements, the sonics, and the amazing voice. I am now officially stoked to take a deep dive into her catalog in anticipation of the concert.



I was running out of time, and so Dave pulled out his grand finale: a track off of John Prine's *The Missing Years* (1991). I recognized it was Prine, but did not recognize the track. Once I saw the LP cover, I was embarrassed, as I have *The Missing Years* on CD in my collection, and I am a fan of several of the songs on that album. I did not admit my familiarity with the album to Dave as we were running out of time (the real reason was my embarrassment at not recognizing a track from an album in my collection). *The Missing Years* was a big success for Prine, winning him a Grammy. The album was produced by Howie Epstein, best known as a bassist with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers. It's a great album, and I am jealous of Dave's LP reissue.



As for Dave's rig, it's impressive. I'm more of a mid-fi enthusiast than a hi-fi guy, so I appreciate the chance to listen to a proper hi-fi system like Dave's. Here are the key components:

- Speakers: Martin Logan CLXs
- Subwoofers: Martin Logan Balanced Force 212's
- Preamp: Audio Research Ref 6
- Phono pre: Audio Research Ref 3
- Amps: AVA (Van Alstine) DVA M225 monoblocks
- Turntable: Denon DP 75, Kuzma 4 Point tonearm, My Sonic Lab Ultra Eminent EX cart
- CD Deck: Oppo UDP-205, tube modification by Exemplar Audio
- Cabling: Nordost, Kubala-Sosna, Sain Line

I love the fact that Dave's rig is so Minnesota-specific. Audio Research and Van Alstine are Minnesota companies.



Dave also has an impressive collection of physical media:



Dave has a generous habit: if he finds a CD he likes priced for a dollar or two, he picks it up and then gifts it to his guests. Dave knows my affection for Pete Townsend's *Empty Glass* (1980), and so he gave me a copy of *The Best Of Pete Townsend*, which has a great remix of "Let My Love Open The Door."



I encourage everyone in the club to arrange a playdate with a fellow club member. If there are any Minnesota snowbirds in the club, please reach out to me (catchgroove@gmail.com). We would love to start a satellite AAVC chapter in Minnesota.

Dealers Corner

As always, we want to recognize and thank the local retailers who graciously support our club.

Equipment Dealers:

Acoustic Designs Group <https://www.adgroupaz.com/>

Arizona HiFi <http://tubeaudio.com/>

Audio Video Excellence <https://www.audiovideoexcellence.com/index.html>

Cinematic Home AV <https://www.cinematichomeav.com/>

Dedicated Audio <https://www.dedicatedaudio.com/>

LMC Entertainment <https://www.lmche.com/>

Woolson Audio <https://www.woolsonaudio.com/>

USA Tube Audio <https://www.usatubeaudio.com/>

Mythic Home Theater <https://mythicsls.com/>

Vinyl/CDs:

In-Groove Records <https://www.theingroove.com/>

They also sell audio equipment, per the store's website.

Zia Records <https://www.ziarecords.com/> Zia has several stores throughout The Valley.

Stinkweeds <https://www.stinkweeds.com/>

Repair Work: The editor recently contacted these repair providers to confirm they are still in business. As of the newsletter's publication, he has not heard back from all the companies.

James Koch - confirmed James is still in business

james@highendrepair.com

480-398-7362

Audio Doctor - active website

<http://www.audiodoctor.biz/>

602-741-0730

Jeff's Professional Audio Repair [602-274-0794](tel:602-274-0794) - Also, Car Stereo work was emailed on 9/9/24 jparepair@yahoo.com

Re-foaming Speaker Surround Service:
Michael Mitchell 480-749-7003
mmiller43228@yahoo.com emailed on 9/9/24

Turntable Set-up and record cleaning:
Richard Jensen confirmed still in business
[602 717 2399](tel:6027172399) | worksbau@gmail.com