



May 2024

Club Officers

President: John Harvell

Vice President: Joe Goswami

Secretary/Treasurer: Joe Goswami

Newsletter Editor: Roy Cook

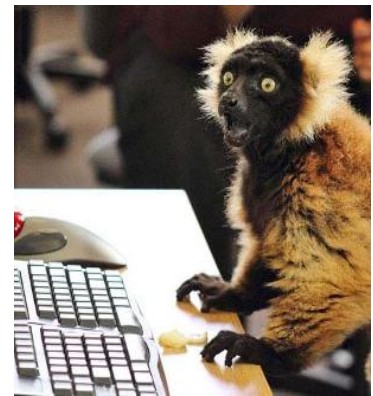
SC Members: Ben Taylor, David Prysock, Paul Johnson, David Hjortland, Joe Roberts, Paul Righello, Michael Kahut, David Snyder, Rich Rachkofski, Jim Welby



President's Message



Last Month's Meeting



Member Articles



Sundry Stuff



Dealer Area



Humor

Memorial Day – We should all be thankful for those who gave so much.

Email Info@AZAVClub.org

Website <https://azavclub.com/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John Harvell

Join us for Our Next Event!

Wednesday May 29 – 7-9PM, Faith Lutheran Church, 801E Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ

Dave Snyder will help us work through the details which can allow you to get the most out of your audio system.

We will learn about the tools that can be used to measure the acoustic signature of any audio system in any listening room.

We will discuss the software used and the setup required to make such measurements.

We'll provide examples of actual measurements Dave has made of club members systems.

We'll learn how to interpret measurement results and actions which can be taken to improve the listening experience.

Finally, Dave will discuss the process of building digital filters which can improve time alignment and tailor the system response to yield a coherent and spectrally balanced listening experience.

We want this to be an interactive experience with lots of questions and discussion. To that end, a number of club members will share their experiences and the insights they gained with Dave's help working through this process.

So, come out and join the other club members for this exciting presentation and discussion.

April 27th/2024 - DAC it Out 2024 – Thank you all those who came out & to those who brought DAC's for us to listen to/play with. <https://azavclub.com/events>

Pictures from DIY Night - Thanks to everyone who came out and to those who brought their DIY gear.

A Big Thank You to **LMC Entertainment Tempe** for being the awesome hosts at their Tempe store.

Thank you **Ben Taylor (Omni Classic) & Clarke Rigsby (of Tempest Recording)**. Great stories and a wealth of information was enjoyed by those who attended.

Best Regards,

John Harvell, AAVC President

LAST MONTH'S MEETING RECAP

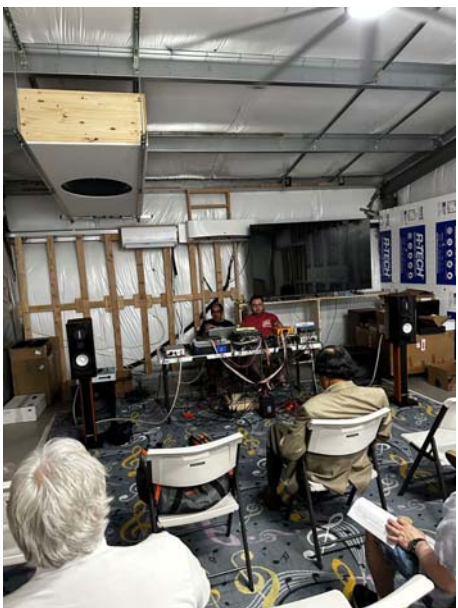
[DAC Shootout and the first visit to Greg's Audio Palace of the West.](#)

Greg Wann's audio room in his large metal building is coming along nicely. It will be a great place for meetings in the future.

Yes, those are ginormous subwoofers hanging from the ceiling. Not hooked up yet, but promises to be fascinating when dialed in. The photos aren't really indicative of the turnout, which was decent.

Thanks to everyone who brought a DAC to try out and a big thanks to Joe who worked tirelessly to make the event come together.

The Philharmonic BMR speakers are truly amazing for their size and cost. Club members can get them at a discount. Thanks to everyone that brought a DAC for the shootout. If you want to know the consensus winner, please send me a request. Hint, it was the most expensive one.



MEMBER ARTICLES

Member System Profile - Jim Welby

We are introducing a new feature in the AAVC newsletter inviting club members to profile their system. AAVC member Jim Welby, a snowbird from Minneapolis, Minnesota, has graciously agreed to be the first to showcase his rig. If you want to share your setup, please get in touch with our Newsletter's editor, Roy Cook (platotrek@cox.net). If you would like assistance with your write-up, I would happily help (catchgroove@gmail.com).

My wife and I completed our third winter in The Valley this year, and over that time, we've put together a modest two-channel system. It's a mix of extra components we brought from Minnesota and new pieces we've added. I've affectionately named it **The Desert Sessions**. Here's a glimpse of our setup: Paradigm Premium 800F tower speakers, Bluesound Node streamer (Tidal), Croft Acoustic Phono Integrated amplifier, Rega P3 turntable, Schitt Vali 2 headphone amplifier, and DROP.com + HiFiMan HE5XX planar magnetic headphones.

The **Croft Acoustic Phono Integrated Amplifier** is a bespoke hybrid amplifier (tube preamp and solid-state amp) from UK manufacturer Croft Audio. Croft Audio was Glenn Croft, who designed and built hand-crafted audio in the UK for over 30 years. Unfortunately, Glen passed away a couple of years ago, and his company passed with him. When I purchased the amp about five years ago, it was under two grand - a significant expense for me but a modestly priced amp in the audiophile world. What makes the Croft special is the phono preamp. Glen put a lot of effort into the phono preamp - I don't understand the engineering, but vinyl sounds fantastic through this preamp/amp. It is an austere unit: an input selector, right and left volume knobs, a mute switch, and an on/off switch, all in an unassuming black case without a remote. It does not have a headphone jack/ amp.

The back side has a set of gold-plated jacks for a phono, three other inputs, and a line out. Speaker connectors, a phono ground, and power are also present. Besides its gorgeous sound, the amp's most notable feature is the right and left channel volume controls. One of the biggest challenges for a stereo is the room, and having independent left/right volume is one of the most straightforward room correction tools I know of. It also helps balance my 65-year-old ears too!

Here is more information about the amp from a 2013 profile in Stereophile.

<https://www.stereophile.com/content/croft-acoustics-phono-integrated-integrated-amplifier>

Paradigm Premium 800F tower speakers: We had a pair of Paradigm Monitor SE Atom bookshelf speakers for many years in Minneapolis and found them delightful. We upgraded them to a larger Paradigm product, the 800F (\$1200 a pair), a few years back. When we got a second home in Phoenix, we decided to bring them down, knowing they would get more use here than in our Minneapolis home (a condo where playing music loud is not viable). The 800Fs have four drivers: a tweeter for high sounds, a midrange for middle sounds, and two woofers for bass.

The bass is a 3-way bass reflex. Bass reflex means that in addition to the two woofers, there is a port on the rear of the speaker cabinet. This port enables the sound from the rear side of the woofers to escape the speaker's enclosure. This increases the speaker's efficiency at low frequencies (bass) compared to a closed-box speaker. This is a standard feature of Paradigms – even my little bookshelf, Atom Paradigms, had this feature. I love the bass on these speakers – it packs a punch without booming.

The tweeter and midrange use Paradigm's patented PPA lens, which stands for Perforated Phase-Aligning Driver Lenses. Per Paradigm: "High frequencies tend to congregate and can sound muddled, obscuring details and shrouding image clarity." PPA resolves that. I don't understand all that (bass reflex and PPA), but the 800Fs are the best-sounding speakers I have ever owned (including my beloved mid-1980s Klipsch KG2s). Speakers are the most personal audio choice you can make, so I would not be comfortable recommending speakers to someone. The only way to make a speaker decision is to work with a good brick-and-mortar dealer where you can audition the speakers in the store and ultimately test drive them at home.

Rega P3 turntable - We have an extensive vinyl collection, and listening to wax is our preferred audio source. For our first winter, we borrowed our daughter's turntable (she was not using it as she lives in a tiny New York City apartment). When I retired at the end of 2022, I bought myself a turntable as a retirement present. I selected the Rega P3 because it got great reviews, was in my price range (below \$1500), and came in red.

I found a great hi-fi dealer in The Valley: Audio Video Excellence, who sold Rega and had various models set up in-store for auditioning. I brought several LPs into the store, and owner Bob Koopman set me up in a listening room and let me audition in peace. After 30 minutes, I was sold. This is a great-sounding table (and it looks cool too).

Bluesound Node streamer (Tidal): As much as I love spinning LPs, streaming is hard to resist. High-resolution streaming (I use Tidal) is the best-sounding audio format, especially for digitally recorded music. Digital audio can be complicated if you want superior sound. Still, simple solutions like Bluesound's Node (a computer and a DAC in a black box) exist. The Node can be controlled by an app on your phone. Before the Node, I was casting via Bluetooth - easy and convenient but lousy sound. With the Node, I get the ease and convenience of Bluetooth with superior sound. The Node can be connected to the internet via WiFi, but I prefer it to be hardwired to our modem (which is more reliable). The Node can be upgraded to use an external DAC, but I have been delighted with the onboard DAC. The Node retails for \$500 (there are many competing streamer hardware options for both more and less).

Schitt Vali 2 Headphone Amplifier: As I mentioned earlier, the Croft amp does not have a headphone stage, so I purchased an inexpensive (\$110) hybrid tube headphone amp (tube-based preamp and solid-state amp) from Schitt and upgraded the tube (with a vintage Amperex ECC88). This little gem is one of the cheaper ways to get into the rabbit hole of tube (or valve, for you, Britts) audio.

DROP.com + HiFiMan HE5XX planar magnetic headphones - The Desert Sessions started with my old Grado SR80s, which sound great (especially given their low cost: \$125) but are uncomfortable. I have been intrigued by the concept of a planar magnetic headphone, so I got the itch to upgrade. DROP is an online retailer that works with headphone manufacturers like HiFiMan to reissue classic products at a discount; for example, these cans sell for \$180. These are the best-sounding and most comfortable cans I have ever owned.

I am not using anything special for speaker wire and interconnects; I use cheap stuff you can buy at Best Buy. A few years ago, we did a speaker wire blind shoot-out at the Minnesota audio club, and more expensive speaker wires sounded better than cheap speaker wires. However, I don't have good enough "golden ears" to have had strong preferences for the most expensive solutions. This is an area where I should probably consider an upgrade. I would love to hear other club members' recommendations for bargain wire/interconnect upgrades - I am interested in "better," not "best."

As an audiophile, I am always itching for a new component, but honestly, the Desert Sessions are in great shape, and I don't have any hi-fi lust (at the moment). I sometimes think about a CD player, given my extensive CD collection back in Minneapolis, but I have not found the need given the extensive catalogs on the streaming services. The Desert Sessions has given me hours of pleasure, and you can follow what I am listening to on Instagram (@catchgroove), FaceBook (Jim Welby), and via my blog.

SUNDRY STUFF

Dave's Record Reviews

More Than a Whisper: Celebrating the Music of Nanci Griffith

(Rounder, LP & CD, 2013)



Being a dedicated fan of the late Nanci Griffith, the release of this collection of her songs performed by other, well-known musical artists was pretty much audio catnip. There are 12 songs on the LP that she wrote (or co-wrote), performed by names most of which will be readily recognizable to many music fans. It took me a second listen through to adjust my audio memory and expectations away from trying to hear Nanci's distinctive vocals on the songs – all of which I know well – and into a mode of listening to the songs and artists on their own merits. This likely will not be as much of a challenge for most listeners.

Once I managed that, I was able to reach the conclusion that this is a pretty doggone good album. Griffith was acknowledged as being a "songwriter's songwriter" and her songs were covered by numerous other artists. The selections collected here were recorded over several years' time and not recorded just for this album. This is "Americana" music, a rather ambiguous label that covers a broad range of styles and content. Not everyone's cuppa, perhaps, but quite worthy stuff for anyone with any affinity at all for the folk/rock/pop/country type of music on offer here.

Of course not every cut on the album is terrific. I have a generally high regard for Sarah Jarosz, who leads off the album with "You Can't Go Home Again," but it is not up to her capability nor does it approach Nanci's original version. Lyle Lovett & Kathy Mattea do not do themselves credit with their rendition of "Trouble in the Fields."

On the positive side, John Prine & Kelsey Waldon do a pleasing version of "Love at the Five and Dime." The very talented Brandy Clark delivers an excellent "Gulf Coast Highway," with backing and production that made it easy for me to (at least temporarily) forget the original. Steve Earle does a very credible job on "It's a Hard Life Wherever You Go," one of Griffith's signature numbers. An unexpected gem and probably my favorite on the album is Emmylou Harris' "Love

Wore a Halo (Back Before the War),” one of three songs from the album that were released as singles.

I can recommend this album as a good listen – good music performed by talented artists. Are the versions as good as the ones that Ms Griffith did on her own albums? Well, let me just say that *optimally* I would hope that listening to this record might motivate some listeners to seek out some of Nanci’s own work.

I mentioned that there are 12 songs on the LP? Only after I had ordered and received it did I realize that the CD version has **14** songs... Will I break down and order the CD for the sake of the 2 additional songs? Well, probably. Eventually.

Dealers Corner

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

DEALERS:

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

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

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

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

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

Woolson Audio -- <https://www.woolsonaudio.com/> (new address – 4411 S 40th Street, Phoenix)

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

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

VINYL:

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

REPAIR WORK:

James Koch
james@highendrepair.com

Audio Doctor
<http://www.audiodoctor.biz/>
602-741-0730

Jeff's Professional Audio Repair, Also Car Stereo work
602-274-0794
jparepair@yahoo.com

Refoaming Speaker Surround Service:
Michael Mitchell 480-749-7003
mmiller43228@yahoo.com

Turntable Set-up and record cleaning:
Richard Jensen
ANALOG resource
602 717 2399 | worksbau@gmail.com

HUMOR

Quality Mirth and Some Great Photos

It turns out that being an adult now is mostly just googling how to do stuff.

I miss the 90's when bread was still good for you and no one knew what kale was.

Do you ever get up in the morning, look in the mirror and think "That can't be accurate."

I want to be 14 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas.

As I watch this new generation try to rewrite our history, one thing I'm sure of ... it will be misspelled and have no punctuation.

I told my wife I wanted to be cremated. She made me an appointment for Tuesday.

Confuse your doctor by putting on rubber gloves at the same time he does.

My wife asked me to take her to one of those restaurants where they make food right in front of you. I took her to Subway.

I went line dancing last night. OK, it was a roadside sobriety test .. same thing.

I saw a homeless man and asked him if I gave him \$50 will you buy booze? He said no he hadn't had a drink in years.

Then I said if I give you \$50 will you buy Records? He again said no, he got rid of his turntable 15 years ago.

So then I said I'll do you better than \$50. I'll take you home, get you all cleaned up. My wife will cook a fantastic meal for you. Then I'll bring you back and give you \$50.

He asked me, won't she get mad? I said it didn't matter. I just wanted her to see what happens to a man if he stops drinking and buying records.



**70% OF THE EARTH IS WATER AND
VIRTUALLY NONE OF IT IS CARBONATED**



SO THE EARTH IS, IN FACT, FLAT...

Beauty comes in ALL
shapes and sizes...



Americans: We walked on the moon
Also Americans



MOM: IF A STRANGER CAME UP TO YOU AND SAID "I'M YOUR MOM'S FRIEND, SHE TOLD ME TO PICK YOU UP." WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

KID: I'D SAY "YOU'RE LYING, MY MOM HAS NO FRIENDS."

MOM: NOT WHERE I WAS GOING, BUT OK.



RANDOM ACT OF KINDNESS

feeding pepperoni slices to our vegan neighbor's toddler, through the mail slot.



**I GOT GAS TODAY
FOR \$1.39**

**UNFORTUNATELY IT
WAS AT TACO BELL.**

This is called cross sea. A cross sea is a sea state with two wave systems traveling at oblique angles.



This is what an eight-ton Orca jumping 20 feet out of the water looks like.



This is what a bubble looks like mid-pop.



This is what Wiltshire, England looks like.



This is what a sunset looks like from above the clouds.



This is a volcano in Ethiopia that burns bright blue.



This is what a tree farm looks like.



This is what a huge rhododendron tree looks like.



This is how massive Tokyo is.

The world's most densely populated city.



This is a process called guttation. The plant is expelling water due to a positive root pressure.



This is what the clovers that cover the floor of the California Redwood Forest look like.



This is what Jupiter looks like from the bottom.



This is what a castle on an island in Ireland looks like.



This is what Venice looks like from above.



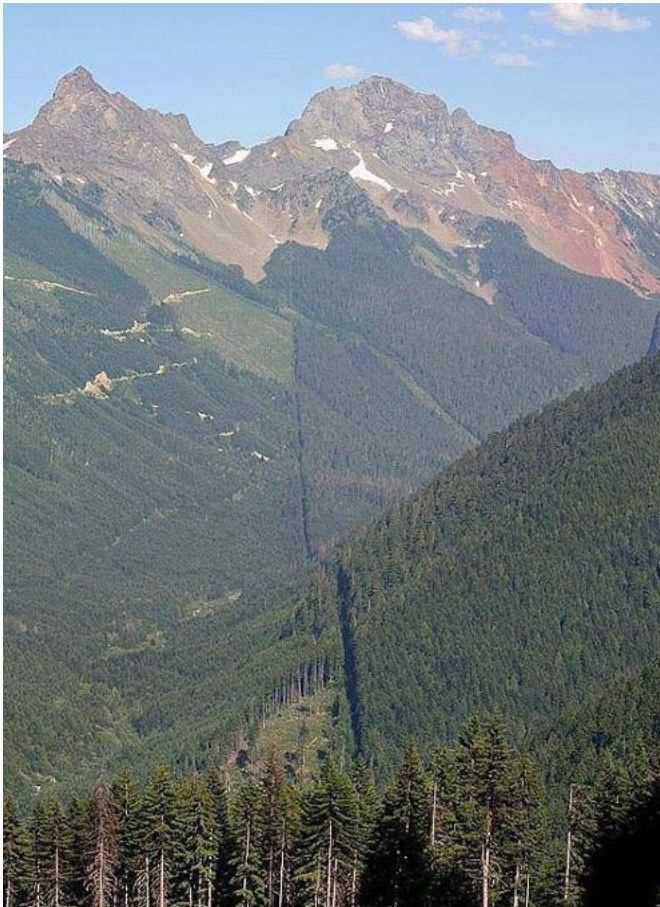
This is what the Dark Hedges of Northern Ireland look like.



This is what the pyramids look like from Cairo street.



This is what the border of the United States and Canada looks like.



This is what two hours' worth of lightning on one pic looks like.



This is what an Osiria Rose looks like.



This is what the turquoise ice formations on Lake Baikal, Russia look like.



This is how Mt. Fuji cuts through the clouds.



This is what Ice Canyon, Greenland looks like.



This is what sunset looks like from space.



This is what an illegally-taken picture from one of the Greta Giza Pyramids looks like.



This is what the sun looks like when shot in Ultraviolet.

