



November 2023

Club Officers

President: John Harvell

Vice President: Joe Goswami

Secretary/Treasurer: Joe Goswami

Newsletter Editor: Roy Cook

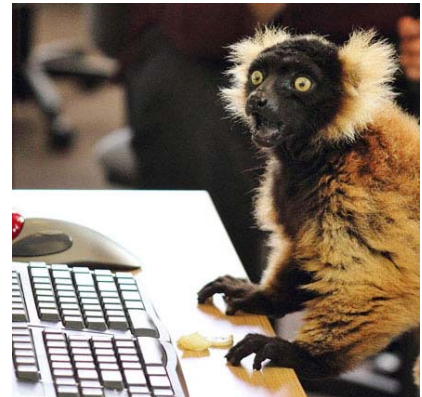
SC Members: Ben Taylor, David Prysock, Paul Johnson, David Hjortland



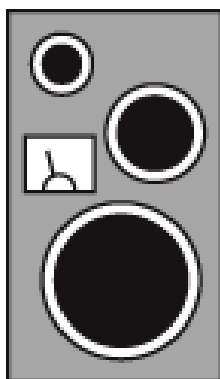
President's Message



Last Month's Meeting



Member Articles



Sundry Stuff



Dealer Area



Humor

Email Info@AZAVClub.org
Website <https://azavclub.com/>

Let it be known that if you are not a paid member of the AZ Audio Club, this will probably be your last newsletter. Industry Associates will still receive their copy.

Also, this month's meeting is something I have wanted for years, and should be fantastic.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John Harvell

President's Message:

As you all know, the AAVC membership runs from January to December each calendar year. So, please plan to renew your membership through the club web site during January of 2024. Additionally, the club is only as successful as the members who are actively participating, organizing, planning, and helping to put together the events and the interactions we have all grown to enjoy. So, I am reaching out in this newsletter again, requesting that you take an active role in the club.

Join the club steering committee, help us organize, plan, and put on exciting and worthwhile events that club members can and will support. We are in desperate need for someone to take over the treasurer position and I am appealing to each of you to help the club and the other club members by please stepping forward into that role. Note: This is not a tremendously taxing position and Joe and I can certainly provide guidance to a new person taking over this important role.

Over the next month and a half, the steering committee will be putting together a preliminary schedule of events for next year. We will have elections for existing and new club officers during the January meeting. In order for the club to continue to succeed, we need the current and future members to step forward and support the coordination and organization of club events. So, please search your hearts and find a way to step forward with an offer to fill one of the club positions. Those positions include: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Website Support, Newsletter Editor, and Steering Committee members. If you would like to volunteer, you can reach out to me at jharvell_1@cox.net and make your interest known. Alternatively, you can also contact any other current steering committee member and relay your interest in volunteering. The current steering committee members and officers include:

President: John Harvell

Vice President: Joe Goswami

Treasurer: Joe Goswami

Website: Joe Goswami

Newsletter: Roy Cook

Steering Committee: Dave Snyder, Ben Taylor, Dave Hjortland, Paul Johnson, and Dave Prysock

So, please reach out to one of them with your interest to become a more active member of the club and help us organize and present the best program we can for the coming year.

Best regards

John Harvell, AAVC President

November Meeting

When: Wednesday 29 November 7:00 – 9:00 PM

Where: Faith Lutheran Church – Faith Center (**Next to Office - Instead of Parish Hall**)

801 E Camelback Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85014, United States

Our November event is all about Audiophile Streaming. Whether you've dabbled in streaming, have been doing it for over a decade, or are curious about how to get started, you'll be glad you came. Our colleague, David Snyder, will share industry concepts you can apply to understand any platform. You'll know the players in the streaming market and how to select (or build upon) a system that will achieve your goals. This will be an interactive session with music breaks every 25 minutes, so bring your questions, sense of humor, curiosity, and imagination. This is an exciting topic and the AZAVClub's last in-person meeting of the year, so mark your calendar **now** to ensure you don't miss it. Bring your questions and your experiences with various streaming services so we can all learn from each other.

System Information

Source Info:	iFi Audio Zen Stream	(\$399)
	WiiM Pro	(\$149)
DACs:	SMSL D-6S DAC	(\$199)
	Schiit Yggdrasil DAC	(\$2299)
Preamp:	Benchmark LA-4	(\$3050)
Crossover:	dBx DriveRack Venu360 Loudspeaker Management System (\$695)	
Amplifiers:	Two Benchmark AHB2	(\$3499)
Speakers:	Swan IV (Bi-Amped DIY Speakers Circa 1988 Speaker Builder Magazine \cong \$750)	



iFi Audio Zen Stream (\$399)



WIIM Pro (\$149-\$219)



SMSL D6S MQA Audio DAC (\$199)



Schiit Yggdrasil DAC (\$2299)



Benchmark LA-4 PreAmp (\$3050)

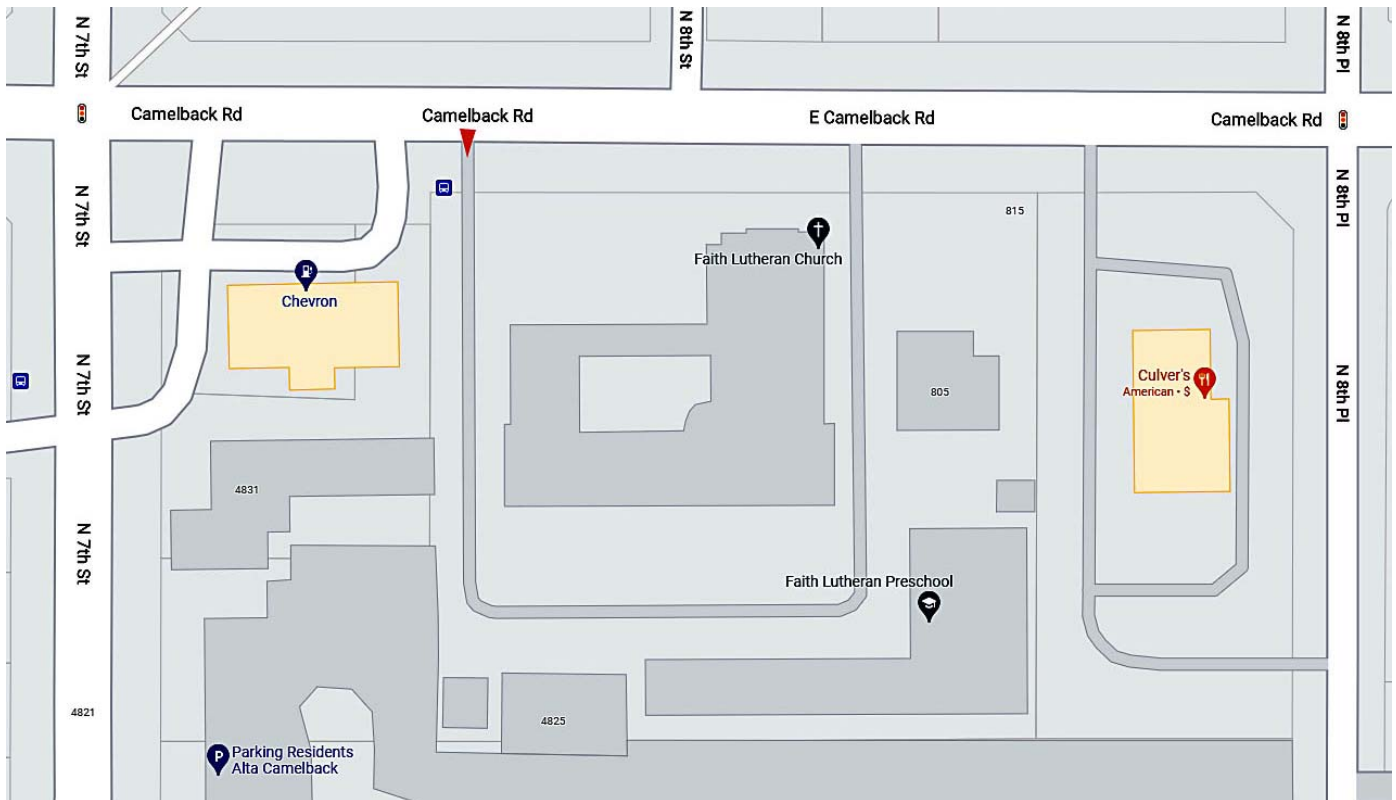


Dbx Loudspeaker Management System (\$695 Ebay)



Benchmark AHB2 Amplifier (\$3499)

Best Regards,
John Harvell



LAST MONTH'S MEETING RECAP

DIY Speaker listening Event

Club members who signed up, were treated to a very modern loudspeaker design by Club member Ed Goff at his residence. The meeting included food and a helping hand by Ed's lovely wife Libby; Thank you very much.

Ed has been creating DIY loudspeakers for decades and his newest design was a tour de force of newer technology to include DSP, built-in class-D Hypex amplification, and the very latest in driver selection. The midrange driver, which is from a newer company was truly excellent.

If you have ever designed a speaker or even wished to, this was a superb meeting to see some excellent software that was used, and to look into the development process that went in to a project of this complexity.



MEMBER ARTICLES

Barret's Record Reviews

For the AZ Audio Club ~ November 2023

Buzzworthy

An Album Review of

Weedkiller

by

Ashnikko

Released on August 25, 2023, through Parlophone and Warner records



Concept albums hold a special place in music in that they are an attempt to not just craft a collection of pieces that function on their own but work synergistically together to create a

narrative that is greater than the sum of its parts. Not an easy task but when accomplished a thing of beauty.

It's been a while since I've heard a good new concept album. It's been a while since I've even heard an album where I really liked more than half the tracks. That stretch ended when I heard an interview of and looked into an artist called Ashnikko. Born in Greensborough North Carolina in 1996, she moved to Estonia and later Latvia with her family and finally to London on her own when she turned 18. She released a few singles and an EP and then her first full length album titled Weedkiller this year. The press release described the concept as "a commentary on environmental disaster and the rapid evolution of technology" that tells "the story of a fallen civilization occupied and destroyed by machines that feed on organic matter where the faerie protagonist seeks revenge by becoming part machine." Although I'm not generally drawn to stories involving faeries, the strategy of assimilation was rather clever and the struggle between flesh and blood and AI driven machines certainly timely.

Musically it spans multiple genres – nu-metal, trap, electropop and industrial pop. Massive bass is used on many tracks – my Audizr app kept showing peaks at 35 Hz. I normally listen at about 85 Db max, but midway through Weedkiller I checked and I was in the 90's. It's just that fun. Ashnikko's voice also spans different styles, from the gentle and natural "Dying Star" that could almost be mistaken for a Taylor Swift song to the auto-tuned "Super Soaker" which would probably not. Personally, I find that auto tune is usually a cheap fix for those who can't sing, but every once in a while it works and on this album it fits perfectly where it is applied.

Track One titled "World Eater" opens as the AI controlled robots have attacked and the female protagonist discovers her perhaps less-than-sweet personality and propensity for violence is well suited to offer resistance. The songs alternate between flashbacks to her former life and the current battle, her hyper-competitive nature on tracks like "Cheerleader" showing the darker side of her ambition.

"I'm not a girl, I'm a swarm of bees
Wrapped in a skin suit, perfect teeth
God made me pretty, you made me mean
I brought a blade to the dance routine"

That concept of the Trojan Horse, a pretty face concealing malice, is furthered on "Worms" as she allows her body to become host to a form of machine parasite.

"Brand-new day, got a brand-new grin
Got a colony of ants underneath my skin
My bones decay, now I'm gelatin
I swear I'm better, swear I'm better, miss parasite possessor"

Her resolve in battle borders on fanaticism and the emphasis on the flesh in contrast to the sterile nature of the AI is brought home again on the title track Weedkiller where she confidently states-

"I made knives outta broken ribs
I will be the one to eliminate you"

It's all very intense and cinematic. It borrows generously from Anime and video game sonics (also not generally my bag) but never felt cheesy. If it were not for the alternating flashbacks to pre-AI days it would likely sink under its own dark weight, but by once again focusing on the flesh, the memories of organic love and lust illustrate what she is trying to preserve. From the innocent "Don't Look at It" where she coyly purrs the title over and over while explaining "I'm shy", to the

somewhat less innocent “Super Soaker’ which includes some very well-done multi-layered vocals featuring Daniela Lalita in Spanish that is about as sexy as it gets.

If you’re easily offended by profanity or sexuality Ashnikko might not be for you. Her videos are like many made by young female artists hitting the scene trying to make a mark. Most try a bit too hard to be confrontational or edgy to get clicks and dollars so I would skip them at least at first. In this case, the writing, arranging and execution stand on their own. It’s wildly creative and fearless, a rollercoaster of emotions and memories of a life lived fully.

Sonically the recording is quite adventurous and will give your system a workout – very good for knocking the dust off those woofer voice coils. Mastered by Chris Gehringer who has worked with the likes of Rihanna and Lady Gaga and mixed by Manny Marroquin who has 13 Grammy’s on his shelf at home, the quality is not surprisingly excellent.

I listened first on You Tube to check it out, and then got the CD, hoping it would go from sounding good to great and was not disappointed. Weedkiller is about as ambitious as a debut album gets - and in my opinion entirely buzzworthy.



Barrett Strong – AAVC Member since 2021. Main system – FiiO M6 DAP/DAC, Schiit Freya+ Pre, Schiit Vidar Amp, 2 REL Q150 subs, Magnepan LRS on 20” stands. Looking to add streaming but otherwise wildly happy with my system.

DEALER'S AREA

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/>

John Akers has left LMC to pursue other audio related adventures (I'll miss John, we may still want him to lead a meeting regarding Home Theater at a future date.

LMC hired a new employee, Jordan Thompson, I met him last week, very sharp, you'll be impressed.

Woolson Audio -- <https://www.woolsonaudio.com/> (may be closed, more later)

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

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

VINYL:

Record High in Phoenix -- <https://www.facebook.com/Record-High-in-Phoenix-225931417539924/>

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

SUNDRY STUFF

Basic Streaming Signal Flow

Roy Cook

A few Club members and many listeners are unfamiliar with the basic aspects of how streaming audio works and where to begin with a system that incorporates a digital front end connected to the internet. An old friend of mine that recently spoke to me at a wedding wanted to know more and have a diagram that laid out a streaming system. Ergo, I created this diagram to help indoctrinate those wishing to have a baseline to begin with.

The diagram was created in Adobe Illustrator and can be provide in vector format that can be blown up to any size.

In a future newsletter look for a recommended list of components that will produce good to superb sound at varying price points.

If you have any questions, please ask David Snyder at the November meeting.

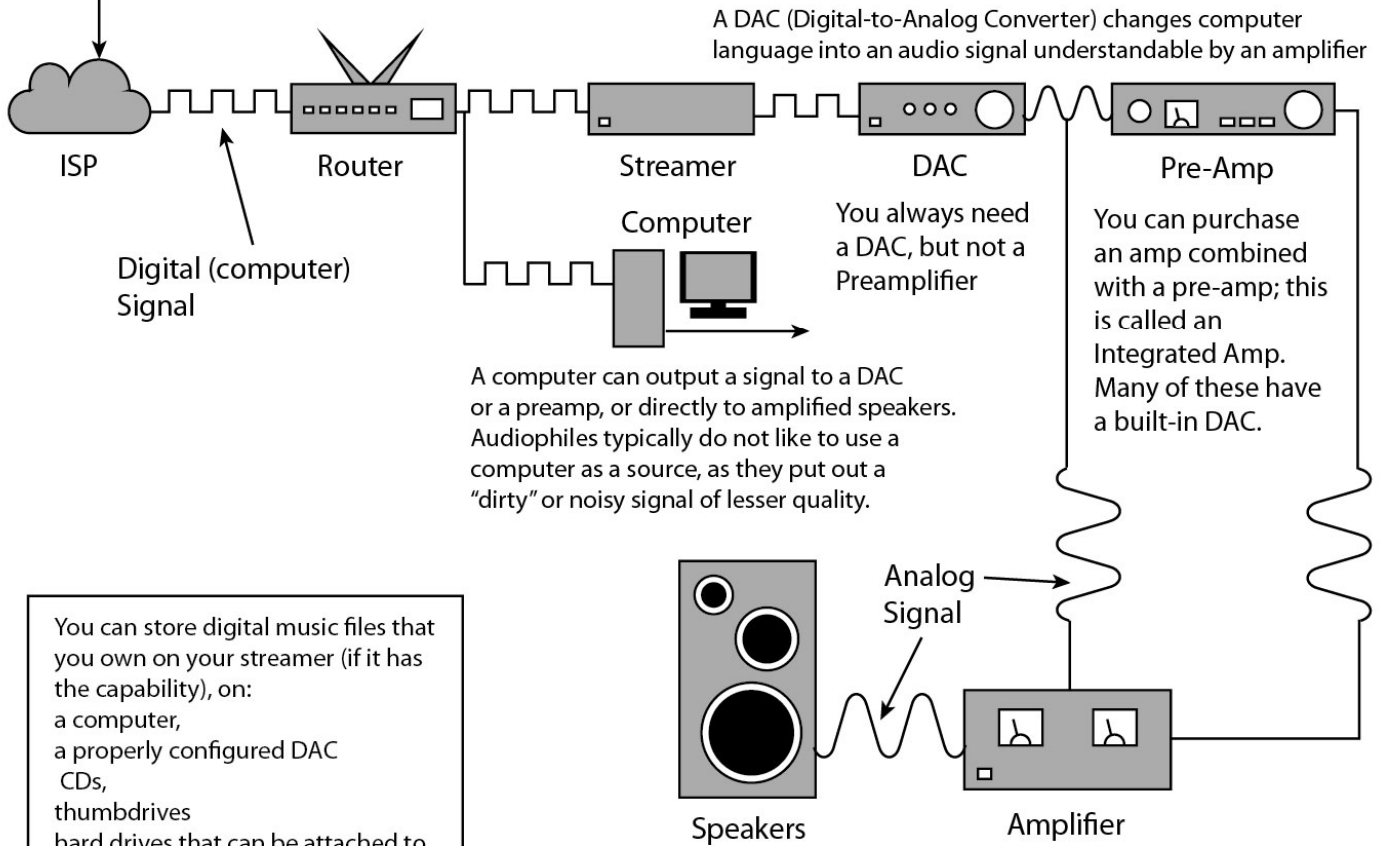
A Digital Audio Primer

You can listen to music files from the internet from a provider that has millions of songs in their servers. Some of the main providers are TIDAL, Qobuz, Apple, Amazon, Spotify, and dozens more. **You don't own this music.**

A Streamer, Computer, and DAC can be in one box. Computers always have a built-in DAC, almost always of poor quality

A Streamer is built to be connected to a router and distribute a digital signal to other audio devices. Streamers typically sound better than computers and can send the digital audio signal to multiple devices.

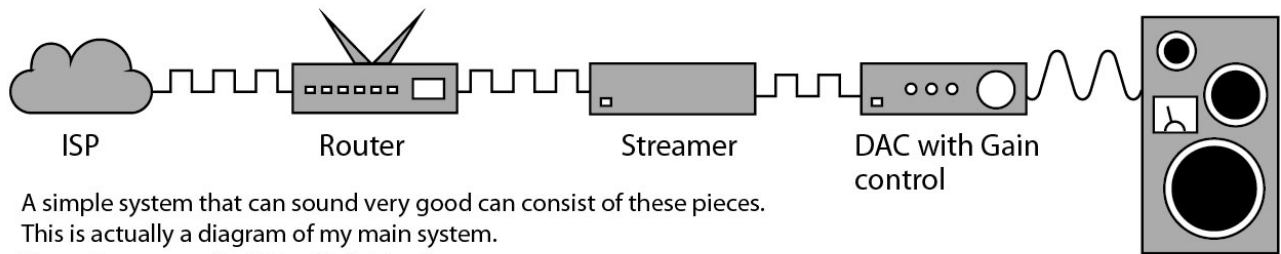
A Pre-amp isn't necessary unless you want multiple audio inputs. A pre-amp will have a volume control, which you will need if your DAC doesn't have one.



You can store digital music files that you own on your streamer (if it has the capability), on: a computer, a properly configured DAC CDs, thumbdrives hard drives that can be attached to you system.

A computer can output a signal to a DAC or a preamp, or directly to amplified speakers. Audiophiles typically do not like to use a computer as a source, as they put out a "dirty" or noisy signal of lesser quality.

Amplifiers and Speakers do not speak computer language. They do understand a turntable and records as those are analog based. There are quite a few speakers with built-in amplifiers, for a simpler system (see below). Desktop speakers for computer audio typically have a built-in amplifier.



A simple system that can sound very good can consist of these pieces. This is actually a diagram of my main system. The antennae are for Wifi, which I don't use. My system is all hard-wired with CAT6 cable; except between the streamer and DAC, which is high-quality shielded USB. My DAC is specially built to clean up any noise in this signal path. Between DAC and amp/speaker is double-shielded XLR Audioquest interconnect.

Speakers with built-in amplification

HUMOR

Silly stuff, a Nod to Our Veterans, and Interesting Facts



At precisely 11:11 a.m. each Veterans Day (Nov. 11), the sun's rays pass through the ellipses of the five Armed Services pillars to form a perfect solar spotlight over a mosaic of The Great Seal of the United States.



**CURES FOR EVERY SICKNESS
I HAD AS A KID**



A comet's tail always points away from the sun.

Caffeine increases the power of aspirin and other painkillers, that is why it is found in some medicines.

The military salute is a motion that evolved from medieval times, when knights in armor raised their visors to reveal their identity.

If you get into the bottom of a well or a tall chimney and look up, you can see stars, even in the middle of the day.

In ancient times strangers shook hands to show that they were unarmed.

Strawberries and cashews are the only fruits whose seeds grow on the outside.

Avocados have the highest calories of any fruit at 167 calories per hundred grams.

The moon moves about two inches away from the Earth each year. The Earth gets 100 tons heavier every day due to falling space dust.

Due to earth's gravity it is impossible for mountains to be higher than 15,000 meters.

Soldiers do not march in step when going across bridges because they could set up a vibration which could be sufficient to knock the structure down.

Everything weighs one percent less at the equator.

The song Auld Lang Syne is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world to bring in the new year.

Peanut oil is used for cooking in submarines because it doesn't smoke unless it's heated above 450F.

The roar that we hear when we place a seashell next to our ear is not the ocean, but rather the sound of blood surging through the veins in the ear.

Nine out of every 10 living things live in the ocean.

The banana cannot reproduce itself. It can be propagated only by the hand of man.

Airports at higher altitudes require a longer airstrip due to lower air density.

The University of Alaska spans four time zones.

In ancient Greece, tossing an apple to a girl was a traditional proposal of marriage. Catching it meant she accepted.

Warner Communications paid 28 million for the copyright to the song Happy Birthday, which was written in 1935.

Intelligent people have more zinc and copper in their hair.

For every extra kilogram carried on a space flight, 530 kg of excess fuel are needed at lift-off.

Glass takes one million years to decompose, which means it never wears out and can be recycled an infinite amount of times!

Gold is the only metal that doesn't rust, even if it's buried in the ground for thousands of years.

When a person dies hearing is the last sense to go. The first sense lost is sight.

Your tongue is the only muscle in your body that is attached at only one end.

The tooth is the only part of the human body that cannot heal itself.

If you stop getting thirsty, you need to drink more water. When a human body is dehydrated, its thirst mechanism shuts off.

Zero is the only number that cannot be represented by Roman numerals.

Kites were used in the American Civil War to deliver letters and newspapers.

Drinking a glass of water before you eat may help digestion and curb appetite.

Drinking water after eating reduces the acid in your mouth by 61 percent.

The letter J does not appear anywhere on the periodic table of the elements