

Coming January 10th: ..Dick Mueller gives a presentation on Big Bands music....

# Audioletter

A PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST AUDIO SOCIETY • JANUARY 2008



DECEMBER 13th MEETING RECAP Text and Photos by Bruce Brown

Well, I guess that's what I call our new turntable. Yes folks, the Pacific Northwest Audio Society has a new addition. A special thanks goes out to our equipment committee for doing an exhaustive research of turntable options for our club.

A vote was taken in November and it was decided that the best option for our Club would be Rega's P-5 turntable. A few members have or have had Rega turntables in the past and felt this was the better bang-for-the-buck out there. With our previously purchased Benz Micro H2

cartridge, I'd have to agree. Not that our previous MMF turntable was lacking in any respect, but the Rega just adds another dimension to putting together a world-class system for our club members.

Speaking of club members, we had a few visitors at our December meeting. I'd like to welcome Laurie (nice to see eager female audiophiles), Mike, Peigen, Joe and Ivan. Forgive me if I missed anyone.

Every December the club celebrates the holidays with raffles, auctions, great music and refreshments. This meeting was no exception. The most unusual piece of music played

was Jeff Foxworthy's, Twelve Days of Christmas.

Gary K. also brought in 2 fine albums that he donated to the Club for auction: Pavarotti's Ave Maria and a Rimsky-Korsakov Scheherazade Shaded Dog. The coffers were treated well!

I love our December meetings. It brings to a close a great year of meetings, camaraderie and one-upmanship. US audiophiles are a unique group. I want to thank everyone for making 2007 a great year for the Pacific Northwest Audio Society and hope 2008 will bring even greater things. Thank-you! ■



The club's new Rega P5 turntable was fitted with a new Benz H2 moving coil cartridge which was funded by member donations. Thanks to all who contributed.

## TITLE TRACK

By Jerry Pomeroy

**H**appy New Year! We all know what that means, if you haven't sent in your annual check for club membership you will now be dating it 2008 instead of 2007. The easiest way to pay your dues is just send a check to the club's P.O. box listed on the last page of the newsletter. Enough said about sending money. We had a good time at the November meeting, got to hear some Christmas tunes on the club's new Rega P5 turntable and didn't have to drive home in a snow or windstorm. I must confess; on Friday I opened the drawer on one of my DVD players and there was the Mannheim Steamroller DVD I had given away in the raffle but in this case it was only the case. I apologize for the disappointment to however got the empty case. However got the DVD case please see me

at the meeting or drop me an Email and I will get the disc to you.

The topic for the January meeting is Jazz and will be hosted by Dick Mueller. I'm not sure all he has planned, but he will certainly bring in some great examples of this American form of music. You probably already guessed Dick has a large Jazz collection of LPs, 78s and CDs, as demonstrated by his *Jazz Journal* published in our newsletters. Expect to hear some vinyl on the new P5 table and some stories to go along with the music but that is up to Dick.

Music Matters, Wed Feb 6<sup>th</sup> starting at 5:30 PM. This will be the third year Definitive Audio will host this event, it will be held at the 6206 Roosevelt Way NE showroom in Seattle as in the past. The event will consist of numerous demos in different rooms with the focus on music.

The past two events have been a lot of fun, listening to more music than speak so the event has lived up to its name. Please RSVP by calling the Seattle store 206-524-6633. More details <http://www.definitive.com/>

The plan for the Feb 8<sup>th</sup> meeting is to have Dr Bottlehead from *The Tape Project* to demo 15ips Reel to Reel tapes copied from the master tapes. This is as close to getting the studio tapes as possible so it should be very impressive. More details on the website

<http://www.tapeproject.com/>

See Ya ■

**Please welcome new  
PNWAS members:**

**Edwin Lee  
John Parkey  
Brian Taylor**

# Tech Stuff

by Jerry Pomeroy

## MovieBeam

The home movie rental system started by Disney and Linksys was sold to Movie Gallery in early 2007, they have been unable to turn the tide and their losses continued to mount. In December Movie Gallery filed chapter 11 bankruptcy and has discontinued the service. The Movie-Beam system was effectively a pay per view rental system after the purchase of the system. The server held approximately 100 movies with trailers and with approximately 5 movies in HD. The trailers could be viewed any time without a charge. The movies were beamed to your house via UHF, changing about 6 movies week. Although the system has gone the way of the Dodo bird I hope a similar server system will emerge in the future that will allow you to keep movies you select, maintain the latest releases and have no user fee except for the actual rental charges.

## Comp USA

The company announce Dec 7<sup>th</sup> it had sold to Gordon Brothers. Most of the chains stock will be liquidated and some stores in good locations may be sold to competitors. The company started in 1984 was a pioneer in the computer retail industry. In an effort to expand its market into home entertainment in 2003 the company bought Good Guys. Unable to compete with electronic giants like Circuit City and Best Buy the

Comp USA shingle will come down after 23 years. Comp USA closed it's doors in Washington State about 2 years ago.

## Sony discontinues RPTV

Faced with declining sales of Rear Projection TVs Sony's Shinji Obana announced the money losing RPTV production lines will be closed. The company will focus on the much larger and lucrative LCD and OLED flat panel display market. In December 2007 Sony started marketing an 11" OLED TV XEL-1 in Japan that measures just 3mm (.12") thick. Some market analyst predict OLEDs outselling LCDs by 2015.

## Total HD disc

Warner is about to release a new format HD disc that will contain both HD-dvd and BluRay. In order to be a candidate for this format the distribution company would need to have agreements with both the HD-DVD and BluRay groups. This also means a 3<sup>rd</sup> format of HD disc, Warner says these will market and eliminate the apprehensive nature of consumers that fear ending up with movie collections on a 21<sup>st</sup> century version of Beta. I think this new disc will only add to the confusion that already baffles consumers. It remains to be seen how retailers would stock these, they could put copies in both HD-DVD and BluRay sections or start a 3<sup>rd</sup> section for the Total HD

disc.

## Digital TV

According to Consumer Electronics Association more than 50% of US households now have digital TVs. The proliferation of digital display devices is expected to continue to surge into U.S homes throughout 2008. Prices are expected to drop for sets over the next year as HD programming availability will increase.

## DTV Converter Coupon

In Feb 2009 analog Over The Air broadcast (OTA) for TV will cease, if you continue to use your old analog set and want to view digital OTA broadcast you will probably need a digital/analog converter. The converters are digital OTA tuners with analog outputs. The converters are expected to cost between \$50 and \$70 each. The US government is offering \$40 coupons for consumers to use toward such a device. Although the coupons are available the products aren't and don't expect them to show up till later on this year as the end of analog OTA draws near. You can apply for the coupon at [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov) or by calling 1-888-388-2009 ■

# JAZZ JOURNAL

by Dick Mueller

One of the nicest things happened to me over the Christmas holidays. A friend, who, with his family has been a client for many years, (and who has referred many of his clients to me) called one day to invite me over for a little Christmas cheer. This friend is a collector of early wax cylinders, one of the earliest sound recording media. He may have the world's largest and most valuable collection. He also collects the early machines to play them on. You know - the ones with the big horns and Nipper listening.

I arrived at the appointed hour, and noticed by the parked cars, that others had arrived. I entered by the side door as usual, and called out "Larry". Larry yelled "High Dick, I'm in the office. C'mon back." He proceeded to tell me that his wife was having her office Christmas party upstairs, so we could just visit for a while. He said, "Sit down. I'm going to tell you about the history of recorded sound". He started by telling about Edison's early efforts in 1877, and those of others in France and Germany, and of Bell Laboratories and the beginning of Columbia. He then got out a book which contained photographs of the earliest devices for the purpose of recording sound, and the progress being made over the next 25 years or so. It was fascinating.

Then he said, "let's go into the other room." There he had set up some of the earliest pieces of his collection, all restored to their original condition (maybe better). All with horns made of brass, or nickel

plated bronze, or wood, or paper - all beautiful. Then in 1911, the first machine was built without a horn. The body of the player acted as the horn. You just opened the cabinet doors to hear. Also about a dozen years earlier a man named Berliner was experimenting with a system to record sound on flat discs. Even more astounding, the new machine, made by the Victor Talking Machine Company, utilized flat discs rather than cylinders. Revolutionary!

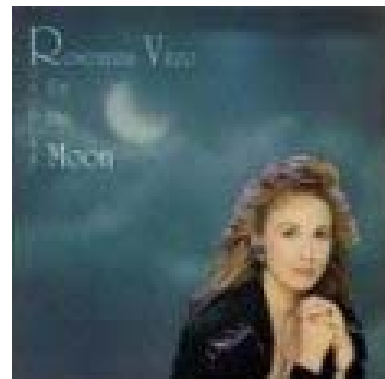
As we went around the room, my friend told me the history of each machine, who had developed it, and how it worked. Then he demonstrated one, playing a wax cylinder. Not audiophile quality, mind you, but actual sound, which was astonishing in those days.

Then we went upstairs where he gave me a tour of their art collection, and collections of antiquities and other objects. Quite incredible. Then he said let's go back downstairs. When we arrived, there was the 1911 model of the Victor Talking Machine Company with a big bow tied around it, and Larry telling me it was a present to me from their whole family. I was in shock, and completely overcome. The emotion of the moment was soon taken over by excitement - - you can just imagine. After profuse thank-you's, and because it was raining, I asked if I could return the next day for instructions as to its use and care, and of course, to take it to its new home.

The Victor Talking Machine is now proudly in my listening room, awaiting the new furniture it will sit upon. The search is on. It will sit

next to the Lenco (circa 1970), then the SOTA, all representing the progress of recorded sound playback over the nearly 100 years just passed. Now I can play Bessie Smith and Louis Armstrong in style!

You know what? This is better than winning Lotto. Well, just as lucky, anyway. But now, as luck would have it, we have some exceptional vocalists waiting in the wings to be heard. Let's see who they are.



**Roseanna Vitro** - *Reaching For the Moon* - (1991) CMD 8030

Great looking gal, excellent singer, wonderful music. I guess that's why I bought the CD, but that's not quite all of it. Cut #2 on this CD is Duke Ellington's "In a Sentimental Mood". If you like the Duke, and you like this particular song (one of his best), you need to have this recording. The arrangement, with Kenny Werner on piano, and George Coleman's outrageous tenor solo is exceptional, and then Roseanna's rendition is so beautiful - well she just owns it.





**Dinah Washington** - *The Jazz Sides* - (1954 – 1958) - Emarcy 824-883

Dinah Washington was one of the all time greatest jazz singers. Growing up in Chicago, she gained her musical experience in a church choir, and in 1939 won an amateur contest and was “discovered”. In less than four years she was singing with Lionel Hampton’s band, and gaining the opportunity for her first recording which would bring her some recognition. She stayed with Hamp from 1943 to 1946, after which she struck out on her own, performing and recording with all of the top jazzmen of the day. By 1958 she appeared as one of the headliners of the Newport Jazz Festival.

Following in the footsteps of Bessie Smith and Billie Holiday, you could hear a little of each of them in her singing, but make no mistake, she had a style all of her own. One of the great voices of jazz in an earlier time, every jazz lover should have at least a little of her work. Sadly, she was taken from us much too soon at just 39 years of age.



**Carol Welsman** - *The Language of Love* - (2002) Savoy 17196

Carol Welsman, renowned Canadian vocalist is a nice find. She makes her home in Toronto, but is away a good bit, touring internationally. In 2002 she was awarded the coveted Best Jazz Vocalist of the Year in the annual Canadian Juno awards, and has been a frequent nominee in other years.

There has been a long heritage of music in the Welsman family. Her grandfather was the founder, and first conductor of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. Carol is a graduate of the Berklee School of Music in Boston, where she majored in piano. After completing Berkeley, she went to France to continue her education with a noted voice teacher.

I really like her singing. She has an easy, comfortable style on ballads. Her rendition of “A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square” is worth more than the price of the CD.



**Cassandra Wilson** - *Blue Skies* - (1988) - JMT 834 419

Interesting. She can definitely sing and perform, but in her own very individual style. She’s backed here by Mulgrew Miller on piano, Lonnie Plaxico on bass, and Terri Lynn Carrington on drums. I’ve never heard Mulgrew Miller sound better or more creative. Like a pitcher in a tie game in the ninth, two outs, bases loaded, 3/2 count, he throws a curve ball. Wow. Taking big chances like Cassandra Wilson does here, putting her own twist on standards. But if you’re good at what you do, you can get away with it, refreshingly.



**Nancy Wilson** - *Yesterday's Love Songs, Today's Blues* - (1967) ST 2012

One of the all-time greats, Nancy

(Continued on page 6)

Wilson was a Capital recording star in the 60's and early 70's, and performed as a single well into the 80's when she was touring the globe with Chick Corea and his group, including Joe Henderson, Stanley Clark and Lennie White. Nancy, at her pinnacle, was known as the greatest singer of love songs, and fortunately for us, has many albums to prove it. The featured album here is one of her best, and backed by the great Gerald Wilson Orchestra.

After her recording days slimmed down, she hosted the hour-long jazz show on NPR in the 90's, which honored a famous jazz musician each week. It was excellent just like she is. One of the truly great members of our jazz community.



**Norma Winstone** - *Like Song Like Weather* - (1999) - Koch 7875

Now here he goes again, talking about people nobody has ever heard of. Well no. Not everybody, and anyway, isn't that what I'm here for? To tell you about artists you should know about. Norma Winstone lives in England - - always has. When she was starting out in the later 60's, plying her trade in English pubs, she developed a style of sing like one would play a horn, actually patterning herself after Miles Davis. Her great range, crystal clear tone, and perfect pitch were just right for blending her voice in with a jazz combo. She started putting words to songs that were just known to jazz lovers, like Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring", or Coltrane's Naima. It worked so well, that in 1971 she was voted England's top jazz singer. Later in the 70's she joined Kenny Wheeler and John Taylor to form Asimuth, a jazz trio that recorded on ECM. Strangely enough, these three people are still working together, but generally in a different format, often times as guest performers in jazz orchestras throughout the world.

Here, it is just Norma and John Taylor, one of this planet's extraordinary piano players. The tunes are varied and wonderful, the performance even better, and a bonus - great sonics. Give yourself a treat and get

this. It has my very highest recommendation.

Well, that's it, kidlets. The final of 36 Jazz Journals. Now you know everything I know (and maybe more). I loved doing it, and hope that through it all, I brought you a new tune, an artist you hadn't heard before, or a better understanding of the music. I call it the thinking man's music. The melody lines and the chord structures are not simple like rock or earlier classical music. This is music straight from the heart, soul, and imaginative skill of the artists. It takes a little "getting into", but once it's in your blood, you'll treasure it forever.

I wish you happy listening. Take care. ■

Oscar Peterson: One of the best Jazz Pianist the world has seen died from kidney failure Dec 23 2007. Born in Canada 8-15-1925 the 8 time Grammy winner had performed with the best: Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Nat King Cole, Ray Brown and many more. He suffered a stroke in 1993 resulting in a week and slower left hand, his love for music continued and within a year he cut another album entitled Side by Side. He received the Lifetime achievement Grammy in 1997. Several historians feel one of his big break came in 1949 when Jazz promoter Norman Granz heard a live performance of Peterson on the radio and then booked him at Carnegie Hall with other great jazz legends. Granz became a close friend as well as Peterson's manager.



# Coming Attractions



**January 7-10, 2008**  
**CES & T.H.E. Show / Las Vegas**  
The Super bowl of audio.

**January 10, 2008**  
**PNWAS Meeting**  
Dick Mueller will be presenting a program of big bands. We'll be playing the music of the top modern big bands and

jazz orchestras, and saying a few words about the groups. If you find that you don't care for the music, and are miserable, have a donut and some coffee, and you'll feel better soon..

**January 23, 2008**  
**Audio Engineering Society Meeting**  
Room Correction, Perceptual vs. Acoustic Ideas Presented by James (JJ) Johnston - Microsoft Corporation and Serge Smirnov - Microsoft Corporation. 7:30pm, Microsoft Studios, Redmond, WA.

**February 6, 2008**  
**MUSIC MATTERS**  
Definitive Audio will host this event, it will be held at the 6206 Roosevelt Way NE

showroom in Seattle as in the past. The event will consist of numerous demos in different rooms with the focus on music.

**February 8, 2008**  
**PNWAS Meeting**  
Dr Bottlehead from *The Tape Project* to demo 15ips Reel to Reel tapes copied from the master tapes.

**May 24-26, 2008**  
**VSAC**  
Looks like VSAC (Vacuum State of the Art Convention) is back! It will still be in the Northwest but it may not be in Silverdale. There isn't a web site yet but we will post more details as they become available.

## Classified Ads

Ads are free to members and will run for three consecutive issues unless renewed. Please limit ads to make, model, short description, condition, MSRP, asking price, contact information.

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I have been remodeling my Theater/listening room and have some things for sale and will pass on a even better deal to any club member. I have 60" x 80" wall mounted Stewart Studio Tech 1.30 screen. The studio tech 1.30 was developed for Joe Kane as a color neutral reference screen to evaluate projectors on, it still is the standard in the industry and Joe Kanes favorite screen for evaluation. This is 1.33:1 aspect ratio screen not a 1.78:1 widescreen. The screen material is in excellent condition, the frame has a rub spot in the black felt. The screen is still on the wall but have all the original packaging. \$325 non club members. I have a matched set of Target B series five shelf steel equipment racks, current model is HF-570 MSRP of \$399 each. These are very solid the shelf frames are welded to the corner post with carpet spikes on the bottom and black wooden shelves. These are in good shape with a few abrasion marks but none go through the black powder coating. None member price \$300 for the set. I also have a Target Pro turntable wall shelf, this has a 22 x 24" shelf, it has never been installed \$100 non member price. Denon DVD-3910 with silver finish, like new aprox 100 hours on it, I was going to modify this but bought another exemplar already modified so it has been setting in the box. This is a highly rated DVD player with very good scaling and audio DACs, Non members \$550.

Jerry Pomeroy 253-350-3916  
enhancedsystems@earthlink.net

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Echo Buster's Room Treatment

1 pr. Absorption Panels 18x48 List \$390, Sell \$185  
1 pr. Absorption Panels 24x48 List \$470, Sell \$225  
1 pr. Diffusion Panels 18x48 List \$530, Sell \$250  
All in excellent condition. No other improvement compares with the bargain of treating your room. Buy these and I'll help you plan it out.

Dick Mueller - [dickm@HomeloanNW.com](mailto:dickm@HomeloanNW.com)  
425-450-4070

## Club Discounts

### Northwest Sinfonietta

The Northwest Sinfonietta (classical chamber orchestra) provides discounts to members of our club for performances of the 2007-2008 season. The regular single ticket price of \$38 will be only \$20 per person per performance at the door (or by phone or mail). Just tell them or note on your order that you are a member of the Pacific Northwest Audio Society. Information and order forms are also available at their website: [www.nwsinfonietta.org](http://www.nwsinfonietta.org).

### First Impression Music

[www.firstimpression.com](http://www.firstimpression.com)  
order through club president Jerry Pomeroy.

### KOSMIC

[www.kosmic.us](http://www.kosmic.us)  
Contact Joe Pittman  
206-878-3833

### Pro Sound and Vision

Contact George H. Pro  
425-889-9499  
425-445-3308 (cell)

### Visitors Welcome!

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at 4545 Island Crest Way, Mercer Island, WA 98040.

### PNWAS Mission Statement

- > To bring together people with a common interest in hearing music reproduced at its best, for their mutual edification and pleasure.
- > To facilitate the exchange and dissemination of accurate data concerning audio equipment and musical recordings.
- > To promote, sponsor, and cultivate the highest quality reproduction of music in the home.
- > To encourage maintenance of high standards in the performance, recording and transmission of music.

### PNWAS Objectives

1. Provide a forum for meeting other audiophiles and exchanging information on musical recordings and audio equipment.
2. Demonstrate and compare such equipment and recordings.

3. Give members opportunities to become familiar with the techniques of audio manufacturing, testing, repair, recording, broadcasting, etc.
4. Explore related avenues as the membership deems appropriate.

### Club website

[www.audiosociety.org](http://www.audiosociety.org)

### E-mail

[info@audiosociety.org](mailto:info@audiosociety.org)

### U.S. Mail

Pacific Northwest Audio Society, P.O. Box 435, Mercer Island, WA 98040

### Annual dues

\$60 due each January. New members pay a prorated \$5 per month for remainder of year.

### Executive Committee

President: Jerry Pomeroy 253-350-3916

Vice-President: Bruce Brown

Treasurer: Andrew Kosobutsky

Editor: Joe Pittman

Equipment Committee Chair: Dick Mueller

Music Committee Chair: Renan Jeffereis

Volunteer: Leo Hrechanyk

### Editorial

Editorial submissions are welcome. Content must be audio-related or of general interest to the club. We reserve the right to edit for style, content, and length.

Editorial deadline: two weeks before meeting date.

Publishing any editorial material is contingent upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

Editor: Joe Pittman 206-878-3833  
email: [joe@audiosociety.org](mailto:joe@audiosociety.org)

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**Pacific Northwest  
Audio Society**

Bringing Audio Enthusiasts Together Since 1978

P.O. Box 435 Mercer Island, WA 98040