

Audio-Video Club of Atlanta 2013 Picnic, July 21, 2013.

The 2013 picnic was held at the home of Avatar Acoustics, in Fayetteville, Georgia, south of Atlanta. Our hosts were Darren and Bonnie Censullo. Over 20 AV Club members attended, and Avatar had some special guests present to show off their equipment. It was obvious that a lot of time and effort by Avatar went into this event, as they have done the past three years. The food was great, with BBQ supplied by Avatar and members bringing in a covered dish or dessert.

More than a picnic, Avatar Acoustics put together a "mini" Audio show for us. This year the club was the first anywhere to see the Mainframe by Sunny Umrao (based in Nashville). This is a music server based on a more robust and powerful "enterprise" computer (usually used in business) rather than a "home" PC, that moves the bar much higher for digital media management and playback. It can be powered by battery, and is actually priced within reach of most of us when you factor in the several pieces of equipment and software packages it can replace. While demonstrating the Mainframe, Sunny tipped us off to the NPR Tiny Desk Concerts available on the internet. These concerts are recorded at NPR in a relatively small room and are up close and personal with the performers.

Steve Ginsberg from Tri-Art (based in Canada) brought new interesting and unusual designs that work very well. Their new \$1200 Pebbles turntable comes complete with arm and is almost completely crafted of Bamboo. It is a wood working piece of art, and it sounded great. He also had production versions of his interesting and great sounding amplifiers.

The icing on the cake was the new products from the compact iFi Micro line from AMR of England including the iUSB Power unit, iCAN headphone amplifier, iDAC computer audio DAC, and the iPHONO phono preamp. This new division of AMR is geared toward headphone and computer audio enthusiasts, but does include other products such as the phono preamp. One member listened to the headphone setup on "vintage" Sennheiser HD 580's and the sound was extraordinary. These products may soon start appearing in the discussions on various audio boards. Two of the products were reviewed in the May, 2013 issue of Stereophile.

Toward the end of the picnic, there was a raffle of one of the new iFi products, the new iFi iUSB Power unit!

Some members stayed long after the "official" end of the picnic, to listen to the many products in the three different well set-up and acoustically treated rooms. There were four traditional systems featuring Tri-Art Audio, Mainframe Music Server, AMR, Rosso Fiorentino Speakers, KingSound Electrostatic Speakers, Karan Acoustics and Graaf OTL amps. All quite impressive gear and music, both digital and analog including superb LP playback.

The club thanks our hosts most heartily for a great day of food and listening!