

THE HARMONIZER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

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THE RACINE DAIRY STATESMEN recently made one of their last visits to Harmony Hall in nearby Kenosha. The home has been sold and will cease to be Society headquarters later this fall. More details can be found on page 9.



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Forming a quartet

Riptide learns that finding the right guy isn't as easy as it looks.
Photo and art by Lorin May





Young Men in Harmony: It's fun, it's our future, and you can do it, too

I'm going to use this issue's column as a chance to sing out about the enormous activity involving Young Men In Harmony (YMIH) and the terrific results of that activity. It is our great hope that every reader will be touched, moved and inspired to make a meaningful commitment to the future of our beloved Society by becoming involved in YMIH work at his chapter or district level. Do offer.

What follows is a brief summary of just some of the outstanding youth work being done across the length and breadth of our Society. Our traveling staff (Dick Bek, Jim DeBusman, Dr. Greg Lyne, Ev Nau, Bill Rashleigh and Rick Spencer), along with the committed help and support of hundreds of interested members and volunteers, has accomplished this magic over the past year:

- Hundreds of presentations made in schools to more than 13,000 students and 1400 music teachers.
- Six appearances touching additional thousands of music teachers for ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) and for MENC: The National Association for Music Education.
- 14 Harmony Camps including five Harmony Explosion camps and countless YMIH festivals across North America, touching more than (believe it or not) 10,000 young singers and their teachers.
- Our Society's YMIH committee, chaired by Eric Ruthenberg (Northeastern District) includes 16 in-charge, district YMIH guys who in turn support YMIH work in most of our 821 chapters.
- YMIH is also the committee that, along with staff, is so dedicated to the ongoing success of our fabulous MBNA America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet Contest.
- At Harmony College we sponsor a very successful youth educational track (The Next Generation Chorus).
- We know of hundreds of chapters that find a way to involve local high school choirs, ensembles (even high school barbershop quartets) on their annual shows. Teachers and parents always come along.
- We know of many chapters and several districts that regularly sponsor high school quartet contests to rave reviews.

We look to the leadership of many districts that dedicate huge manpower and budget resources to their youth outreach projects. I know you'll forgive me for mentioning just two among many, but the Far Western District has led the way by sponsoring many festivals, camps and high school quartet contests. At the same time, the Sunshine District approaches its outreach directly through the Florida state educational system. Sunshine District alone accounts for

more than 5,000 students and teachers attending statewide festivals.

A chapter that does it all

One of our Society's best and brightest chapters is the Columbus, Ohio, "Singing Buckeyes." You might ask if I am just a bit prejudiced because they are from my home district, Johnny Appleseed. Well, maybe just a little, but here are a few great reasons why I love what this chapter does:

- Its chorus is an 11-time JAD champ and international competitor.



I hope we all make a meaningful commitment to our future through YMIH work.

- It presents one of the greatest chapter-sponsored festival events of all time. That would of course be the fabulous "Buckeye Invitational." (Aug. 14-17, 2003, www.singingbuckeyes.org for details.)
- It has a strong, active quartet component within the chapter.
- The Singing Buckeyes will host its ninth consecutive Harmony Camp for more than 200 boy and girl singers from area schools.

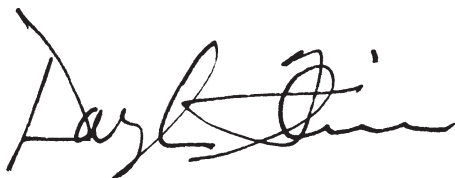
The chapter's great camp enjoys the very best teaching staff, which, by the way, is headed by Camp Dean Richard "RD" Mathey of Bowling Green University fame. The campers/singers are well-chaperoned by several Society and Sweet Adeline International volunteer counselors. At the end of the camp, the kids sing and perform the wonderful music they have learned at camp as a feature of the "Invitational."

The "Invitational" and camp are from the non-stop brain of Singing Buckeye Mike Renner. Then there is the unflappable Bill Miller and his team of Singing Buckeye quartetters, who have made a near full-time career out of visiting music classrooms across Central Ohio. Bill says, "We demonstrate the wonderful sound of close harmony, get the kids singing tags (they love it) and enroll the teachers in the possibility of sending a few of their kids to camp." Bill adds that the camp has such a great reputation that he and his quartets are always very welcome in the classroom.

If you have read this far, my guess is that you are in awe of the stunning progress being made while we weren't looking. I hope that you are nourished and energized about the possibilities of our youth outreach. I hope you are inspired to become an important part of the solution to our future.

Thanks for listening. Come on in, the YMIH is fine.

Let's harmonize,



July/August 2003



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SPEBSQSA, Inc., The Barbershop Harmony Society, an International Organization: Vision Statement

The Society is to be an ever-growing fraternity of barbershop-style singers, leading the cause of encouraging vocal music in our schools and communities.



The official charity of SPEBSQSA, its mission is to "be a leading philanthropic force dedicated to perpetuating the Barbershop Harmony art form for present and future generations to enjoy." Call 800-876-7464 x8447 for donation, gift-planning, grant or sponsorship information.

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Is there a “Q” in your barbershop life?

Does your barbershop life include singing in a quartet? Any kind of quartet? Whether it's with a “pick up” group or a Society registered quartet, opportunities to sing in a foursome abound. You can do it just for fun or in competition, for Singing Valentines deliveries or in chapter shows and cabarets, for shut-ins or at an interchapter gathering. Whatever opportunity you choose, quartet singing can enrich your barbershop life.

My barbershop life began in a high school quartet in 1954. Then, in 1962, a year after I joined the Society, I joined **The Harmony Hounds** quartet. I still sing with the Hounds—41 years and 11 “litters” later. Since last fall, I also sing with **Antiques Roadshow**, the current Pioneer District seniors quartet champion. So I've actually sung in a quartet more years than I've been a Society member.

I can truthfully say that singing in a quartet has given me far more than I will ever be able to give back. The joy, the fun, the satisfaction, the people I've met, the personal growth and the “applause” are what prompted me to say yes when I was first asked to serve in a leadership capacity. I felt it was time to repay some of the huge benefits that I was receiving.

Although singing in a quartet isn't for everybody, it's the pinnacle of barbershop for a large percentage of our members. And it's never too late to start. Here are excerpts from an e-mail to Darryl Flinn from a good friend and past Society Board member:

*I wanted to pass on a wonderful tale to you. Over the past 27 years in our hobby, I have NEVER, if you can imagine, been in a quartet. For whatever reasons I don't really know. Over those 27 years, I have watched my sons and my late wife compete and always watched in awe of their talents and the fun they seemed to have. About nine months ago, I formed my first seniors quartet, the **Fourth Quarter**.*

I've read the countless articles you and others have written in The Harmonizer about the joys of quartetting, but never gave it much thought, until recently. Well, during the weekend of May 2 at the Sunshine District contest, I entered my first-ever quartet contest, the district seniors quartet competition, and darned if we didn't win the thing. I can't tell you, because you already know of course, the thrill and absolute “high” I had when they announced, “And now ladies and gentlemen, your 2003 Sunshine District Seniors Quartet Champion—Fourth Quarter!” I nearly lost my composure ...

Wayne Brozovich

The most wonderful opportunity for you to sing in a quartet is *Singing Valentines*. Through this great program, hundreds of Barbershoppers have sung in their first quartet, then gone on to make it a regular experience. There are many other ways to get involved in quartetting, too—chapter novice quartet contests, interchapter quartet nights, comedy quartet contests, and division contests, to name just a few.

Does your chapter have some quartet singing every week? It should. Can you find a way to make it happen? “Hitting the boards” at any level will help you be a better singer and performer.

Singing in a quartet may not be everyone's #1 barbershop activity. Some feel more comfortable just singing in their chorus. Yet, one year, every member of our chorus also competed in a quartet in the fall contest! Even the guys who were “scared stiff” loved the experience. Try it—you'll like it! I guarantee.

SINGING (in a quartet) IS LIFE ... the rest is just details.

Lewis4bbs@aol.com



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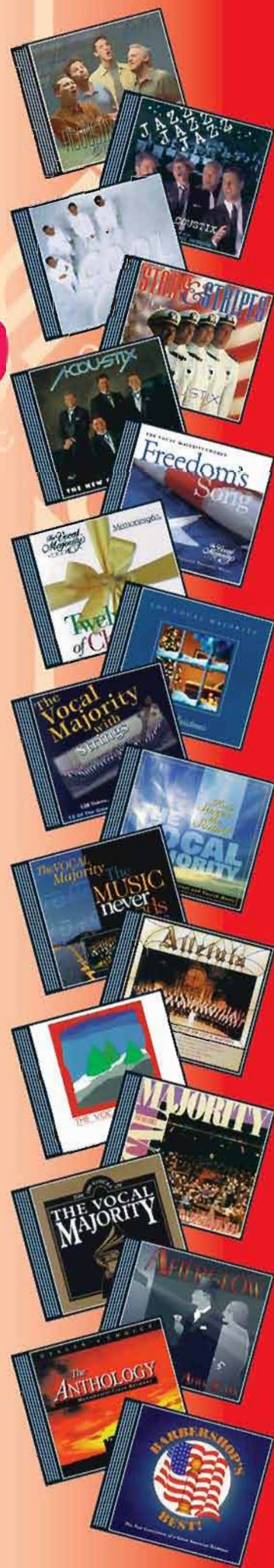
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For a detailed day-by-day itinerary for our tours, and to read about **NEW Harmony Travel Tours**, see our web site at

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Putting on a good show ... even at age 333

I am a one-man standing ovation for a simply outstanding article in the latest *Harmonizer*. Last year, I served as our Music VP and was in the fray as the chapter overhauled its music repertoire. We went through the same process as Borts described, deciding what each song meant in the overall set, and defining a specific purpose for each slot. We didn't come up with such cool names, but you can bet I will start referring to them as Borts has.

The emphasis on reducing the amount of "talk" during a set was also right on, specifically the way to keep the intros short, rehearsed, and laced with LOTS of enthusiasm. I've heard too many emcees who just monotone an introduction, with no personal sense of involvement or excitement.

STEVE TREMPER
Raleigh, NC

Although Michael Borts' article on show packages had some good suggestions, the repeated theme is that you start with your best song and follow it with a better one. His "uptune with a huge ringing tag" solution to repertoire follows the current performance trend of all dessert and no potatoes.

Borts' obsession with standing ovations is a bit disturbing. I disagree with the idea that an audience is to be deliberately guided into showing its appreciation in an extreme manner. That's not showmanship. It's manipulation, and I don't like it.

DAVE ORNICK
Morgantown, WV

Congrats on a well-written article in the new *Harmonizer*. It's a subject that needs addressing. Lloyd Steinkamp gave me a similar formula years ago, and I've always tried to utilize it. It really works, almost to the point that following the format becomes as much or more important than the actual songs you sing, especially when it comes to performing for the general public.

JOHN EBY
El Paso, Texas

Excellent points convincingly made! Quartet show pacing is a subject that has long deserved thor-

ough treatment in the most prominent forum possible, and this is sure to help many groups.

I always hated to hear, "Hey, we're gonna slow the tempo down a little bit with this next number ..." Even worse: "Mind if we try out a new one on you ...?" Or even: "We've had this next one for only a couple weeks ..."

Here's hoping this entertaining and cogent article will banish these bush-league "introductions" forever more.

JOEL BOURGEOIS
Austin, Texas

Ageless fun

Our quartet, **The Harborside Harmonizers**, enjoyed reading the article "How Much Does Age matter?" (January 2003 *Harmonizer*.) It was particularly interesting because we are all over the age of 80. We are



The shirts tell the tale: 333 years combined. Bob Norum (T), 82; Carl Rostek (L), 84; Bernie White (Bs), 86; Rod MacDonald (Ba), 81.

an active quartet, having sung out more than 40 times last year. We sing in nursing homes, churches, women's and men's clubs, 10 years for the First Night Celebration, and our favorite, the Cape Cod Railroad Dinner Train.

BOB NORUM
Cap Cod, Mass. Chapter

Corrections

In the Harmony Foundation Annual Report published in the May/June issue of *The Harmonizer*, the following names were inadvertently left out of the Founder's Club Bronze Members listing:

Jack A. Heller (JAD/SUN)
Wilmington, DE Chapter (MAD)

The following names were misspelled in that listing: William J. & Estalee Boll, Jr. (SUN)
Bob Morgan (FWD/EVG)

The Harmony Foundation apologizes for these errors and thanks the donors for bringing them to our attention.

At 100 years, Bing lives on in Barbershop

The world may remember Bing Crosby for his solo legacy, but the crooner's influence on barbershop is likewise difficult to overstate. An amazing number of his 2,500 songs made their way into the barbershop repertoire, which is itself a fitting tribute to an entertainer who was a dyed-in-the-wool Barbershopper and an early member and leader of the Society.

His memory lives on in his hometown of Spokane, and the Spokane Chapter's **Pages of Harmony** were singing along at a celebration of Bing's life and music on the 100th anniversary of his birth. Gonzaga University, his alma mater, recently staged a three-day bash attended by Crosby fans from all over the world. Fan clubs from Great Britain and New Zealand were well-represented. Comedian Rich Little, Frank Sinatra Jr., The Big Bing Theory (Gonzaga's student a cappella chorus), a group of Crosby's friends and relations, and the chorus and quartets of the Pages of Harmony provided the entertainment throughout the weekend.

Bing's widow, Kathryn Crosby, shared her memories of life with Bing. She told the Pages of Harmony that Bing was proud to have been a member of the SPEBSQSA board and that barbershop harmony was a joyful and regular part of their home life. Bing sang bass, and she sang lead in a barbershop quartet filled out with celebrity guests and members of the Crosby family.

A first: Barbershop Phish Nets!

Fans at the NBA finals got to hear barbershop chords ringing through the rafters, and none other than the rock group Phish did the honors. The group sang Val Hicks' barbershop arrangement of "The Star-Spangled Banner" before game four of the NBA Finals on June 11. Phish, whose eclectic repertoire fuses rock, jazz, funk, R&B, bluegrass and just about everything else, has been performing barbershop in concert for many years, and has previously sung the Hicks arrangement at various sporting events.

In their earliest years, the Burlington, Vermont-based band were coached by their landlord, the late John Austin, a noted barbershopper from the Northeast District and former Society Board member and judge. Their affinity for the barbershop style and regular use of barbershop repertoire led to 1999 Quartet Champs **FRED** covering a song for the 2001 Phish tribute album, *Sharin' in the Groove*.



You don't need to go to Spokane to memorialize Bing—we do it every time we barbershop one of his songs.

Harry Lillis "Bing" Crosby graduated from Gonzaga High School in 1920 and attended Gonzaga University until show business lured him away. To this day, however, his name is all over the Gonzaga University Campus. Look closely at the songs in your group's repertoire and you'll see that his name is all over Barbershop as well. Melodies he made famous enjoy continual refreshing throughout the world—and sung in barbershop style. Bing surely wouldn't have wanted it any other way.



Size XD shoes to fill: apply now

Applications for the Society's pending executive director opening will be accepted between Aug. 1 and Sept. 30, 2003. Here are excerpts from an ad that will appear in several national publications:

Executive Director SPEBSQSA

Serve as COO of this 31,000 member Barbershop Harmony Singing Society. Lead planning. Align and inspire staff and volunteers to achieve the Society Vision. Demonstrate expertise in program, employee, systems and public promotion development. Provide guidance and support for activities to accomplish membership growth. Lead and direct 50 person staff during transition period into new headquarters facilities. Up to the Challenge? View Position Description and Performance Expectations at: www.spebsqsa.org/xdsearch. Submit confidential resume to Executive Director Search Committee by email to: XDSearch@spebsqsa.org.

Society briefs

Membership renewal: You've got mail! Wondering where your membership renewal notice is? Look in your e-mail inbox. First notices for membership renewal are sent via e-mail only, if you have an e-mail address on record with the Society. (This is one of the reasons it's important to keep your membership information up to date. Please use "Members Only" at www.spebsqsa.org to do so.) Second notices, issued about a month later, are sent regular mail. If you are uncomfortable renewing your membership online, you can print the e-mailed renewal notice and mail it with a check. Questions? Contact Membership at 800-876-7464 x8475 or membership@spebsqsa.org. If you do not have an e-mail address on record, you will receive your notices via the postal service.

Harmony Marketplace fees change for chapter orders. Effective May 27, regular shipping/handling charges for catalog and Internet orders no longer apply to *chapter orders*. Instead, all chapter orders will be charged a \$3 handling fee (per order) plus *actual shipping charges*. The actual shipping charges and the \$3 handling fee will be combined and appear on the chapter's invoice. Direct any questions to Nancy Thorn, nthorn@spebsqsa.org or 800-876-7464 x8487.

'MyName@barbershop.net'

Personalized Internet service gives back

In response to positive feedback from thousands of surveyed Barber-shoppers, the Society is proud to launch a new e-mail and Internet service: Barbershop.net. This full-featured service gives members a way to share their hobby with friends via a "myname@barbershop.net" e-mail address while providing added income to their own chapters and to the Society.

"Barbershop.net will be a great way to spread the word about Barbershop Harmony," said Society Executive Director Darryl Flinn. "Whenever you give anyone your barbershop.net address, it invites an opportunity to tell someone about the greatest hobby in the world."

Subscribers get full-featured reliability provided by Qwest, MCI and Net Related, with complete 24/7 customer service. The www.barbershop.net homepage offers the latest barbershop news, worldwide news, weather, stocks, maps, and more. Most Society members in the U.S. and Canada will be eligible for the service and will be able to choose addresses like tenorguy@barbershop.net or myquartet@barbershop.net.

Monthly costs for Barbershop.net are set at a highly competitive \$18.95 (U.S.) per month, with \$2 going back to the member's chapter every quarter. Members who already have high speed cable or DSL service can add the e-mail-only function for \$9.95 per month, and again, a portion of that fee is returned to the member's chapter.

"The potential to add revenue to chapters and the Society is substantial," said Frank Santarelli, director of finance and administration. "When you consider that anyone who already has a dial-up account would only have to switch, and in doing so, probably save himself money and contribute to our chapters and organization, it's a win-win situation for everyone."

To sign up, go to www.barbershop.net or call toll-free 866-450-8932.



It's official: Harmony Hall has been sold

A Kenosha family has purchased Harmony Hall for the price of \$1.6 million and will use the 18,000-square-foot lakefront mansion as their full-time home. The Society will continue to occupy Harmony Hall until at least early October. Temporary office space in the Society's Sheridan Road building is being planned for the 20 employees who currently occupy the mansion.

The Sheridan Road building, which went on the market this spring, has a serious offer pending. The Society will likely lease the building back from the buyer for at least two or three years if the sale goes through. At least that much time will be needed to build a new permanent headquarters in a location that is yet to be determined.



All those singers in your town—how will you find them?

A new study finds that an estimated 28.5 million Americans regularly perform in one of approximately 250,000 U.S. choruses. Almost half of those 28 million regularly sing with more than one chorus. The study, conducted by Chorus America, found that early exposure to choral singing was the dominant common factor among adults who participate in choruses. Almost 69 percent of singers said they had their first choral singing experiences in elementary or middle school.

The 250,000 choruses include an estimated 12,000 professional and vol-

unteer community choruses. (Male and female Barbershoppers presumably make up well over a thousand of those choruses.) Additionally, there are more than 38,000 school choruses and 200,000 church choirs.

The survey also showed that choral singers much more likely than the general population to: be involved in charity work; be aware of current events; and be involved in the political process. The 28-page report, "America's Performing Art: A Study of Choruses, Choral Singers, and Their Impact," is available in its entirety at the Chorus America Web site, www.chorusamerica.org.

Have you led singing in your community? Tell us about it

One way we can keep the flame of recreational singing alive is to promote community singing when and wherever we perform. We can also encourage community singing in other organizations to which we belong.

The *SPEBSQSA Community Song Leading Guide* contains advice and ideas from Joe Liles, Burt Szabo, Val Hicks and Bill Biffle. Please use it to help accomplish the important task of keeping singing alive in our communities. The guide is available to download at www.spebsqsa.org > *Sing and Perform* > *Performance Skills* > *SPEBSQSA Community Song Leading Guide*.

If your chapter or quartet has had some great experiences or success stories in leading public singing, please send them to *The Harmonizer* magazine at harmonizer@spebsqsa.org. We'll print some of the the best stories in an upcoming issue.

Singing really does make you feel better

It's not just in your head—the high you get during a performance is usually accompanied by a boost to your immune system. Researchers from the University of California at Irvine recently showed that a protein called Immunoglobulin A, which your immune system uses to fight disease, increased by at least 150 percent during rehearsals of choirs they were monitoring and by 240 percent during the groups' performances. "The more passionate you feel while singing, the greater the effect," said Education Professor Robert Beck, co-author of the study along with Thomas Cesario, Dean of UC-Irvine's College of Medicine.

The researchers used volunteers from the 160-member Pacific Chorale to obtain saliva samples on cotton swabs to calculate the presence of Immunoglobulin A before and after singing. The scientists theorized that the difference in the higher levels of the disease-fighting proteins between a rehearsal and a performance night might have resulted from the singers' thrill of the performance itself. ■



Barbershop covered in national magazine

The June issue of *GRIT Magazine* printed an article that showcased Denver's **Sound of the Rockies** chorus. Several chorus members spoke glowingly of barbershop harmony and the Society in the article, which discussed both the art form and the Mile High Chapter's ambitions in the barbershop world.

The article, "Hanging on to Harmony," written by Kelly Bastone, covered a wide gamut of perspectives, musically and socially, within the barbershop world. Included are quotes from high-school-age member Mark D'Agosta, international quartet gold medalist Denny Malone, 80-something member Fred Wiese, and chorus director and international quartet competitor Darin Drown.



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HARMONY HOW-TO

Jim DeBusman
Society music specialist



Get the most out of changing voices

Both younger and older singers have to deal with the reality that as their bodies change, so do their voices. Nothing can be done about such a change itself. However, singers can still enjoy singing and make positive contributions to a quartet or chorus when they make the proper adjustments.

Working with younger singers

Deal with major vocal changes. Careful attention to a young man's vocal development is critical because the voice changes that take place during puberty are major. The larynx grows suddenly and a shifting of the voice range can bring about a more or less drastic change in his abilities—the lower the voice the more radical the change. Some voices drop gradually, while others will drop radically. Young men take a little time to readjust in their lower ranges.

Don't lock a younger man into a voice part. Even after the change that occurs in his teens, a young man's voice is still developing. The male voice does not fully mature until 35 years of age. A younger man past puberty could still settle into a range more appropriate to another voice part and, thereafter, could settle into yet another vocal range—either higher or lower. Consider any young man's vocal assignment to be a temporary designation at best and assess him regularly to ensure he is still singing in his correct range.

Carefully assess the youngest voices. A young man who sings before his voice changes is in a particularly sensitive spot; what he is taught and how he is coached can have a particularly positive or negative influence on his vocal development. If a young man's voice has not changed yet, put him in the tenor section of your chorus and move him to another part only if and when he is ready. The guidance of a careful and patient chorus director who understands the younger voice will help him stay on the right track.

Don't force a young voice beyond its current abilities. When a younger singer joins a chapter, it's not uncommon for a chorus director to feel that he must get everything he can out of the young man's vocal mechanism, regardless of the consequences. Please remember that a younger man's vocal capabilities are likely to be different from adult chapter member's, even though the vocal principles for the young voice are fundamentally the same.

Help young men avoid oversinging. Pay special attention to singers in their early- and mid-teens and allow them to sing a voice part they can comfortably perform without strain. Do not permit them to get carried away with the emotion of a stressful contest or show and attempt to emulate the volume and resonance of adults standing next to them. If needed, plan to have frequent opportunities for them to rest during rehearsal time. Watch their faces and necks for signs of fatigue.



Working with older singers

Be ready for another voice change. The male voice will change again, roughly starting at age 60. Just like the younger voice, an older voice may become lower or higher, although for different reasons. And, as with younger singers, it's wise to regularly revisit the *quality* singing ranges of older singers. How many leads have become basses and how many basses can sing a sweet tenor now?

Help singers recognize and work with a vocal change. We have too many older singers (particularly leads) in our quartets and choruses who need to realize that they can't do with their voices at age 70 what they could do at age 45. Some even try to muscle through the issue, causing them to sing with vocal tension and greatly diminished resonance.

Adjust to a new vocal instrument. As with younger singers, an older singer must recognize when his voice may have changed or be changing to a range better suited for a different voice part. When older singers accept their changed voices, they can then practice vocal skills and principles that apply to their new vocal instruments, strengthening their voices and perhaps actually adding to their ranges.

Help them work harder and sing smarter. Older singers have to work harder to keep in good vocal condition, although it is important to distinguish between *working harder* (which is great) and *singing harder* (which is not). Over-exertion inflicts damage at any age, and the amount of damage increases as you get older. Don't overdo it.

Maintain good physical condition. Older singers must compensate for diminishing muscle mass and lower physical energy. The issue that will require the most work for older singers is *breathing*. Older singers, especially, need to keep their bodies in the best condition possible. Swimming, walking or any consistent exercise will make a big difference in vocal ability, as it increases the ability to support the vocal tone.

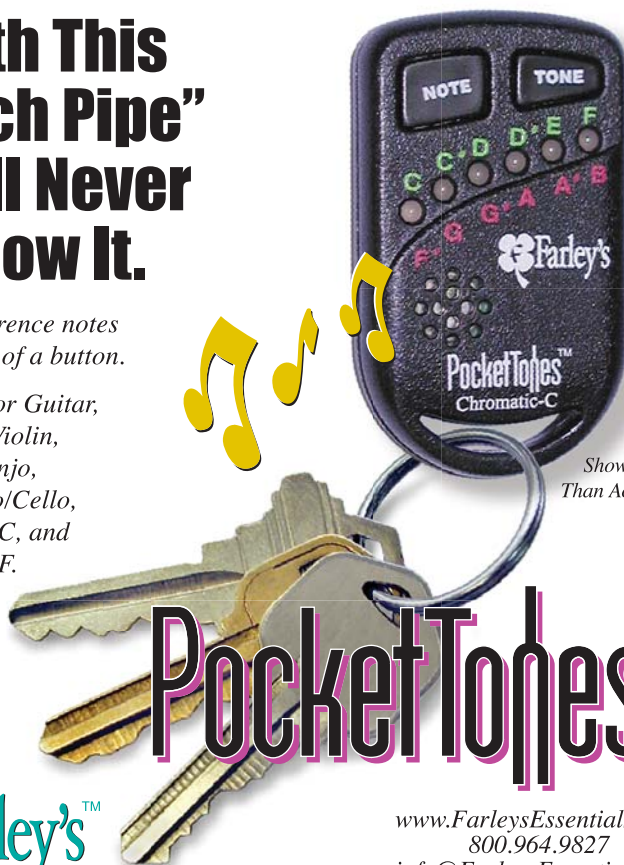
It is the responsibility of every chorus to monitor its singers, especially the younger and the more mature voices. How many would-be basses or full-voiced leads, impressed with their manly depth, have tucked their chins into their necks or lifted their chins with veins showing and unguided, singing with tension in the voice? Never let such a younger or older man experience the disappointment of thinking he "hasn't got it" when, in fact, a shift in voice part or a few appropriate vocal adjustments could make him the singer he always wanted to be. ■

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Completing the picture

There's more to it than finding a great voice and buying a suit

ust get together with three other good Barbershoppers and start singing—what's so hard about that?

If you're forming a quartet, it really is about that simple. However, if you're hoping to form a quartet that will grow and stay together longer than one or two contest cycles, things get more complicated. For a truly rewarding quartet experience, there's more to do than find four compatible sets of vocal chords and get matching suits.

Recently, the members of **Riptide** were reminded of this when we were forced to find a new quartet mate. For years, our tenor, Eric King, had been a great fit for the quartet; but lately, the quartet had not been such a great fit for Eric. He told us he had decided it was time to focus more on work and family. As we wished our long-time friend a heartfelt good-bye, I thought, "Replacing Eric is going to be tough, but quartets replace guys all the time. How hard could it be?" We soon learned the answer: really hard.

At first, it looked as though the hardest part would be to decide which great tenors we'd have to turn down. As soon as Eric announced his departure on the

Harmonet, we were deluged with phone calls, e-mails and faxes from interested tenors from all over the country, some of them our personal barbershop heroes. After talking to quartets that had been through similar transitions, we decided to make a checklist of our desired "ingredients" for the new tenor, such as singing skill, presentation skill, personality and support from home. We mapped out what we were looking for and soon realized that we could not afford to bring in a new member who was weak in any of the areas we'd listed. It turned out that what we needed was not just a great singer, but "the perfect guy." It was not an easy task, but we eventually found him.

Whether you're forming a quartet or auditioning a new member, we've found that a guy's ability to bust open a chord with you is only the beginning of your search. Here are some other critical considerations, listed in no particular order of importance.

Beyond singing skills

Would you believe a guy can sound great during an



Jeff Selano
Bass of Riptide

audition with your quartet and still turn out to be less than you need as a singer? It happens all the time. Consider these additional factors:

Is everyone singing the right voice part? Many people think they sing the correct part, but they don't. Just because a guy is known as a bass doesn't mean he can handle the demands of your arrangements any day of the week. Remember, each singer needs to get the job done when he's vocally tired and dealing with the nerves of performing for a contest or an audience—not just when he's had time to rest up for a private audition. Unless every quartet member can perform well on his down days, you will have the added job of rearranging your music. That's time-consuming and can be frustrating.

Are you sure you know what voice part you're looking for? In our case, our perfect new tenor had been better known as a baritone. In your case, your perfect bass may currently be singing tenor, your perfect baritone may be singing lead. In an existing quartet, one or two quartet members might even change parts to make room for "the right guy." Be flexible in what you're looking for and you may be surprised. We certainly were!

Is he a fast learner? How quickly does a guy learn his music? Someone who has a lovely voice but learns very slowly may frustrate the others. That frustration may outweigh his great stage appeal or personality.

Presentation skill

A man's presentation skills can be as vital to your quartet as his singing ability—especially if you are in a competing quartet. Within that aspect are some less obvious factors.

Does he look like the right fit? Does your quartet have a certain image? Young? Experienced? A mixture of both? Do height and weight matter? Sure, a guy's age or appearance is only a surface detail, but in the performance arena these are not necessarily minor issues. Noticeable differences among quartet members can be an asset, but "different" can also mean that one guy sticks out in an unflattering way. Obviously, you don't want to hurt someone's feelings or turn an audition into a beauty pageant, but these factors do play a role in the "consistency" of your image. This factor may also help you choose among nearly equal candi-

If a guy's family or boss is not supportive of your quartet's time demands, you're dead. If you disagree, you'll learn the hard way.

dates.

How well does he pick up your visual style? Obviously, you're looking for a guy who is natural and comfortable on stage and whose gestures and facial expressions integrate well into the quartet's presentation style. Look even deeper: How well does he pick up on visual cues from the other quartet members? Can he learn performance adjustments as quickly as he learns his music? A lack of ability in this area means your quartet will struggle to perform as a cohesive unit.

Strength in this area merits strong consideration.

How willing is he to learn new performance tricks? We all can look better, but most of us don't know what to do to look better as we perform. There are many great coaches who are tremendous at helping you in this matter. But is the new guy teachable? You will quickly become frustrated if he is not. Gauge how well a prospective member can take gentle criticism and suggestions for improvement from you or coaches.

On-stage personality

What you do when the singing stops has a big impact on your entertainment value. You'd be wise to ensure at least one member of your quartet can skillfully handle microphone duties.

How well does he talk to the audience? This may or may not be something you care about—in our case this was huge because none of us remaining quartet members is particularly good at it. Do you have or need someone who can make the talking portions of your

KNOW WHAT YOU WANT, be flexible in your search. The members of Rip-tide knew what they wanted in a tenor and found it in Rick Taylor (on the left), a man better known as a baritone. The right guy for your quartet may be singing a different voice part, belong to another chapter or may not even be a member of the Society ... yet. Other members of Rip-tide: Tim Reynolds (L), Jeff Selano (Bs), Richard Llewelyn (Br).



performances worthwhile for the audience and a strong complement to your singing? If you already have a good microphone guy in your quartet, could you use a good straight man?

How is his joke telling? Barbershoppers love to tell jokes at the microphone. Ten thousand comedians are out of work, yet we all think we're Shecky Green. Telling a good joke or story is a hard skill to learn, and even more difficult to pull off in front of an audience of strangers. It's likely that a guy either al-

fraternity? As a quartet, you're going to be spending an awful lot of time together. Get the wrong guy, and you could instead be spending a lot of awful time together. Maybe it doesn't matter so much if a guy laughs at your jokes, but is he at least known for being pleasant to work with? Does he have a reputation as a prima donna, or will he respect the other quartet members and compromise when there are artistic differences among you? Will he do his share of work in running the quartet business? Away from rehearsals, will he work as hard as the others at learning his music and improving his craft? Experienced Barbershoppers can tell you that a guy's track record on these questions may trump all other issues of talent and ability.

How does he connect with your audience after a show? The more you perform, the bigger this factor becomes in your reputation and the likelihood you'll be invited back. At an afterglow, does each guy love to be with others and sing until they shut the lights off or does he only want to speak with the obligatory three people? After a show or other performance, does he enjoy meeting and mingling with audience members, or does he hide out in the bathroom or try to blend in with the shrubbery? If you're singing with another chapter, how does he interact with the other Barbershoppers? Quartet members should view themselves as gracious guests of the audience that invited them to perform. Does each guy see it that way? What's each man's track record?

Is he teachable? How willing is he to learn new music, new skills? It's important to talk to (and perhaps test) the potential new man regarding his ease in taking advice from a coach or teacher. District HEP schools are a great place to learn and grow as a team, except when you have a guy who is resistant to instruction, suggestions or gentle criticism.

Are his goals compatible with yours? If you have high ambitions and enjoy a steady diet of intense rehearsals and coaching sessions, several gigs a month, traveling to contests, and a continuous cycle of perfecting new songs, you'd better choose quartet mates who enjoy that, too. Likewise, if most of the members of your quartet are content to stay local and tweak a small repertoire, you'll frustrate and be frustrated by a quartet mate who is ready to fall on his sword over anything less than a district championship. Incompatible goals lead to short-lived quartets.

Life circumstances

If a guy's family or boss is not supportive of your quartet's time demands, you're dead. If you disagree, you'll learn the hard way. All members of a quartet will likely need to make adjustments to the others' situations; just be sure you've considered the following.

Does he have children? What are their ages? Can your quartet's goals and schedule mesh with his family

Depart a quartet gracefully

There is a definite "put up or shut up moment" for the quartet member leaving. You're either still on the team and working in a supportive role to help ... or you're not. In my case, I would have been very unhappy if my departure had derailed my best friends in the pursuit of their goals. If you really care about the guys you sing with, here are some simple things you can do to help out.

Make part-predominant learning tapes for your repertoire. This will serve the quartet (and new member) well and give you a moment to celebrate all the material you've shared together.

Provide input as to who might be able to replace you. Keep close to the profile mutually agreed to by the quartet. Also, understand that your input is not as important as the others'. You won't be around to deal with consequences if the wrong choice is made.

Don't leave your friends holding the bag if you can avoid it. The show commitments your quartet made before you announced your departure were your commitments, too. If you really can't fulfill prior commitments due to a change in circumstances, everyone will understand. (In any case, your quartet may still get by with a temporary replacement.) But if you can hold on for a short time while a permanent replacement is found, you'll save your old quartet mates a lot of grief.

Once the new member is selected, welcome him enthusiastically into the quartet family. New members may express a feeling of awkwardness. It is your job to wipe that feeling away quickly and replace it with encouragement and confidence. The new member needs to feel this is exactly where he belongs.



Eric King
Former Riptide
tenor, current
head of Riptide
cheering
section

ready possesses this skill or doesn't. If someone is good at it and has a proven track record, let him at it. If someone *thinks* he's good at it, but really isn't, don't adopt a problem. Does a guy tell clean jokes that are helpful to the flow of the show, or are they angular to the theme you are endeavoring to develop?

Off-stage personality

Barbershopping is a social experience as much as a musical experience. How does each man interact with other quartet members? How does he interact with your audiences?

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goals, or do you have reason to doubt he's in a position to walk the tightrope of being both a good quartetter and a good father?

Is his wife or girlfriend supportive?

You want to be a good husband, but you also want to rip some chords with your buddies, perform in shows and compete. Does his significant other think that's fun, too? Once she stops enjoying it, he'll stop enjoying it. Be considerate of her feelings and desires.

Is his job schedule flexible enough?

A guy has to earn a living—can he perform when you need to perform? Can he practice when the others can practice? Can he get occasional time off from work without jeopardizing his career? Can the quartet adjust to his job demands?

How far are you willing to travel? Living hundreds of miles apart isn't a major concern for our quartet, but most quartets have tighter limits on how far they're willing to travel to practices and performances. In many cases, the distance between the members of a group is a good indicator of the size of the quartet's

If he has a proven track record as a joke teller, let him at it. If he thinks he's good at it, but really isn't, don't adopt a problem.

goals. How far away are you willing to search for the right match? It's also possible that the best match for your quartet isn't a Society member ... yet. The broader your search, the more likely you are to form a quartet with compatible goals, voices and growth opportunities.

There are a lot of deal-breakers out there, aren't there? For example, we auditioned guys who we could have gladly welcomed into the quartet were it not for sizeable schedule conflicts. For us, finding the right guy meant constant, clear communica-

tion among the remaining members and a clear focus when we considered the various candidates.

Before you put the word out that you are looking for a new guy, be sure you have discussed the various factors so that you will know the right guy when he finally shows up. Same goes double if you are forming a new quartet. Good luck in your journey in finding the guy or guys who have the right stuff. ■

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Political Correctness: Oppression - or - Opportunity?



Charlie Metzger
Music & Performance committee chairman

others who might choose to be offended in spite of the obvious affection that the quartet displayed for Old Lazy Bones.

As Barbershoppers, we don't intend to offend others; virtually all of us prefer to be "politically correct" in the sense that we take care not to offend. But sometimes, we may not be as aware or as sensitive to others as they would wish. For example, many of us, after performing at the local care home, have wondered how our rendition of "Everybody Wants To Get To Heaven" and its punch line "But nobody wants to die" was accepted by an audience much closer to the Pearly Gates than our group. We can make efforts to think before we sing.

In response to such concerns, the Society Board has called for a review of barbershop songs and materials that may be considered offensive by some in today's sensitive environment and has asked for an updated set of guidelines for choruses and quartets.

What it means to be politically correct

The term "political correctness," in its original "let's take care not to offend" sense, refers to good faith efforts to raise awareness of the need to respect all of humanity and to recognize the basic equal worth of all human beings. When we are aware of what is politically correct and why, we can be sensitized to the plight of those around us: their particular situation and the bounds and limits that the majority culture imposes on them.

However, some people use the term political correctness only when discussing a double-standard kind of censorship imposed by the most hypersensitive among us. For example, on the Canadian west coast, there are those who invoke "religious tolerance" as the rationale for an attempt to deny people the use of even the term "Christ-

At this year's Midwinter convention, our current international quartet champion, **Four Voices**, repeated their contest-stopping rendition of "Lazy Bones." It was, of course, sung with consummate skill, fine musicianship and wonderful performance values. In fact, the song was sung with love, the singers portraying an open-hearted affection for the fellow who lazes about, doing just about nothing, easing along through life. It was wonderful!

But I spoke with at least one audience member who was worried that the song would be seen as offensive by some, as it comes from the black rural background of many of our best-loved songs and perhaps depicts, incidentally, a lazy black man of the South. This audience member was not, himself, offended by the performance. Rather, his concerns were for

NOT THAT YOU'VE SUNG THIS, but the glorification of killing and the unflattering depictions of Germans and American Indians wouldn't wash well with today's audiences. Suffice it to say that many attitudes and sensitivities have changed in the years since much of the barbershop repertoire was written.





**YESTERDAY'S FLATTERY,
TODAY'S OBJECTIFICATION.**
With major shifts in gender attitudes, need we revisit our old love songs? Do songs need to be modified, or will many be well-received if presented in a tasteful context?

agent for the promotion of tolerance, respect and equality. It also has the potential to prevail over the tyranny of censorship and the tendency to behave inappropriately out of shame and guilt in the light of history and its lessons. The challenge we all face is in how to present great music from the past in a manner that will be tasteful to the diversity of potential members and audiences we wish to court.

How does history affect us?

We are faced with some unique challenges due to the age of our music. Songs written decades ago were written for audiences that generally understood the composer's frame of reference. Today's audiences will often hear the same songs through different filters.

When our Society was founded in 1938, all-male organizations were common and gender roles were more defined. There had been some societal change, but the rate of change had not yet moved society in general much beyond the themes and attitudes of the songs our Society wanted to preserve. In the last 65 years, however, change has accelerated, causing a greater need to provide historical context to our music.

Traditional barbershop music comes from an earlier time when notions of racial equality and social mores were very different. The centrality of the Christian religion was more widely accepted, governmental authority less questioned. Humor was often based on physical, ethnic, geographical or sexual stereotypes. Women had a different place in society, were treated and regarded differently, and families operated on different assumptions. Musical themes, therefore, naturally reflected the realities of an era when linguistic usage was different. Song lyrics had different meanings and connotations than they do today.

mas tree," insisting on the term "celebration tree" or some such term. Indeed, most of us are aware of heavy-handed instances of political correctness, which can be a tyranny that denies freedom of expression, condones censorship and promotes a collective guilt and shame, confusing us and often leading to ill-considered, precipitous action.

The Barbershop Harmony Society can be an

In some cases, meanings have changed because values have become less strict. Consider "*You can go as far as you like with me in my merry Oldsmobile*," once an invitation to travel—now an invitation to engage in something quite different! Likewise, some of today's values are more strict than in the past. In the light of current feelings about child abuse, consider: "*With the same old shillelagh me father could lick a dozen men . . . knock 'em down again. And many's the time he used it on me to make me understand.*" Today's audiences would note the father's abusive temperament and believe that his son is proudly taking up the abusive family values!

Political correctness is not the same everywhere

Political correctness has regional bases as well as historical ones. Things that might generally offend in Canada may not offend in the Southern states and vice versa. For western Canadians, the "boy" in the *Chattanooga Shoeshine Boy* is simply a boy with a service job—the reference is likely to offend no one. In some parts of the southern U.S., however, some audience members may recall that "boy" was once a common, condescending term for addressing a black man in a service job. Will older, black audience members take offense at hearing

Ensure your performances are politically correct

What to do

- Consciously consider the composition of each audience and the expectations surrounding each performance, and tailor your material accordingly.
- Solicit input from a well-informed person, such as a Presentation judge or a member of an upcoming audience, on what kinds of themes and actions could be found offensive.
- Encourage emcees to keep their jokes acceptable to general audiences.
- Ensure that everything on your performance fits under our Society's implied promise of "family" entertainment.
- Solicit audience feedback to stay aware of sensitivities current in your region and adjust your performances accordingly.
- Provide appropriate historical context for your songs when needed.
- Assume that a song presented in good taste and proper context will be well-received by the audience.

What not to do

- Don't overreact by gutting your repertoire of any song that has the remote chance of offending some unknown person or group. Adhere to known sensitivities and common sense.
- Don't say or do anything that would suggest that an upcoming song may be controversial. This essentially challenges an audience to listen closely for offensive material.
- Don't be apologetic about a song or attempt to persuade an audience to "not be offended." This communicates that you either don't respect audience sensitivities enough to keep something controversial off the stage, or communicates that you're not sure the audience is enlightened enough to otherwise give you the benefit of the doubt.
- If you believe that political correctness has been carried too far in a given instance, don't use the stage to send a message to people you think should "lighten up." Intentional disrespect toward others violates multiple precepts of our Society Code of Ethics.

the song or will they enjoy the song if it is presented in an inoffensive context? The answer to that question may depend on where you live.

A group that performs within a religious Christian community could likely perform "Amazing Grace" or a spiritual like "I'll Fly Away" in virtually any setting with no negative connotations. However, were the same performance to take place in most of today's cosmopolitan communities, the experience may be uncomfortable for

audience members who have different religious inclinations. In either setting, the context in which the songs are presented may further affect how the song is received.

Has the Society been politically correct?

For many years, the Society strived to be politically correct in the best sense of the word. We long ago addressed many elements of performance that have the potential for offense, including the use of black

face and the presence of weapons on stage. For many years, the lyrics of our published music have been examined and altered, where possible, to reflect current sensibilities. For example, "Down Mobile" is published with lyrics that make it generally accepted.

At other times, appropriate changes seem impossible, as with "Chattanooga Shoeshine Boy," where the word "boy," integral to the very title of the song, has no acceptable substitute. Because of

this concern, the new arrangement has not been republished. That removes from our literature a song that has a legitimate place, lost because of a word which some see as offensive.

Is our music politically correct?

When the Society Board charged the Music & Performance Committee to begin a formal study of potentially offensive material, it decided to get its bearings by scanning the lyrics of randomly selected songs found in the Society's published arrangements catalog. It soon became abundantly clear that we could not realistically be expected to change or remove all potentially offensive

music. We found that roughly 70 percent of our sampling had passages that could be seen as offensive to *somebody* on the basis of various sensitivities. For example:

Racial

"Mammy" songs
"Shufflin' along" songs
"Honey gal" and "Little Lize" songs
Creole songs
Songs about "folks"
Songs about the glory of the Old South

Religious

Hymns of all kinds
Christmas songs of all kinds
Spirituals
Hanukkah songs

Political

"Let There be Peace On Earth"
"God Bless America"
"God Save the Queen"
"This is My Country"
French Canadian songs

Glorification of war

"If He Can Fight Like He Can Love, Then It's Good-bye Germany"
"Hun" songs
World War I songs

Objectification of women

Song depicting the "fair" or "weaker" sex
"Hard-hearted Hannah" (loose women)
"My Wife is on a Diet" (fat women)
"Broadway Rose" (prostitution)
"Sweet Sixteen" (pedophilia)
"Why Do They Always Say 'No'?" (date rape)
"Wait 'Till You Get 'Em Up In The Air Boys" (maybe actual rape)
"Last Night On the Back Porch" (premarital sex)
"I Wonder Who's Kissing Her Now ... Showing Her How" (sexual connotations)
"Just Give Me One More Chance" (stalking)

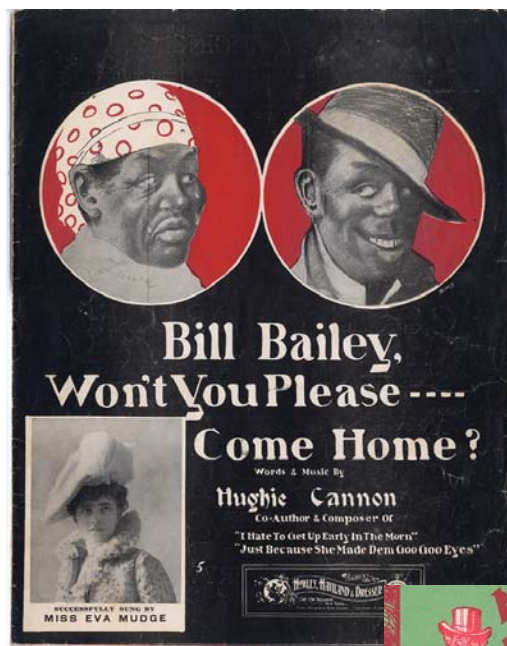
Physical characteristics

"Huggin' and Chalkin'" (obesity)
"K-K-K-Katie" (stuttering)

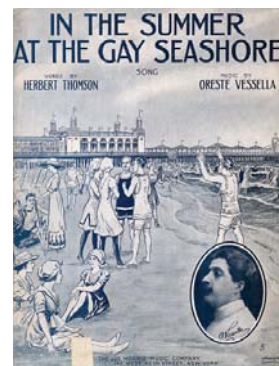
Outdated usage

South "Where the folks are happy and gay" (black folks and gay folks)

As is clear from the extent of this list, if we remove from publication every song with the potential to offend, we lose a large part of our available literature and a large part of our inheritance and legacy.



YOU'D SOMETIMES HARDLY KNOW by listening, but many songs we sing contained racial components when composed. While the most blatant examples have mostly faded into history, racist sentiments were nevertheless once common in popular music—sensitivity to certain words and themes can be well-justified. The question is: which old songs can today be presented in a manner that does not recall old stereotypes?



MEANINGS CHANGE ...

Balancing sensitivity with common sense

Perhaps we should not choose to halt publication or remove music from the catalog on the basis of terms or concepts with which a regional or ideological group might argue. Rather, we should celebrate diversity and encourage in our performers the freedom to thoughtfully make the choices that are appropriate to themselves and the audiences for whom they perform. We might also point out on our music publications that since the music we sing is rooted in history, it should be heard with that understanding.

As we publish music, lyrics that might today offend are altered from the original, as much as possible, in order to remove offense. General music themes, ones that see women as the gentler gender, for instance, often cannot be altered without obliterating the songs. Could we take the *bloom* from our *Wild Irish Rose* with any other lyrics? Let's educate performers to make careful song selections, given their audience and region, and encourage those audiences to choose tolerance over offense. That seems like good advice for all people building a civil culture together.

Be sensitive, but not oversensitive

Individuals have their own filters, or sets of perceptions, to which they refer in order to take offense, and these are not always predictable. If we eliminate every possible reason for offense, we eliminate much of our musical literature. Surely, that is not reasonable, given our goal of preservation.

Nevertheless, be aware of the sensibilities of your community and take them into account in your choice of music, theme and style of performance. For example, church functions are great places for gospel songs and hymns. The local Legion might not be as appropriate a venue for the same songs.

Anticipate that people will choose to be reasonable and tolerant and help them do so by making them aware of the historical origins of the songs you sing. More than that, perform your songs with affection and positive intention, humor and grace. Your attitude is a major part of the

message that reaches your audiences, and a positive attitude increases audience tolerance.

How can we be productively concerned?

We should understand and respect what is politically correct in the regions and settings in which we perform. However, let's not put ourselves in the position of second-guessing the concerns of others or assuming that some unidentified group somewhere may take offense at what we sing. We can presume that the diverse audiences for which we perform are composed of reasonable, tolerant people. We can presume that as reasonable people, they are able to accept song lyrics as historical, cultural expressions that neither reflect negatively upon the people who sing them nor reflect performers' attitudes or feelings about others.

I'm reminded of the first published barbershop song I learned in the early '60s, while attending a Lutheran college:

*Oh Daddy, get your Baby out of jail,
Come and get someone to do my bail*

*They've been treating me so mean;
Took away my cigarettes and my morphine.*

*Daddy put my diamonds into soak. Buy
me just another shot of coke.*

*All night long you'll
hear me wail, "Daddy, get
your Baby out of jail."*

I was too naïve to understand much of it and, in retrospect it doesn't add much to the literature. But it sure was fun to sing! Somehow, audiences with value systems diametrically opposed to that in the song picked up on the fun and recognized the naivete, choosing to

not be offended in spite of the opportunity the lyrics provided!

Overall, it's important not to pursue our musical purification too adamantly. The task would be endless and self-defeating and would supplant the energy we need to preserve the essence and encourage the growth of our art form. To these ends, we have important goals to pursue, projects to complete and innovations to put in place. We can ill afford to be unduly distracted by the voracious demands of political correctness run amok! ■



... and some songs may need more sensitive treatment.

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The Vikings

They learned that a little adversity can make you stronger, and that come hail or high water, nothing was going to stop them from winning gold



From left: Robert Maurus (T), Bruce Conover (L), Robert Lindley (Br), and Robert Livesay (Bs).

It's ironic that four non-athletes earned one of the biggest championships ever won by the Augustana College Vikings. In 1946, just after the war, the small college in Rock Island, Ill., was filled with young, former military men attending on the GI Bill. Among them were four singing soldiers-turned-frat-boys who had formed a quartet and called themselves The Four Beaux: Bob Lindley, Bob Maurus, Bruce Conover and Calvin Stuhr.

All but Lindley had sung together in high school, and they probably considered their new quartet name a big improvement over the pre-war quartet name: Rock Island High School Male Quartet. In 1947, they were itching to improve as a quartet when they learned about SPEBSQSA. Hoping for the best, and in fact "hoping to steal some arrangements," they visited the Rock Island Chapter and were immediately sold.

They changed the quartet name again when they joined the Society, calling themselves The Vikings in honor of their school athletic teams. They immediately began to flourish in the Society. Shortly after joining, they took third place in the Illinois District contest at a time when the district was hands down the Society's strongest district. The next year, they placed second in the district.

From then on, the quartet continued to improve

as it made the tough climb through the competitive ranks. In 1949, they qualified for their first international contest, using donations to travel to Buffalo and make the finals. Later that fall, they placed second again in the district contest. At the 1950 convention in Omaha, they moved up to 10th place; that fall, for the third time in a row, they took second place in Illinois district competition.

The year 1951 was a mixed year for the quartet. In Toledo, they moved up one spot to ninth place and finally won the Illinois District championship. But, they also lost bass Calvin Stuhr, who moved out of the area and was married. The remaining three were as motivated quartetters as ever, and soon rounded out the quartet with a third "Bob" (Livesay). This Bob was older than Bruce and the other two Bobs, which is why started calling him "Dad"—as an endearing, back-handed means to show him their "respect."

With Bruce and three guys named Bob, they whimsically tossed around the idea of changing the quartet name again, this time to "The Four B Four" or perhaps "Three Bobs and a Boob." Perhaps the Society is fortunate that they weren't serious about

that last name, because it was at this point that the quartet started to make its rapid move toward the top.

Livesay's considerable quartet experience was part of the reason the quartet improved so rapidly. Perhaps even more significant was the addition of Floyd Connett (later to become the Society's first full-time field staff member) as coach, arranger, and steadfast friend. Floyd and a lot of hard work paid off in the ensuing months—the quartet came in second place in Kansas City in 1952.

The quartet's championship year had an auspiciously lucky beginning, courtesy of the metal roof on the Masonic Temple that housed the contests. As the Vikings launched into their first song, "When You're Smiling," the heavens opened up with a torrential hailstorm, so loud on the metal roof that the judges could not hear the quartet. The quartet was waved off the stage and, after the storm ended, was reannounced. Thus, the Vikings became the first quartet to have to sing seven songs to win the gold.

And win it they did, to become the fifth Illinois District quartet in 11 years to become champions—and the first Illinois winner from outside Chicago.

Their championship year was so busy that they realized that train and car would not suffice; they chartered and then purchased an airplane. Some of their harrowing experiences are legendary.

The pressures of job and family obligations soon made it impossible to continue. They were on the way to acquiring 14 children among them, Lindley had moved 120 miles away, and lead Bruce Conover was recalled to active duty in the Air Force. The Vikings disbanded, but individually they kept very active in the Society and remained close friends.

The quartet enjoyed Rock Island reunions on the 10th, 20th and 30th anniversary of their wins, but perhaps the most memorable was their 35th anniversary. Livesay died six months before, but the quartet gave a 1988 cameo performance at the San Antonio convention, singing the same number that had interrupted by the hail storm on that fateful day 35 years earlier. It was a fitting tribute to "Dad" and his fellow champions. ■

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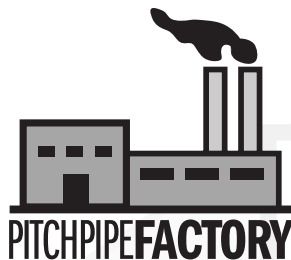
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Seven technologies that will change barbershop!

Take a look at some promising new innovations from Borts And Borts Barbershop Labs of Excellence. (Company motto: "It's only an unfortunate coincidence that our company acronym spells 'babble'.") While our products await the cumbersome approval processes of various federal agencies (their safety is being reviewed by Ken-OSHA), we thought you'd enjoy a sneak preview of our upcoming product line.

1-900-Dial-A-Tag

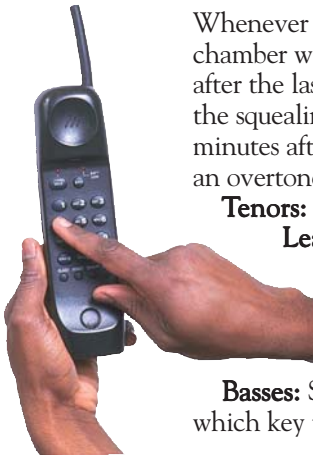
Whenever the mood strikes, this long-distance tag chamber will produce high, ringing overtones long after the last chord is finished. Really: we've noticed the squealing often emanates from the earpiece for minutes after we've hung up the phone. Now that's an overtone! Getting in is easy:

Tenors: Press the *highest* key – 9.

Leads: It doesn't matter what key you press, *just stay in it!*

Baritones: Just do what comes naturally—keep hitting keys at random until you find one that works.

Basses: Stay on the line and a lead will tell you which key to press.



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Artificially Intelligent Baritone

You'll never go back to the old way! We hope to have this on the market soon, but the government won't grant us a patent until they can compare our product with a Genuinely Intelligent bari. We've only interviewed the baritones in 45 chapters so far, so we're holding out hope that we'll find one soon.

Auto-Tune Medallion

If you have guys whose enthusiasm exceeds their skill, insist that they wear this "award" at all performances. Only you know that special stealth sound-blocking technology silences his voice completely, while mild electrical impulses move his lips in time with the director's motions. Stage presence packages sold separately.



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Bomb-Sniffing Dogs

For shows that even the Pocketful of Gags can't save. These incredible pooches are trained to wait in the wings and sniff out dangerously *bad* performances. When they see a quartet about to collect a tomato in the kisser, the dog trots out on stage, sits down in front of the mic, and howls its lungs out until (1) the emcee invites the quartet back on stage, or (2) Fido gets a standing ovation, whichever comes first. Just don't be offended if the dog's CD outsells yours after the show.



Performer's Face Dart

When visualization techniques and behavior modification just won't "stick" — a little bit of Botox goes a long way. Capture the perfect face and freeze it. Use with caution: too high, and you freeze the brain (see Artificially Intelligent Baritone). Use it too low, you freeze the voice (see Dial-A-Tag, bass.) ■

Andrew Borts
Brother of
Mike Borts



Mike Borts
Brother of
Andrew Borts



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

The many ways we Sing . . . for life

Chapters give back to their communities



The **Masters of Harmony** chorus of Valparaiso, Ind., recently donated \$1,000 to the local Memorial Opera House and donated barbershop sheet music and learning tapes to Portage High School. Music teacher Jill Jones will be helping the two quartets from Portage High School prepare for the upcoming district music competition. The Masters of Harmony chorus members also have made themselves available for coaching the students.

The chorus will be looking for other opportunities to support vocal music education in schools and communities during the year.

Students receiving sheet music from Masters of Harmony member Jack Wessel are (from left) Dan Castro, Aaron Bloomfield, Adam Garner, Chris Boyer, and Nick Sturgis.

During a music demonstration of barbershop quartet singing, the Hereford High School music class of educator Gerry Smith was presented with multiple copies of each of 30 barbershop songs. The gift was made possible with a grant from Harmony Foundation. The music for the entire county school system is housed at the high school and is available to public school music teachers throughout the county.

Participating in the project was **Calliope**, the quartet that helped acquire the grant and demonstrated the barbershop style of singing to the students. **The Chorus of the Chesapeake** also contributed to the music purchase.



The recent death of Johnny Fliton (far left), bari with the "Friends in Harmony," served as a reminder as to how far a quartet can go in charitable giving. The Southwestern District Hall of Fame quartet sang for donations only, and proceeds of all 718 performances over nine years went to charity. Donations totaled \$55,000, \$32,000 of which went to the Society's former charity, Heartspring. Today, other quartets also contribute primarily or exclusively to charity; many contribute generously to Harmony Foundation, thereby helping perpetuate singing and barbershop harmony for future generations. ■

NEW FOUNDERS CLUB MEMBERS

Gold

Larry T. & Mary Lou Park, FWD

Silver

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Tony & Carolyn George, SUN
Chad E. Hall, PIO
Jerome J. & Melissa Hughes, JAD
Charles F. Hunter, Jr., MAD/FWD
Scott D. & Rhonda Monroe, SWD
David N. & Barbara Plum, FWD
Kermit W. & Donna Taylor, FWD

Bronze

Merrill & Hazel Aitchison, CSD
Robert H. Arnold, ONT
Gordon H. & Betty Bergthold, FWD
Earl W. & Mimi Berry, PIO
Brian C. & Judith Betsworth, SUN
Don A. & Vivian Bierwagen, SWD
Raleigh E. & Jean Bloch, PIO
Jack E. Bobek, SWD
William J. & Estalee Boll, Jr., SUN
Dr. Hugh H. & Kathryn Calhoun, MAD
Bruce W. Churchill, LOL
Dr. Herman & Rose Cohen, SWD
Donald G. & Janice Flom, NED

George T. & Jane Gorsuch, EVG
Ethel M. Gray, LOL
C.N. (Dino) & Yonnie Houpis, NED
Paul A. Jockinsen, FWD
David R. Johnson, JAD
Jonh L. & Kay Krizek, FWD
Albert J. & Loraine Kutscha, ILL
John W. & Ronda Marshall, CSD
Joseph A. & Denise Martin, MAD
Dr. Clare F. & June McCreary, SUN
Earl E. & Beverly McDougal, FWD
Fred & Charlotte Nordgaard, EVG
Richard J. & Joan Nyikos, CAR
Kenneth M. & Ellen Pacetti, SWD
Richard N. & Bernice Pollitz, MAD
Thomas W. Raffety, FWD
Donald & Dee Richardson, FWD
Bertram & Rose Mary Ryan, MAD
David L. & Karen Schubert, SUN
Wilbur D. & Elizabeth Sparks, MAD
James H. & Judith Stephens, FWD
John D. & Jane Stucker, CSD
David Ewing & Marilyn Turner, SWD
Alan R. & Patricia Wile, Jr., MAD
Melbourne, FL Chapter, SUN
Wilmington, DE Chapter, MAD



O.C. Cash's grandson joins the Society

Though he never met his grandpa, he's now part of the family legacy

Okay, maybe it's the easiest Man of Note any quartet will ever earn. How can you miss by asking the grandson of Society founder O.C. Cash to join his Society? Nevertheless, it took members of **Friendly Advice** nearly nine years to sign David Oathout as a member of the Frank H. Thorne Chapter-at-large.

While at the Sheraton Hotel in Seattle, the quartet stopped to order a cup of coffee in their typical fashion—singing “Java Jive.” David was working nearby as the hotel’s head audio guy, heard the quartet and stopped to listen. In the ensuing conversation, they realized that a few of the guys had sung for Dave’s wedding reception nine years earlier, and he had been meaning to look into Society membership ever since.

One of two sons of O.C.’s only child, Dave never met his famous grandfather; O.C. died a few months before Dave was born. But the musical genes were still there—Dave has been a lead singer in a number of bands and has one of the largest record collections the quartet ever saw. (His favorite had been Fats Waller and 1950s R&B.) Dave attended the international convention in San Antonio in 1964 with his mom and grandmother (O.C.’s widow) and again in 1988 with his mom.

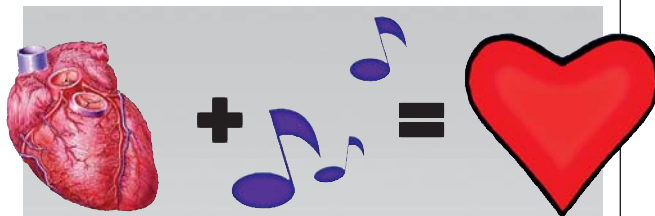
O.C. was known for telling folks he was “The World’s Greatest Baritone.” Dave figures if genetics count for anything he should have a shot at “World’s Best Lead.”

Going Hog wild with harmony

Baaaaaaad Biking Barbershoppers will be getting together to celebrate Harley-Davidson’s 100th birthday August 2003 in Milwaukee. They’ll incorporate a “ride in,” tour and special reception at SPEBSQSA’s beautiful Harmony Hall in nearby Kenosha. Contact Marty Wise, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Chapter for details: mwise@psualum.com.



FRIENDLY ADVICE GETS THE GOODS from David Oathout (in blue), the presumed heir to his grandfather’s self-proclaimed title of SPEBSQSA Third Assistant Temporary Vice Chairman. From left are Dan Tangarone (T), Wes Sorstokke (L), Forrest LaMotte (Bs), Bill Thurmon, (Br).

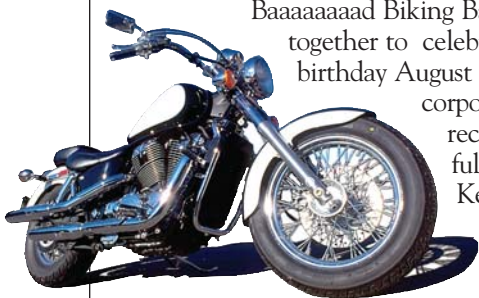


Old songs for new heart

Heart of my heart, I love you ... Life would be naught without you ...

Singing from the heart is commonplace. Singing to the heart... that’s rare. So when **oldsongs.com**, a quartet from the Buckeye-Columbus, Ohio, Chapter was asked to celebrate the sixth anniversary of a woman’s heart transplant—well, their hearts leapt at the chance. The song list was what you would expect: “Let Me Call You Sweet-Heart,” “Heart of My Heart,” and “Happy Birthday.” The delivery at her workplace, a downtown bank, was much appreciated, but (thankfully) did not stop any other hearts.

—Contributed by Lionell Lyle, fill-in bari



**NEWSFLASH —
MANY BARBER-
SHOPPERS GOLF.**

But how often does your foursome (either kind) get this kind of press? These members of the Winter Park, Fla. Chapter make a fine impression for the Society in a full-page feature in Florida Golf Central magazine.

Note the active, fun pose with the clubs serving as microphones, the contemporary attire, and the nice age spread of members. No word yet on whether their greens fees are paid for from the quartet checking account. From left: Joe Lamy Jr. (T), Troy Soos (Bs), Bob Stump (L), Joe Lamy Sr (Br).



Chapter hopes to make Finland the next country to discover barbershop harmony

Is Finland the going to be the next country where barbershop music takes off? It will be if Dan Lindroos and the Mt. Baker, Washington Chapter have their way. Last year's chapter tour of Finland went beyond the scope of most Barbershoppers

singing abroad—it was in essence a well-planned barbershop proselyting mission to a nation that loves to sing.

Lindroos, a Finnish barbershopper with membership in

SPEBSQSA, has made it his mission to spread barbershop harmony to his nation of five million people—one with 3,000 singing clubs averaging 50 members each. His goal got a nice shot in the arm with the help of the Mt. Baker Chapter and other area Barbershoppers, plus **Friendly Advice, High Five**, and **Studio One** quartets, plus 20 friends and family members.

The two-week excursion, with lodging ranging from private home stays to hotels to college dorms, greatly raised the visibility of barbershop harmony. Thousands of singers saw the groups' performances, many of which were in high-profile, well-attended

venues. What made this kind of trip so much more than a mere tour?

- **A lot of performance opportunities** – typically two scheduled performances each day
- **Quality venues** – including a festival appearance, civic performances, media opportunities—even opening for a rock concert!
- **Depth of ensembles** – three accomplished quartets made the trip with the chorus, extending the performance possibilities.
- **Well-coordinated itinerary** – with an enthusiastic, well-connected host.

Lindroos has since indicated that the chorus and his objectives were met with much success—he's invited Studio One and Finnish Mt. Baker Chapter member Markku Kannervikkoaho back this year to help form a barbershop chapter!

FYI

Read it all

Alan Wilhite and Quentin Gates' fascinating travelogue, featuring menus, grins, and at times touching moments of transcontinental friendship, is online at www.topperschorus.org





Who was that masked quartet? And why are they singing "Forgive Me"?

(Editor's note: A member pointed us to this story, written to a sales consulting company's newsletter, but neither we nor the consulting company have been able to identify the quartet. Anybody remember doing a gig like this? This could prove to be a great niche business opportunity—who says we can only melt hearts on Valentine's Day?)



"Our company lost a key account because of a bumbling sales rep. I replaced this rep and spent six months trying to regain the account to no avail. I couldn't get an appointment, returned phone call or e-mail. In complete desperation I tried the following.

"I hired a local barbershop quartet and bought a white dove in a cage. The barbershop quartet arrived unannounced with the dove and sang two songs to the purchasing agent. When they finished singing, they placed the caged dove on his desk along with my business card, which I'd signed "we're very sorry," and promptly left.

"He called me immediately to come get the dove out of his office and was laughing.

"I signed a \$215,000 order with the facility within the next 90 days."

Not bad. We hope the quartet earned an industry-standard commission on the sale.

Barbershop genetics part 2

One of the greatest honors a son can give is to pick up on dad's favorite hobby and make it his own. Lewis Law Sr. couldn't feel more honored than having his son join the Society a couple of years ago—and a continent away, at that. But what really busted dad's buttons was when Lewis Jr. earned the "Rookie Barbershopper of the Year" honor—the same year Lewis Sr. was named "Barbershopper of the Year" in his own chapter.

Lewis Sr. earned his honor for outstanding service in directing and teaching the chorus and quartets of the **Central City Chordsmen** of

Santa Maria, Calif., as director of the Tri City Sound Chapter of Sweet Adelines, as coach of two high school quartets, and as lead in **Priority Mail** quartet. Lewis Jr. earned his honor as a diehard new member of Florida's **Space Coast Chorus** and as bass in **Group Therapy**, which specializes in entertaining shut-ins in area convalescent centers.



How not to list in the Yellow Pages

Several late-night calls started showing up on Scott Reinhard's caller ID before he knew that he'd made a mistake. The president of Wisconsin's **Flambeau Ramblers** chapter assumed they were just late calls from vacationers who were asking about he and his wife's advertised snowmobiler's cabin. (Insomniacs expecting to reach a bartender, perhaps?) No, it wasn't until Scott actually answered the phone one weekend at midnight that the naked truth was exposed:

Caller: "... (hic!) Yah, what kinda (burp!) strippers you got there?"

Scott: "I'm sorry, sir, you obviously have the wrong number!"

Caller: "Well, you're the (hic!) Flambeau Ramblers, aren't you?!"

Scott: "I ... yes, I'm the president of the Ramblers."

Caller: "Well, you're in the (urp!) entertainment section of the Yellow Pages. What kinda entertainers can you send over tonight?"

Scott (Laughing): "Sir, The Flambeau Ramblers is the name of a barbershop chorus!"
(long pause)

Caller: "Well ... you wanna come over and sing me a song?"

After declining the opportunity for this late-night gig, Scott hung up and went to the Yellow Pages where he saw the one other ad in the same section as his chorus's. "Needless to say, I have since requested that we be listed under 'Clubs,' but it can't be changed until they print the 2004 phone books," he reports. "Hopefully, my wife will be speaking to me by that time." ■



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DIRECTOR WANTED

Phoenicians Seek Director. The Phoenix Saguaro Chapter seeks an enthusiastic, high-energy director who will continue our growth as high quality singers, and our history as an international medallist and top-notch show chorus. The Phoenicians won our Division Contest in April, and we eagerly look forward to an exciting future. For more information, contact Greg Dodge at greg.dodge@grubb-ellis.com or 602-224-4418. Resumes will be accepted until Aug. 15, 2003 and can be sent to: Greg Dodge, VP of Music and Performance, Phoenicians Chorus, PO Box 62091, Phoenix, AZ 85082

REUNION

The Fairfax Jubilaires, Fairfax, VA, will celebrate their 50th Anniversary with two shows on October 18, 2003 starring the Suntones and Alexandria Harmonizers (chapter sponsor). Fred King and Rick Taylor will be their emcees. There will be a reunion reception for present and former chapter members, Sunday brunch, and lots of afterglow fun! For information go to www.thefairfaxjubilaires.org or call Jim Stewart at 703-758-9764.

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Mail with payment (checks: payable to SPEBSQSA) to: **SPEBSQSA, 6315 Harmony Lane, Kenosha, WI 53143-5199**. If you register for more than one person, please attach *complete* information for each person on a separate sheet. A housing application and information regarding events and tours will be mailed to you when you register. All show and tour tickets may be picked up at the convention registration area. When you receive confirmation, please keep it as your receipt. **Registrations may be transferred to another person, but they are NOT refundable. No phone orders, please.**

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THE TAG

Joe Liles, Tagmaster



No profound story behind this tag—just fun chords from the pen of a 16-year-old

Bob Caldwell, lead of the fine senior quartet **City Slickers**, contacted me recently about a great tag he had learned from a young man named Chad Wulf. Bob then sent me a copy with Chad's permission, and I have had fun singing it myself ... with three others, of course.

Chad and Jason Wulf are sons of Presentation Judge Gary Wulf. Gary has been assistant director of the Columbus **Singing Buckeyes** chorus for many years. He's a great coach, choreographer, and sang lead in three JAD district champion quartets: **Bowery Boys** (1989), **Dynamics** (1997), **Park Avenue** (2000). Gary was privileged to sing with his two sons in a Johnny Appleseed District novice champion quartet, **Once Around The Block**, back in 1994.

Back to Chad ... Chad joined the Society in 1987 at age 12. He learned to love tag singing as a teenager, especially after spending many an hour at it at Harmony College and taking a number of trips to the JAD Apple Corps. He availed himself of the music theory courses, intent on learning about chords and chord progressions. Even while in Miami University at

Oxford, Ohio, while getting a degree in accounting and finance, he took some music theory courses and sang for four years in the men's glee club.

While at the university he put together a college quartet, **Attractions**, that competed in the Society's MBNA America Collegiate Quartet Contest in Indianapolis, 1997. He currently sings lead in the 2002 Johnny Appleseed District champion quartet, **Impulse**.

Some of the best tags have very simple origins. In the case of this tag, Chad said that he merely sat down at the piano one day when he was 16 years old and played a series of chords that really pleased him, then he thought up lyrics that seemed to fit. Who cares if there's no profound story behind every chord? Just sing and enjoy this neat Chad Wulf creation.

Chad says it seems to work well whether you sing it high or low, softly or loudly. If you tune and balance this one correctly you can clearly hear a goose-bump-makin' undertone ... hey, Jim Richards, is that called a "difference" tone? Get a foursome together and try this one ASAP! Thanks, Chad. ■



I WILL DREAM OF YOU

Tenor Lead

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1 2 3 4

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Bari Bass

Written by Chad Wulf, 1991



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