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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY



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THIS IS NOT AN ADVERTISEMENT FOR A CRUISE SHIP. Don Reckenbeil is this happy even when the camera is put away, which is not often when you belong to the Hunterdon Harmonizers. One in a long line of great shots the chapter keeps on hand, this one, which appeared on the front page of the local newspaper, once again demonstrates that great publicity can be free if you know how to pursue it.



Features

14 Meet Rob Hopkins
With a history of positive changes behind him, our new president looks ahead to a brighter future
Eric Jackson

26 Pull off a community event
Some groups had a rousing success with their 9/11 tributes. Don't miss Veterans' Day this year
Reed Sampson

20 The most influential groups
Forget who's your favorite or who was the best: like them or not, these 10 groups made a lasting impact
ROGER PAYNE

29 Barbershopping in Baghdad
Sweet seventh chords bounce off the marble walls in one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces
Staff, with Sgt. David Witt

Departments

2 THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE
President Rob Hopkins asks us to see the Society with new eyes

4 LET'S HARMONIZE
Top chapter public relations tips

6 LETTERS
National anthem, riverboating

8 TEMPO
Quartet gets a "plumb" gig
Don't miss the upcoming road shows!

12 HARMONY HOW-TO
Build a solid quartet repertoire

32 CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES
Boosting choral music in private schools
Stroke victim provides hope through song

33 STAY TUNED
Three small chapters, three big shows
Guyton genetics strike again

36 THE TAG
"Indiana Tag"



On the Cover Trend-setters

The Suntones: 1961 international quartet champion
The Vocal Majority: 10-time international chorus champion
The Boston Common: 1980 international quartet champion
Four Under Par: 5-time international competitor

Cover by Lorin May



See the Society with new eyes

“Le seul vrai voyage de la découverte ne consiste pas à découvrir de nouveaux lieux mais d’avoir de nouveaux yeux.”
The only true voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes. – Marcel Proust

This is an exciting time for the Society, one in which we need “new eyes” to see where we really are as a Society and where we would like to be—who we are and who we would like to become.

Human nature being what it is, this will be something of a challenge. Each of us makes sense of the world by drawing inferences and conclusions from what we observe and then comparing it to our past experience. We tend to categorize and stereotype people and ideas, rarely stopping to consider whether a different outlook may actually be more accurate and useful. How often do we *really* see with new eyes and examine our world from different and new perspectives?

Our current vision says that *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 Society Board is now engaged in a process to re-examine—with new eyes—our vision and mission for the Society. What is our dream for the Society? What is our core business and what are our core values? What is our fundamental purpose? An Envisioning Task Force has been formed to assist the Board with this “envisioning” process, and it has invited more than 400 Barbershoppers to help look at these questions.

The goal is to align ourselves with a vision and a mission we can all embrace, with clear priorities and all of us pulling in the same direction. We pursue that goal recognizing that volunteers united in a common pursuit can achieve extraordinary results. What an exhilarating challenge!

Old slogan, new meaning

In selecting a slogan for 2004, I could have tried to be original and find a new “landscape,” if you will, but I felt it would be more useful to use a familiar landscape—“Keep the Whole World Singing”—and challenge all of us to see it with new eyes.

Of course “Keep the Whole World Singing” is familiar to Barbershoppers. Indeed, perhaps it is too familiar. How often do we really think about what it means and what it can mean?

Naturally, people immediately think of our wonderful affiliates throughout the world and our efforts to keep extending the reach of barbershop music to

Asia and other parts of the world. Have we considered how we can contribute to this?

At home, what does “keep the whole world singing” mean? *Do we think of our world as our chapter?* Or do we have a broader perspective? It is crucial for us that the barbershop style of singing continues for future generations to enjoy, but without an emphasis on singing in the world will we have good chances for success? Where are future barbershop singers going to come from if folks don’t learn the joy of singing? Who will sing tomorrow? What can we do to increase awareness of our Society throughout North America?

Envisioning Task Force seeks “soul of the Society”—your phone might be ringing now. As described in Roger Lewis’ President’s column last month, the Society Board is undertaking an unprecedented inquiry into the core values and primary purpose for the Society’s existence. More than 400 Barbershoppers will be invited to participate in round table discussions that explore the fundamental tenets of our life in the Society.

The end result of this process is a clearly described vision of the future of the Society, the “why” of the organization’s activities and place in the world.



We rarely stop to consider whether a different outlook may actually be more accurate and useful.

THE HARMONIZER

WWW.SPEBSQSA.ORG/HARMONIZER

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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.

A need for greater external focus

To keep the whole world singing, we must look outward, not inward. Our immediate past president Roger Lewis is fond of saying that organizations with an external focus grow, those with an internal focus do not. Surely an external focus includes supporting vocal music in our schools and communities.

What is each one of us doing to keep our part of the world singing? What opportunities do we provide in our communities? How do we reach out to other vocal groups? To what extent do we support our local school vocal programs?

If we are to keep the whole world singing, each of us must start by keeping his own part of the world singing. And that means outreach: We must reach out to other people and other organizations and institutions.

And when we do, we can see with new eyes. Consider your most memorable experience with a group of young men singing. Maybe it was the collegiate quartet guys all together singing on the international stage, or a YMIH camp, or your local school chorus. Close your eyes for a moment and put yourself back to that time. Remember what it felt like. See it in your mind's eye. Do you remember being wowed by the enthusiasm of the young people singing? Recall the power of the vocal performance and its emotional impact on you. Can you see again how much fun it is to sing? Can you *feel* the excitement? Did the performance give you new eyes to see the importance singing has for you personally?

Reaching out to the people of the world is an important part of helping share the joy of singing. There is an instant camaraderie and harmony among people who sing together. Singing together makes life more enjoyable and allows each of the singers to live life more fully, no matter what the vocal style. Singing is fun! Singing allows us to communicate and make connections among people. Share the joy!

Keep the whole world singing!

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Top tips to make your chapter famous

Hello friends. Sharing my column with interesting barbershop leaders is something I don't do often enough. It is a real joy for me to have Reed Sampson, our managing director of public relations, sit in today. Reed not only heads up the Society's PR efforts but he takes care of the bass efforts in our seniors quartet, **Harmony**, and is a good friend.

Reed has been on staff for six years. He came to us as a newspaper writer and editor, following 23 years in the U.S. Air Force. Reed has been a Society member for 27 years and a quartetter for most of that time. I've asked a few important questions of Reed today. Questions we hope will provide answers and ideas which will prove helpful to our readers as we all go about selling our Society, our harmony and our brotherhood to the world around us.



**Reed
Sampson**

The two best PR programs in the Society

Darryl: Reed, as a fellow who gets to see what individual chapters and quartets all over North America are doing, what do you see as the top one or two best PR ideas?

Reed Sampson: Thanks for the opportunity to share some thoughts and ideas in your column, Darryl. Public relations, while not particularly complicated, does require smart planning, some sharp "idea people" and, of course, a budget. PR cuts across every aspect of chapter life. So, I believe that each chapter needs a PR officer and every PR officer needs a PR committee, even if that committee is just one or two other people.



It sometimes seems we're a Society of "haves" and "have-nots." Reed Sampson shows how to be a "have" in chapter PR.

Singing Valentines is hands down the best PR program we have going in the Society today. It puts our music in front of thousands of people in the very best and most positive way. A Singing Valentine delivered to local government officials or other prominent people in the community (or even to kids) should always include an invitation to the media. I think our readers will agree that there are great opportunities for follow-up, e.g. send Singing Valentines customers information about shows and other appearances. Businesses that supply flowers, cards, candy, etc., make excellent advertising prospects for show programs. The follow-up definitely presents opportunities to recruit new members. It's really an easy sell. "You gave music to someone special as a Valentine gift ... why not come be part of our special music yourself?"

After saying all of that, it would be fair to remind our readers that aside from being simply the best PR opportunity, providing Singing Valentines has become a hugely important fund-raiser for many chapters—often a bigger revenue source than chapter shows or show programs. It is low risk; it can net a chapter \$20-\$30 per sale. Small chapters typically will sell 30-100 Valentines, while larger chapters might sell 200-300. Some chapters also consider the Singing Valentines program the best quartet development device they have ever used.

A close second, and a program that has wonderful PR opportunities throughout the barbershop year, is the **holiday chorus** concept. That's where non-barbershop singers are invited to come sing with your chorus for a specific event—without a commitment to join. Again, it puts our music in front of new men in a wonderfully positive setting, and it also helps men decide—on their own—to become part of your chapter. It can be used as originally presented—for the Christmas holidays—and at many other times throughout the year. We recently used that concept

(United We Sing) as part of the 9/11 Tribute. One chapter had 30 guest singers, 20 of whom have visited the chapter since the event. Many have asked for membership applications. *Men join the Society because of the music.*

DF: Reed, I know you are always working on the next big barbershopping exposé. What can you tell our readers to be on the look-out for?

New things on the horizon include an appearance by one of our top quartets on the popular National Public Radio show "A Prairie Home Companion." The show host, Garrison Keillor, is a close-harmony aficionado and will put our guest quartet in the very best light. Many chapters and quartets have already committed to doing Singing Valentines. Our readers should know and click

onto our very rich Singing Valentines Web site. On page 26 of this issue of *The Harmonizer* is information about the next Society-wide effort from the Marketing & PR Committee: Planning a PR strategy for the year is smart business. While we're just into the new year, the November Veterans' Day/Remembrance Day program would be served well by being on the calendar for early planning and organization.

And who isn't looking forward to our international convention in Louisville? Any chorus or quartet that will compete should take advantage of the inherent PR opportunities. Wouldn't it be just great if we sent 60 or 70 news releases to local media throughout Canada and America telling about hometown quartets and choruses headed for the world championship of barbershop quartet singing?

Additional effective PR tips

DF: David Letterman has his top ten list (as sometimes sung by a barbershop quartet). Do you have a Reed Sampson list of a few ideas about how a well-organized chapter might use PR to promote a local show or even membership in their chapter?

- RS: Here are some of the best tips:
- About three weeks before your show, invite all local media to a "media night." Prepare press kits about the show, including information about your headliner quartet. Let them see the preparations and even sing with you, if they wish. "Local singers prepare for fabulous show" is the headline for the story. And what could be better than to have a reporter say or write, "I had the chance to sing with them and had a great time"? It's wonderful *free* publicity.
 - Invite a local high school vocal ensemble to appear on your show and to promote your involvement with the school's music program. All those young singers have families who'll attend your show, too!
 - Cultivate personal relationships with local reporters and features editors. Plan to have your chapter PR officer send out at least one press release a month about chapter performances, charitable endeavors, school involvement—any legitimate activity—regardless of whether the releases are published. But remember:

The media want real information—not "stuff." Answer the reporter's question, "What's in it for my readers/listeners/viewers?"

- Regularly use a skilled photographer. Quality photos make a good story great. When accompanying a press release, a great photo immensely magnifies the chance that the story will be given good exposure.
- Join your local fine arts/performing arts organizations. Associate with others in your area who do what you do—entertain. Such organizations are also sources of financial grants and performance opportunities.
- The "Award of Harmony" could and should be much more widely used. The award is presented to a non-Barbershopper in the community who promotes "harmony" in the broadest sense. I've seen it given to a couple who tape records books for the blind, a woman who started the local bookmobile, and a community chorus director. A guide and presentation kit is available from Harmony Marketplace. The PR value is tremendous, and the media love it.

PR as a recruiting aid

DF: Reed, membership recruiting is such a "hot potato" these days. How can PR help get new members?

RS: The overwhelming majority of members first joined because they were invited to a chapter meeting or had a direct experience with barbershop harmony. Nothing will ever replace the value of a member saying to another man, "Why don't you come out for a night of singing and fellowship with me and my friends"? That's PR at its best.

Public relations is about name recognition; it's about doing a good job and taking credit for it; it's about delivering a quality product—good singing—that attracts men and inspires them to want to join. Every member should carry chapter business cards at all times ... they're a great, inexpensive PR tool.

When preparing PR material for your chapter, use the resources on the Society Web site, in *The Harmonizer*, "Live Wire" and other publications. Chapters can use or reproduce any of the material produced by the Society without first having to obtain permission. Just provide the appropriate attribution when you do. Example: "*The Harmonizer*,

Jan/Feb 2004. Used by permission."

The Society Web site should be the first resource for every chapter. Be sure to read the PR article "The best-kept SECRET in town!" (www.spebsqsa.org > *Run Your Chapter* > *Get Famous*). If your chapter is a secret, how will you attract new members? That piece came from a larger feature about PR that ran in the May/June 2002 issue of *The Harmonizer* (pages 14-19), which was also used as a handout in PR classes at our 2003 COTS. Any barbershop chapter can make tremendous strides in their PR efforts by following the suggestions and guidelines in that article.

Actually, that entire "Get Famous" section has some great ideas. The COTS course outline gets into details about building a chapter press kit—another important PR tool. There are guides to help prepare for radio and TV interviews, and much, much more.

DF: Many thanks, Reed. Our readers, and ultimately our chapters, will benefit greatly from the information and ideas you've shared today. I'd offer this observation for your final thoughts. It sometimes appears that we are a Society of "haves" and "have-nots." That's to suggest that while some chapters are growing, many are not; some chapters produce shows that are perennial sell-outs, while other chapters no longer even do a show; some chapters enroll 2-10 quartets and sell 25 - 250 Singing Valentines, while other chapters just don't bother. From a PR perspective Reed, what do you see as the difference?

RS: It's a matter of action. In both types of chapters, leaders come away from COTS talking about planning, smart PR and how to market new membership in their chapters. For the so-called "haves," that conversation becomes a plan, a strategy and a commitment, with a real budget and a capable person or team that executes a plan that utilizes the many PR and marketing tools available to them. Their conversation becomes a promise, with follow-through by many "promise keepers."

For the "have-nots" ... it pretty much remains a conversation.

DF: Thanks again, Reed.

RS: I'm glad you asked.



National anthem gigs, riverboating adventures

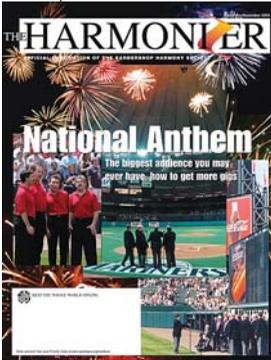
In light of the wonderful Harmonizer article about singing the national anthem, I thought it would be appropriate to let you know that your formula for getting these gigs is a good one. This past summer, **Pierce-Arrow** quartet followed the same basic steps you outlined in *The Harmonizer*, and this photo was the result. It was a thrill and the cold temperature was out-matched by the intensity of the crowd and the “rockets red glare” bursting overhead while we sang.



GARY MCBRIDE
N. Tonawanda, N.Y.

Cheez—you didn't tell me our quartet was going to be on the cover! Great issue—got three calls already last night. Now if only we can get 76 at prelims.

BOB SUTTON
(Author, national anthem story)



Riverboating really is that fun

I spend much of my time “testifying” about the Delta Queen Company and the sheer glory of riverboating, so I really appreciate the beautiful job you did through pictures and words to get the message out to those who share my other passion. Prior to that barbershop trip I had been on seven trips on the Mississippi Queen within the last two years! By the way, I was the one who thought up the idea of the cruise. Each time we took a trip, I commented that the only thing that could make it any better was to have

barbershop on the boat. Lo and behold, I happened to say that to the right person and before I knew it we had planned the trip, and I was there with my quartet. I called **The Roaring Twenties** and had the entertainment director contact Darryl Flinn. I'm glad he recommended Joe Liles because he was just what we needed to pull it all together.

I, like you, thought there was just enough barbershop to keep us happy but not so much that the group didn't get to experience the real joy of the steamboating experience. We will be making our 10th trip in February.

JUDY NICHOLS
Lead, Special Delivery quartet

See ad on the inside front cover for more details on this July's trip.

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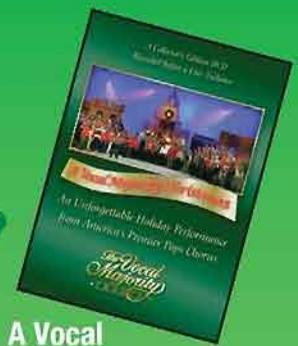
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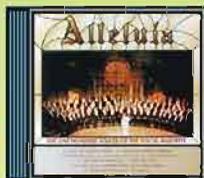
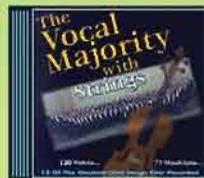
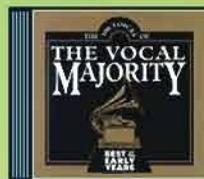
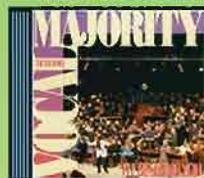
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Missed you in Montreal: catch you on TV

Last summer in Montreal, **Hi-Fidelity** quartet was devastated when they had to scratch their international debut at the last minute due to illness. They've had some mighty nice consolation prizes, however, in the form of show biz folks who've recently picked them over more prominent groups for some national advertising gigs.

During the Rose Parade celebrations Dec. 30 through Jan. 1, they helped with a national marketing blitz for Roto-Rooter by performing as barbershopping plumbers. Three days worth of jingles, commercials and spot performances of barbershop favorites helped celebrate the 50th anniversary of the company's famous jingle.

In November, the quartet filmed yet another television commercial perfectly tailored for a barbershop quartet: the popular Xbox video game "Tao Feng: Fist of the Lotus." On second thought, we don't see the connection either, but the director knew what he was looking for; in Hi-Fidelity he found the needed look, sound and high-energy style, plus the ability to translate his comedic ideas into music. The sound man was likewise impressed that after 10 hours of filming, the quartet maintained the same sound through hundreds of takes. (They did



PLUMBING, ORIENTAL COMBAT AND BARBERSHOP combine for a nice paycheck for members of Hi-Fidelity: Craig Ewing (T), Tom Moore (L), Martin Fredstrom (Bs) and Gregg Bernhard (Br).

the Harmony College faculty proud!) The crew insisted on hearing a "real barbershop" number once the filming was done and the quartet obliged with a new Tom Gentry arrangement of "I'll Never Say Never Again, Again."

For more information on Hi-Fidelity, go to www.hifidelityquartet.com

Four kinds of Harmony College/Directors College scholarships now available

Earl Moon Scholarship. A limited number of Harmony College scholarships will be made available through the Earl Moon Memorial Endowment Fund. A candidate must have been a member of the Society for at least three years, active in his chapter, have never attended Harmony College before and might not otherwise have the opportunity to do so.

Submit applications by May 1. Get a copy of the form at www.choralaires.org or fax or e-mail request to 626-336-7755 or pboyle@choralaires.org. Request applications or send completed applications to Whittier Chapter, SPEBSQSA, P.O. Box 4262, Whittier CA, 90607



Larry Ajer Scholarship applications requested. This scholarship covers tuition, room and board for four quartet members at the 2004 Harmony College. Application is open to quartets that have been registered with the Society for at least two years and have placed in the top 10 at a district contest and competed in at least one international preliminary competition.

Application details are available on the Web at *Happenings > Schools > Larry Ajer Scholarship*, or by calling Linda Neuenfeld at 800-876-7464 x8591. Completed applications must be received by April 15, 2004. Send them to the Dan Signor, Vice Chairman for Quartet Support, P.O. Box 342, Grantham, NH 03753 or by e-mail to dan_lead@yahoo.com

100 Director's College scholarships available. The Society Board of Directors and Harmony Foundation have approved 100 scholarships for Directors College 2004. Each district has been allocated a specific number of scholarships, with a primary focus on front-line directors who have never attended Directors College. This year, districts unable to fill slots with first-time, front-line attendees may invite repeat attendees and assistant directors. All directors interested in receiving one of these full-tuition, room-and-board scholarships must apply via their district vice president for chorus director development by Feb. 29. Direct questions to your DVP or Jerry Knickerbocker, 814-827-9347, jerrykn@csonline.net.



Salute hospitalized veterans. Here's a great way to do some good and get chapter quartets primed for Singing Valentines: Perform for hospitalized veterans a few days in advance at the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week, the days just before Valentines Day this year.

The Barbershop Harmony Society is a charter member of PAVE (Performers Alliance for Veterans Entertainment) and member choruses and quartets already have provided shows through that organization. To help, contact Katie Brooks at The Veterans Fund, 616-650-2076 or KatieBrooks@veteransfund.com. If you schedule a concert, please contact the Society PR department and be sure to get some great photos. Send your information to PRmedia@spebsqsa.org.

30 minutes of fame, no quartet backup

The month of November brought fame but not a lot of fortune to Bob Hartley, lead of **Metropolis** (2003 international bronze medalist). This **Dapper Dans of Disneyland** sub rubbed shoulders with the ghouls in a credited one-song tenor role with the stone quartet in "The Haunted Mansion" movie and soundtrack. Earlier that month, he rubbed shoulders with Pat and Vanna as he filmed an episode of "Wheel of Fortune" for later broadcast. During the introductions, he plugged his quartet, the Barbershop Harmony Society and the Harmony Sweepstakes, which Metropolis won in 1998. He was reportedly the life of the party backstage (no surprise), and after the show, Bob's two on-air competitors credited Bob with calming them backstage and helping them feel comfortable in front of the cameras. Unfortunately, Bob's ease in front of the camera didn't make him a superior guesser, as he spent his time at the wheel calling letters and buying vowels that weren't there. The other two won \$15,000 and \$22,000 respectively. Hey, return the favor, won't you?



MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY

Lou Perry Harmony College Scholarship competition opens. Arrangers, here's your chance to win prepaid tuition to Harmony College 2004. (Last year, Joe Johnson and Derek Hatley won scholarships!) Each participant will receive a detailed review of his arrangement by Dennis Driscoll (chair), Mel Knight or Burt Szabo. By March 15, 2004, send three copies each of one arrangement, the published sheet music, and a brief letter discussing your arranging experience. Arrangements written with a Coda product, such as Finale, should be sent by e-mail to driscoll@tca.net. Otherwise, mail to: Dennis M. Driscoll, 213 Redmond Drive, College Station, TX 77840. For more details call Dennis at 409-693-0036 or go to www.spebsqsa.org > *Happenings* > *Schools* > *Lou Perry Scholarships*.

Don't miss the Roadshows!

Looking for a way to spend an evening with a bunch of other Barbershoppers while re-lighting your barbershop fire? Want to have a guaranteed great time in the process? Well, the Roadshow is just for you.

There will be 20 Roadshow appearances in 2004. Each session will be an interchapter activity designed to reconnect you, the member, with your barbershop roots while enjoying yourself immensely and learning why you need to share this hobby more with others. It's designed to be fun first, and with enough to inspire and show you how to find more men like us. Plan now to attend one of these meetings with these leaders:

- March 15 Washington, D.C., *Ev Nau*
- March 22 Dallas, *TBA*
- March 22 Houston, *Bill Rashleigh*
- March 23 Los Angeles, *Bill Rashleigh*
- March 22 Hartford, Conn., *Jim DeBusman*
- March 23 Atlanta, *Lloyd Steinkamp*
- March 23 Philadelphia, *Jim DeBusman*
- March 24 Minneapolis, *Lloyd Steinkamp*
- March 29 Louisville, *Dave LaBar*
- March 30 Rochester, N.Y., *Dave LaBar*
- April 5 Seattle, *Joe Liles*
- April 7 Chicago, *Joe Liles*
- April 19 Des Moines, *Ev Nau*
- April 19 Toronto, *Greg Lyne*
- April 20 St. Louis, *Ev Nau*
- April 20 Orlando, *Greg Lyne*
- April 21 Columbus, *Ev Nau*
- April 26 Detroit, *Mel Knight*
- April 26 Denver, *Jim Bagby*
- April 27 Indianapolis, *Mel Knight*
- April 27 San Francisco, *Jim Bagby*
- May 17 Des Moines, *Ev Nau*



Bring a guest, win a prize ... but be there and enjoy the fun, singing and camaraderie that make us what we are. Then, go find others to make us even bigger and better! More details will be forthcoming. But, don't miss this opportunity to see some of the Society's finest presenters in action.

Choose best of the best of the best

Want to start a good debate? Of the Vocal Majority's 10 wins, which was their best performance? Decide for yourself by listening to all 10 winning contest sets on one CD,



"VM X." The evolution, growth and development under director Jim Clancy is readily apparent. (Nine members of the Vocal Majority have won all 10 gold medals: Bob Arnold, Dave Barrow, Brian Belcher, Mickey Bonesio, Greg Clancy, Jim Clancy, Denis Conrady, Quinn Hunter and Jim Martin.) Order a copy of VM X at 214-526-8686, www.vocalmajority.com or from Harmony Marketplace at www.harmonymarketplace.com.



Society music briefs

Learning CDs now available. The Society's popular learning cassette program has expanded to include CD format. Each single song CD (published catalog only) contains all four voice part tracks in the same voice predominant right channel (other three voices left channel) configuration as the cassettes. Some CDs also will contain other tracks, such as a demo. For songs in eight parts, the CD will contain the predominant voice tracks for all parts.

Currently, 150 songs are available, including the Barbershop Classics series (7340 - 7384), Harmony Explosion series (8601 - 8617, 8625 - 8635) and Gold Medal series (8801 - 8836). Songs from previous series (Songs for Men, Show Tunes, Harmony Heritage, etc.) will be made available on a continuing basis. There may be some delay on orders for songs that have not yet been remastered for CD.

The price per CD will be \$12 USD, and each order will include information on policies and procedures to duplicate tracks for members. Note, the current price for a set of *four* single cassettes is \$16 USD. Volume discounts will not apply. Order from Harmony Marketplace at 800-876-7464 x8410, marketplace@spebsqsa.org or www.harmonymarketplace.com.

Simplified music pricing announced. Harmony Marketplace no longer lists both member and non-member prices for sheet music. A single price of \$2.20 per copy is now in effect, with a 25% discount for members, effectively making the member price \$1.65 per copy. Both members and non-members receive a 10% discount for volume orders of 40 or more copies, equaling \$1.49 per copy for volume purchases by members.

Previews of unpublished arrangements discontinued. A moratorium has been called on the mailing of legal/unpublished arrangements for previewing. The heavy volume of orders has required us to seek a better way to help music consumers interested in this giant reservoir of music. Details will be released immediately when a new process is in place.

ASCAP Show Licensing Reporting Form now online

A new online reporting mechanism is now available on the Society Web site. View the updated instructions (with screen shots!) at www.spebsqsa.org/ascap.

Harmonizers score again with gig on network television



The Alexandria Harmonizers performed for President George Bush and a national

television audience on the highly prestigious Kennedy Center Honors as part of a tribute to director Mike Nichols. The two-hour program, which aired Dec. 26 on CBS, also included tributes to performer James Brown, actress Carol Burnett, singer Loretta Lynn, and violinist Itzhak Perlman.

Little did the audience know the chorus received its invite for the weekend filming Tuesday of that same week—with new music to learn—and had another show that weekend still to do. But that's why the producers consider the Alexandria Harmonizers the "go-to group" they can count on—this was the fifth Kennedy Center Honors performance for the chorus, and the third performance in the last four years. They previously helped pay lifetime tributes to artistic legends such as Perry Como, Charlton Heston, Angela Lansbury and Van Cliburn.

Sweet Adeline turns 100

The strains of "Sweet Adeline" were heard across the USA on Dec. 27, marking the 100th anniversary of the influential song. National



Public Radio's Scott Simon discussed the song's influence and played a concert recording of a barbershop rendition by the rock group Phish, which has long included barbershop harmony in its eclectic concert repertoire. While no one would mistake Phish's rendition

for that of **The Ritz**, the sentiment and exposure were appreciated. At press time, there was an active audio link to the NPR segment at www.npr.org/rundowns/segment.php?wfId=1572654. ■

CONVENTIONS INTERNATIONAL

2004
LOUISVILLE
June 27-July 4

2005
SALT LAKE CITY
July 3-10

2006
INDIANAPOLIS
July 2-9

2007
DENVER
July 1-8

2008
Nashville
June 29-July 6

2009
Anaheim
June 28-July 5

2010
Philadelphia
June 27-July 4

MIDWINTER

2004
Biloxi, Miss.
Jan. 25-Feb. 1

2005
Sacramento
Jan. 15-22

2006
Albuquerque
Jan. 21-28

HARMONY COLLEGE / DIRECTORS COLLEGE
2004
Missouri Western State College
St. Joseph, Mo.
Aug. 1-8



HARMONY HOW-TO

Burt Szabo
Arranger, director, quartet singer



Build a strong quartet repertoire

It is important for each quartet to develop a musical repertoire unique to its strengths, style and limitations. While many new quartets start out by singing songs from their chorus repertoire or from *Just Plain Barbershop* or *Strictly Barbershop*, very soon they recognize the need for something of their own.

Virtually no quartet has the ability to perform *every* song equally well. Even top quartets have concerns—or ought to—about the types of songs they select for their repertoire. No matter the skill level, each quartet must recognize its limitations (we all have them) and take advantage of its members' strengths as performers. Hence, the need to select material that guarantees every performance will be successful.

Assess your abilities. What is the range of each voice? Be absolutely honest about this. Sure, some days you get lucky and your range suddenly expands a note or two. Don't let this influence you. It's better to play safe and take off a bit on both the high and the low end. Why? There will be those times when you have a performance and some of the four singers have nerves or are not in the best vocal shape. Wouldn't it be comforting to know, "Sure, we can handle this song," and not have to worry, "I hope we can make it through to the end of the tag."

Analyze your voices. Is there a voice you could showcase with a solo? A solo provides some needed variety from the usual four-part sound. Someone with a comedic flair? Take advantage of that with an appropriate song.

Choose a variety of songs—not just your favorite types. What kind of music does your quartet prefer: all oldies, lots of ballads, mostly up-tempo tunes, songs of the swing or contemporary era? It's fine to make your favorite types of songs the foundation of your repertoire, but do build *variety* into your repertoire so you'll have a show package tailored for any audience. Consider that there will be different needs and tastes if you are performing for senior citizens, a businessmen's group, a birthday or anniversary group, a youth audience or if you're singing on a chapter show.

A fixed package of only 8-10 songs that you sing for every occasion assures that some of these songs will be less favorably received (yawn) by an audience. Plan a package that 100% of your audience will find accessible, not 75%. This means you might not sing "Dear Old Girl" for the businessmen's luncheon, or a Beatles song at the senior citizens retirement center. Think about it.

Ideally, your repertoire should display plenty of variety, including:

- Some oldies. Audiences will appreciate the well-known ones most.
- A couple each of up-tunes, ballads, and medium tempo songs.
- Something more recent, from the 1930s, '40s, or the '60s or later.
- Something inspirational, sacred or gospel. Such a song will appeal to every audience and is always a winner.
- Something patriotic or at least one song which says you're proud of your country. Another sure-fire winner.
- Certainly "Happy Birthday," and something seasonal like "Winter Wonderland" or "In The Good Old Summer Time."
- A "Hello" song—something light, fast and snappy that says, "We're glad to be here singing for you."
- A farewell song, a closer. "Goodnight Ladies" works well for almost any event. There are many others.

Signs a song may be a good fit for your quartet

- It contributes variety to your repertoire
- It fits your personalities and your image
- It fits your voices and voice ranges
- It's easy enough that you can sing it very well—every time
- It challenges you just enough as singers to help you become a better quartet

Signs a song may be a poor fit for your quartet

- Only half the quartet likes the song
- It's on an international champions' recording
- You already have two or three songs that are similar
- It's too darn difficult for your quartet

Choose songs you can sing well, not songs you wish you could sing well. It's important for your audience that you sing every song with ease, good vocal production, energy and understanding. If a song is too difficult, and every time you perform it you just hope you make it to the end, you're taking a chance on losing part of your audience and perhaps reflecting negatively on our music and our Society.

That said, *do* choose some songs that present a bit of a challenge—songs that will inspire your quartet to strive to sing better, with better vocal production and with more fine-tuned interpretation technique, and with more showmanship and flair. All of these will help your quartet grow, develop, and become more entertaining than you ever thought possible. All challenges should be attainable with some hard work—not impossible. Every quartet has strengths and limitations. Learn to accept them.

Be original—find music that showcases you at your best. When selecting repertoire, many quartets simply sing whatever they've heard, rather than taking time to find arrangements well suited to their style and skills. Please remember that the arrangements that our top quartets sing are usually too difficult for most other quartets to perform well. If you're tempted to imitate the champs, imitate their ability to find arrangements that showcase their own unique strengths.

Broaden your search to include the thousands of great four-part arrangements available through the Society and via arrangers' Web sites. Every quartet and chorus, from beginners to veteran contest winners, can find a bigger variety of appropriate music than they could ever hope to learn.

Fill your repertoire with a wide variety of strong, time-tested barbershop style harmonies—there's virtually no end to the variety of quality material available. Always keep in mind that we are a barbershop singing organization—barbershop-style music is what your audiences want and expect. To provide anything less is to give your members and your audiences less than they deserve. ■

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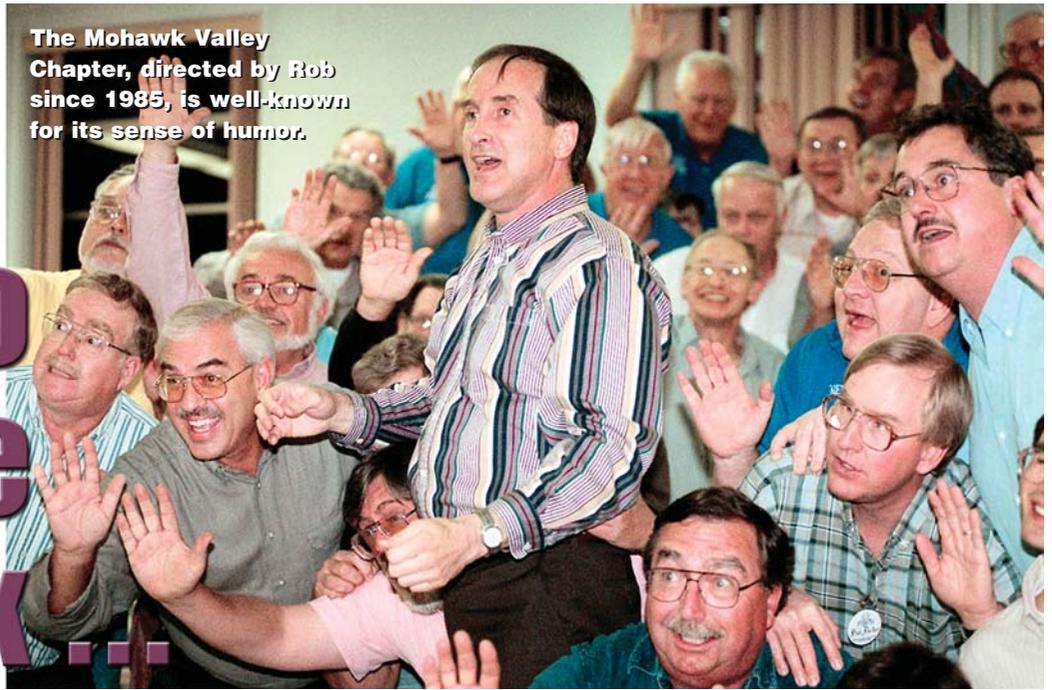


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Contact the Education Department for further information at 800.992.7464 or go to www.sweetadelinesintl.org

The Mohawk Valley Chapter, directed by Rob since 1985, is well-known for its sense of humor.

To give back...



President Rob Hopkins hopes to strengthen the Society that has given him so much

Were George Hopkins alive today, he would be overwhelmed with pride and joy. The consummate quartetter, arranger and administrator was plenty proud in 1966, when his junior-high-aged son, Rob, joined with three other Boy Scouts to form a quartet, the “Uncalled 4.” As the quartet stayed together through high school, this Bryn Mawr Chapter legend was thrilled to see that his son had acquired his own love of music and commitment to the Society.

Fast forward to today. How proud would George be to know that his son has now been directing Society choruses for decades and has become one of the Society’s top arrangers? How would he have reacted had he been in Montreal to watch Rob’s latest quartet compete on the international stage? Now imagine how George would feel to know that his son is now president of the Society he loved so much!

Mind and heart

Even people who barely know Rob are struck by his obvious intellectual ability and knowledge of music. (His double major in mathematics and music from Oberlin College and doctorate in music theory and history from the University of Pennsylvania tell that story!) Those who know Rob well can also tell you of the size of his heart. Ask Rob why he has given so much of his life to Barbershoppers, and he will talk of the wonderful music, the deep friend-

ships, and the desire to give something back to a Society that has given him so much. Ask him again, and you will easily bring him to tears of appreciation and love.

Rob is convinced that barbershopping affects people’s lives in a profound way and has dedicated a large part of his life to preserving and nurturing the hobby for future generations. This combination of mind and heart has made Rob an exceptional Society leader for many years.

A history of positive change

Rob thrives on change and is committed to change “that will enable us to grow, for members to have more fun, and for a more efficient approach to the work of the Society.” Based on his past successes, you know that he means it.

Over the years, Rob has ably demonstrated his capacity to realize his dreams and the dreams of others.

The sidebar on the opposite page shows the many administrative tasks he has tackled for the Society and, more important, the imaginative and positive results he brought to fruition. For example, he chaired the Future II subcommittee that initiated the redesign of the Contest and Judging system in the early 1990s and served on the Management Study Team, which redesigned the Society’s Board and management structure in 1995.

Rob sings baritone in Harmonix, 2002 Seneca Land District champion and 2003 international competitor.



Eric Jackson
Former Society Board member, Harmony College faculty

When asked about his reaction to being president of the Society, Rob points to huge changes coming in the first year of his presidency:

- a new executive director
- a revised vision and mission for the Society
- continued planning for a new headquarters building
- a revised governance structure for the Society
- an effective response to a new marketing study that indicates significant opportunities for the Society

In planning ahead, Rob speaks highly of the professionalism of the Society staff and the resource they represent for the future. He expresses high hopes for the continued expansion of the staff's role in developing the Society both musically and in membership.

The music always comes first

Meanwhile, some things never change. Rob is always arranging barbershop music, singing in a quartet, and directing a chorus. Sixteen of his arrangements have

Barbershop history

1976	Joined the Society
1977-79	Assistant director, Bryn Mawr, Pa., chapter
1980-83	Director, Wilmington, Del., chapter
1980-present	Certified judge in Arrangement, then Chairman of Judges, then Music judge
1981-98	Served 13 times on the international judging panel
1981-2003	Harmony College/Director College faculty member 17 times
1983-85	Assistant director, Utica, N.Y., chapter
1983- present	Music professor at Hamilton College, Clinton, N.Y.
1985-present	Director of the Mohawk Valley chapter
1994, 1997	Directs Mohawk Valley chapter to SLD district championships
1999	SLD Bulletin Editor of the Year
2002	SLD District Champion with Harmonix
2003	International competitor with Harmonix

16 arrangements published by Society, dozens of others performed throughout Society. Coach of various prominent groups, including **Uptown Sound** and **Riptide**

Administrative history

1986-95	Society Contest and Judging Committee member (chair, 1992-93)
1992-95	World Harmony Council member
1994-95	Management Study Team
1995-96	Society Board member
1995-96	Chairman, Music Publications Committee
1997-2000	Chairman, Music & Performance Committee
2001-present	Society Board member
2002-03	Society Executive Vice President

been published by the Society, and dozens more have been performed by Barbershoppers. In 2003, after 36 years of quartet singing, Rob performed for the first time on the international contest stage, as baritone of the 2002 Seneca Land District champion quartet, **Harmonix**. Amazing!

From 1985 until the present, Rob has served as director of the Mohawk Valley Chapter, which has continuously thrived. The chorus is known for both zany and heartfelt performances, winning the district championship twice and the AA plateau medal several times. Rob, a certified master director, has received many honors, and it tells a lot about him that he is most proud of being named his chapter's "Barbershopper Extraordinaire," a multiple-year super-Barbershopper-of-the-Year, in 1999.

Finally, here is a short story of a quartet performance that speaks volumes about our new president. It's one of those magical moments that Rob remembers vividly, and that this writer had the privilege to witness.

The year was 1982; the quartet was **Classic Choice**, with Rob in the role of baritone, arranger and creative leader. The song was "That's What I Call A Pal." It began in usual heartfelt fashion, but then the bass singer Bob Brown ("Brownie") began to cough, quietly at first and then more noticeably. The other three singers ignored him and continued performing. The coughing grew worse, and Brownie started to lean on the other men, then slowly slide down to the floor and start to twitch. As the other men began the tag, Bob gave a final jerk on the floor and stopped moving. The others stepped over him and went for it: "That's what I ca-a-all, a PAL!" When it was all over, they noticed Brownie on the floor, loaded him into a cart and rolled him off stage to the uproarious screams of appreciation from a packed house.

I have thought many times about that performance. Combined with the unmistakable expression of love and appreciation for their bass singer (and therefore for each other) was also the clear message that "nothing gets in the way of a barbershop song."

Behind the delightful entertainment, a profound double message shone through: We deeply love our music, and we deeply love each other.

Our new Society President knows that about us, because he is one of us. ■

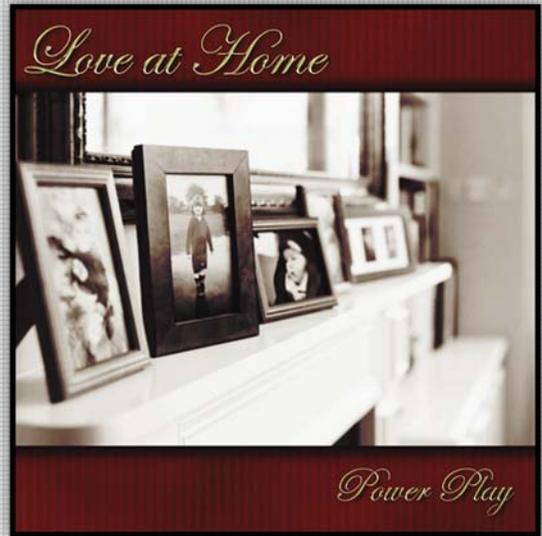


Married for 15 years, Rob and Kris have three children, Emily (13), Daniel (9) and Laura (6). Kris and all three kids love singing and regularly attend district and international conventions. Daniel recently announced his intention to join the Mohawk Valley Chapter next year. No surprise!



Don Mike Jack Mark

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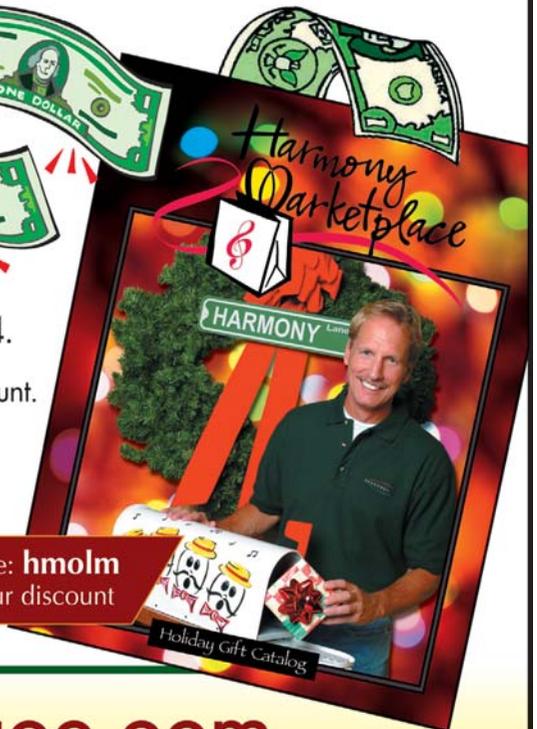
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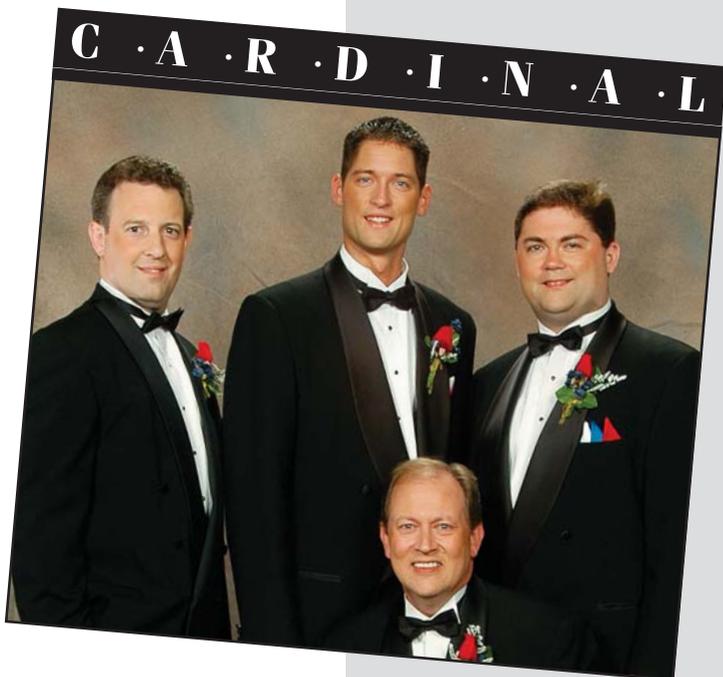


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2003 District Quartet CHAMPIONS

C · A · R · D · I · N · A · L



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From left: Kurt Vogel (T), Aaron Hughes (Br), Bryan Hughes (L), (kneeling) Terry Wence (Bs)

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Phone: 765-349-8950

C · E · N · T · R · A · L S · T · A · T · E · S



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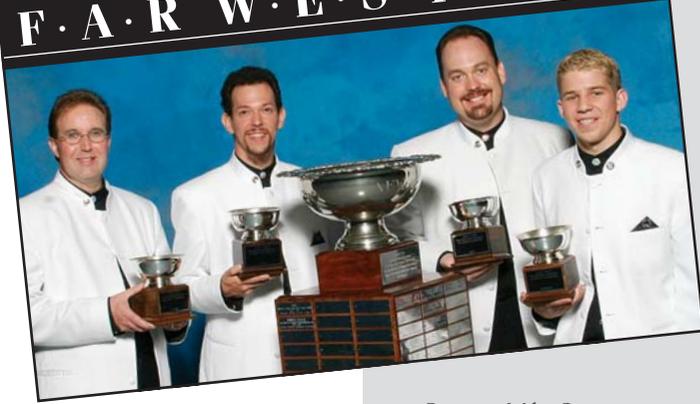
E · V · E · R · G · R · E · E · N



FRIENDLY ADVICE
From left: Dan Tangarone (T), Wes Sorstokke (L), Forrest LaMotte (Bs), Bill Thurmon (Br)

Contact: Bill Thurmon
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S · E · N · E · C · A · L · A · N · D



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S · O · U · T · H · W · E · S · T · E · R · N



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S · U · N · S · H · I · N · E



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Roger Payne picks The most influential groups of all time

Forget the 10 best or 10 favorite—these 10 changed the landscape forever

What an assignment! Pick the top 10 most influential barbershop groups in history. Justify your selections.

Well, thanks for the plum assignment, Lorin. I can see the villagers picking up their pitchforks and lighting their torches already. “He left out the Phlegm Throwers!” they’re telling each other. “What in the name of the Waesche 13th is the Tritone Chorus doing on there?”

This is no academic tome, and I didn’t want to cloud this article with unnecessary facts. These aren’t even necessarily my favorite groups, or even the most skilled groups. They’re just, in my opinion, the most influential: groups who had the most impact beyond their contemporary fan base, groups whose influence we still feel, for good or ill, to this date. My list starts in the 1950s—anyone who hung it up before the ’70s, I’ve only heard on records. So, for example, while I’ve heard that the **Mid-States Four** first brought audience entertainment into the barbershop equation, I have no firsthand experience of that, so I couldn’t put them on my list in good conscience.

So, here are my picks in chronological order.

The Buffalo Bills

1951 quartet champion

Sure, it’s an obvious pick. But their appearance in “The Music Man” reinserted barbershop onto the pop culture landscape and continues to give us credibility to this day. If you’ve been in a quartet for at least six months and sung in public at least twice, there’s a near zero chance you’ve never been asked to sing “Lida Rose,” often by an attractive woman who supplies the counterpoint. It’s a tough job, boys, but somebody’s

If you’ve performed publicly in a quartet at least twice, there’s a near zero chance you’ve never been asked to sing “Lida Rose.”

got to rise to the occasion, and we have the Bills to thank for that ongoing opportunity. And for the chance most every quartet has if they hang around long enough to appear in their community theater production of Music Man.

Besides, how can you not love a quartet they named a pro football team after?

The Suntones

1961 quartet champion

I doubt anyone’s arguing yet. In Harlan Wilson and Gene Cokerof, these guys gave us arguably the finest baritone and tenor in Society history. Their appearances on the Jackie Gleason show further

solidified barbershop’s slot in pop culture consciousness. What’s more, they’ve sustained their excellence to this date, more than 40 years after their championship, although Bill Cain’s illness requires a fill-in these days.

Let’s talk repertoire. Charts like “As Time Goes By,” “Chordbusters March,” “Emaline,” “Bye Bye Blues,” “The River of No Return” and “In The Cool, Cool, Cool Of The Evening” have long since passed the test of time, often surviving subsequent arrangements of

the same songs—an unusual feat in itself. I’ve no doubt left out 10 of your favorites. Their show medleys—“West Side Story,” “Fiddler,” “My Fair Lady,” and others—remain the standard and the inspiration for subsequent attempts to marry barbershop and Broadway.

From a musician’s perspective, if you listen to the contest recordings of the era, just as the **Cracker Jills** led by the great Renee Craig did for the Sweet Adelines, they appear to have been the first to bring a true horizontal

THE PRE-MUSIC MAN CHAMPS: Vernon Reed (T), Al Shea (L), Dick Grapes (Br), Bill Spangenberg (BS)



Roger Payne
Music judge

sensibility to all their music. Sure, it is a rewarding pastime to enjoy each chord thoroughly before moving along, but not as musical an approach as the kind of line singing this Florida contingent showed us is possible.

And how about their four mikes approach and the attendant theatrical possibilities? Never mind the drama it permitted in their show medleys—who can forget the simple tilting of the mike stands which was so effective in “Jezebel”?

And here’s the clincher: Any quartet that can translate “Shrimp Boats Are A-Comin’” into barbershop and retain their credibility gets my vote.

The Louisville Thoroughbreds

Seven-time chorus champion

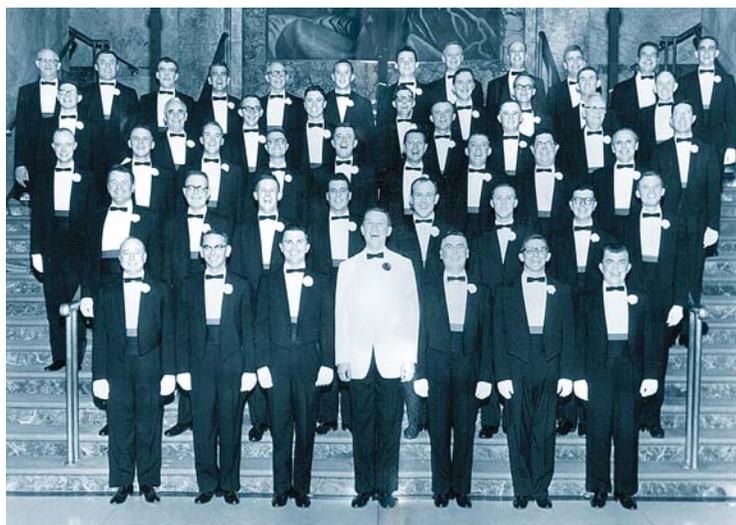
Led by the Vince Lombardi of SPEBSQSA, the legendary Jim Miller, the Thoroughbreds were the first chorus to demonstrate sustained championship excellence at the international level. They did it through a

They were the first chorus to demonstrate sustained championship excellence.

unique combination of rigorous attention to musical fundamentals and a wonderful, and thorough-(bred)ly barbershop sense of showmanship. “It’s barbershop harmony ti-i-ime” remains one of the great

launching pads for a barbershop show ever conceived, and many will argue that their performance of “Mardi Gras March” in Detroit in 1981 was the finest barbershop chorus performance at international in history. I know that, despite all the

THEIR FIRST OF SEVEN WINS in 1962 was under the direction of Bill Benner. The remaining six Thoroughbreds wins were under the baton of Jim Miller (Joe Wise co-directed three wins). Below, Jim is the first man on the second row.



They appear to have been the first to bring a true horizontal sensibility to all their music.

wonderful performances and musical improvements I’ve witnessed since, it remains for me the most viscerally exciting.

The TBreds also spawned the Citations, The Barons, the Bluegrass

Student Union and parts of the Interstate Rivals, all internationally renowned quartets. They also contributed much to the barbershop pedagogy and lexicon. Start with the famous Bill Meyers vowel chart, now a Halloween fixture at optometrist and dentist offices around the country. Then there’s the famous Miller equivalent of “This is a football,” which goes something like “All we have to do is sing the same words the same way at the same time. It’s simple, but it’s not easy.”

Three chords and a cloud of dust, and we loved it! Man, that’s good old-fashioned barbershop at its best!



THE SUNTONES: (Top) Bill Cain (Bs), Harlan Wilson (Br); (bottom) Bob Franklin (L), Gene Cokeroff (T)

The Dealer’s Choice

1973 quartet champion

There was a good reason they won their first year out, a feat only two quartets have accomplished in the 30 years I’ve been a member, both from Dallas. (Come on, that’s an easy one!) The DC brought an entirely new kind of sound to the hobby, one that emphasized quality vocal production and careful attention to balance and blend over individual virtuosity.

They showed the Society what mastery of the Sound category was about just as the category came into play. They showed how technical mastery, including a previously unheard level of precision and unity, could

They brought an entirely new kind of sound to the hobby, putting balance and blend over individual virtuosity.



DEALER'S CHOICE: Ai Kvanli (T), Bill Thornton (L), Gary Parker (Bs), Brian Beck (Br).

be harnessed to produce some electrifying moments, such as the swipe in “Goodbye Old Dixie” or the “I’d stay, but as much as I try-y-y-y” in “You Can Have Every Light on Broadway.” Their recordings remain masterpieces to this day, and such classic Brian Beck arrangements as “Love Letters Straight From Your Heart” are still woodshedded in lobbies everywhere. Heck, it’s a contest tune now! (I just don’t agree with those who contend that Brian Beck’s subsequent turn as Yoda, the hyperactive gnome, invalidated any previous musical value he brought to our hobby.)

They used a deeply resonant vocal production to produce a sound startlingly different from the exclusively “pingy” sound in vogue at the time.

always with fewer than 40 singers. In Salt Lake City in 1986, they took down a fifth-place medal with just 33 men, to the enthusiastic acclaim of the crowd.

The General Assembly Chorus

Back in the 1980s, before the **Louisville Times** or **Toronto Northern Lights**, a small chorus was succeeding at the international level. The Research Triangle Park chorus from North Carolina stunned the barbershop world with a breathtaking series of performances at international,

THE GREAT SINGING of today’s top choruses was pioneered by The General Assembly Chorus in the early ’80s. Too few in number to blow you away with volume, they made up for it with superior use of the vocal mechanism.



General Assembly performed with a great freedom and exuberance while using a deeply resonant vocal production to produce a sound startlingly different from the exclusively “pingy” sound in vogue at the time. Under the direction of Rudy Partin, an extraordinarily talented iconoclast if ever there was one, they were the first “little chorus that could” in the modern era. And although their identity morphed after Rudy’s departure, their convincing demonstration that quality did not have to stem from quantity paved the way for the current international chorus landscape, where more is not necessarily better.

The 139th Street Quartet

If this list were in order of influence, this quartet could be #1. Where to begin? How about this: They brought a slick—dare I say hip?—urbanity to the style that showed us all a new way to appeal to our audiences through barbershop. They employed the Hi-Los sense of inversion as spectacle in the barbershop medium in an extraordinarily focused, targeted way that made their arrangements exciting and effective. And who else would have put “K-K-K-Katy” into an arrangement of “You Tell Her Cause I Stutter,” a song that entertained mightily at the time but today would fall well outside the PC umbrella?

They brought a slick—dare I say hip?—urbanity to the style that showed us all a new way to appeal to our audiences through barbershop.

But their major contributions went beyond approach and repertoire. Their dispute with the judging program, which led to their lead quitting barbershop, has helped to fuel a kinder, gentler C&J program, focused more on encouraging performers than on rule enforcement. They were the first to bring a Russian quartet (The Quiet Don) to America. They were early proponents and organizers of the Society’s college quartet contest, which has grown into such an integral part of our operations. Without them, groups such as **Reprise** and **Four Voices** may never have come to be.

They brought barbershop to plays and other high-profile settings, and their television appearances on “Cheers” and “Night Court” also represented the hobby brilliantly. While their second Cheers

If everyone else's sound is the size of a barber pole, their sound fills the whole barbershop.



139th Street, early '80s (from top, clockwise): Larry Wright (L), Pete Neushul (Br), Doug Anderson (T), Jim Kline (Bs)

appearance caused a furor among the overly sensitive wing of the Society, it is less well known that the Night Court script originally called for the judge to insult them and send them away. After hearing them sing, star Harry Anderson told the producers, "They're too good! I can't insult them!" Which resulted in the memorable verdict, "They admit their guilt, they told no lies, but Oh! how they can harmonize! Not guilty!" At which point they exited singing, "We're just wild about Harry!," heroes to Barbershoppers everywhere.

For a quartet that changed leads almost as often as they changed key, the fact that they continued to win medals in three decades is awfully impressive.

The Boston Common

1980 quartet champion

I wish I could say that their musicianship and sound were influential, but nobody else has really been able to sing like this beloved quartet. If everyone else's sound is the size of a barber pole, their sound fills the whole barbershop. As musicians, it's as if everyone else is skating along the surface of the music and "doing things" with the arrangements, while they're just singing the song exactly the way you want to hear it.

That unique ability is why few other quartets have attained top levels with the BC's wonderful repertoire. I've never judged a performance of "Who Told You," for example—and I've judged quite a few—that scored higher

than mid-60s. Mid-B and below quartets apparently find that those charts display their abilities quite accurately, while quartets that might score higher seek out charts they can "do more" with.

So why are they so influential? Perhaps most important, they clearly showed that the performer's vision is much more important than the judges'. Proudly different, throughout their competing years they went out of their way to criticize what they considered an inherently flawed judging system that rewarded conformity and engendered conflicts of interest. The judges therefore cut them little slack in contests, which likely delayed by years the quartet's eventual championship.

Yet, the conflict only made the BC more beloved to the people, who, with **FRED**, would ask of the judges, "WHAT WERE YOU THINKING?" The result is, today's C&J system aspires to never force performers into pigeonholes but to recognize and help enhance the value each performer and performance generates on stage. Ironically, this cultural change among judges probably took longer to implement because BC cur-

Now's your turn

Put down those pitchforks and pick up your pens. Who's the most influential of them all? Who makes your list? Vote on-line at <http://secure.spebsqsa.org/survey/greatest.htm/>. We're also looking for well-written alternate selections to print in a future issue. Here are the rules:

- Justify your selections—don't just give us a different list.
- Focus on why your picks are right, not why you think Roger's picks are wrong.
- Be concise. The more words you use, the less chance you'll see them in print.

Send your comments to harmonizer@spebsqsa.org (preferred) or send to "Most Influential Groups" c/o The Harmonizer, 7930 Sheridan Rd, Kenosha, WI 53143.

THE BOSTON COMMON: Kent Martin (T), Rich Knapp (L), Terry Clarke (Bs), Larry Tully (Br)





FOUR UNDER PAR: Roger Payne (T), Joe Hunter (L), Frank Hendricks (Bs), Brian Horwath (Br)

mudgeonally stuck to its guns!

The BC's other major contribution, of course, was repertoire. No other quartet has so enriched lobbies everywhere with so many "Barberpole Cats Plus." "First Hello," "I'm Alone Because I Love You," "Caroline," "Ten Feet Off the Ground," "Moving Picture Ball," "Barbershop Strut" and "Don't Blame Me" are just a few, and I'll bet there's hardly anyone reading this who hasn't enjoyed singing more than one of those.

And what a magnificent gift they presented by sum-

ming up our shared barbershop experience with the signature song of their championship, "That Old Quartet of Mine." For that alone, they would make the list.

Four Under Par

Hey, just because I was in this quartet doesn't mean we don't belong on the list. Four Under Par legitimized pure comedy at the international contest.

At least one person from each of the following groups confirms that in biblical terms, Four Under Par begat **Chordiac Arrest**, which begat **FRED**, which begat **Freestyle** ... 4UP also begat **Providence**, which begat **Polk County**, which begat **Big Chicken** ...

It's tough to recall now, but before 1980, there was entertainment and the occasional costumed, themed "package," but pure comedy quartets typically did not sing well enough for that stage, and it

wasn't really expected. As singers, nobody would have mistaken Four Under Par for **Four Voices** (four sure), but we sang well enough to successfully base the comedy in the music and lyrics. Presentation guru Steve Plumb always says, "It sounded a little funny, and that was part of the appeal!"

It was enough to get us to international five times, where we clearly highlighted several principles

of successful parody:

- Punch lines need to fall on the musical climaxes, not in the middle of

measure seven

- Each punch line should be better than the one before. (It's called "development.")
- The basic parody can't merely sound like the original ("My Wild Irish Nose" just doesn't

make it unless you write a lot of funny stuff about it) but must recast the original in a funny context: "Panelin' Madeline's Home," "My Putty," "Tile, Darn Ya Tile," all from our Handyman Medley. In the same medley, we also showed the fun you can have with the language with the line people quote me most often: "If your ceiling's a disaster call the alabaster plaster masters."

Finally, we were one of the first to bring "inside" comedy to international, poking fun at ourselves and the hobby with the "Encore Song" and "Barbershop Conventions." **FRED's** immortal "Him and Him and That Guy" had its roots in "Wally Weepy, a busy district VP, he's busy doing real important stuff. Right." Today, because of Four Under Par, the court jester is a fixture at international.

The Vocal Majority

10-time chorus champion

Their musical influence is so obvious they hardly need me to talk about it. They set a new standard for barbershop chorus singing in 1975 and have continued to raise the bar for three decades. A tremendous work ethic and an exalted musical vision have produced sustained,

Before 1980, pure comedy quartets typically did not sing well enough for that stage, and it wasn't really expected.

AS THE BIG GUY up front, Jim Clancy has shown what is possible in performance. The Vocal Majority has likewise established enviable business benchmarks.



Three bonus quartets

The Interstate Rivals. A fine champion, they nonetheless wouldn't have made the list based solely on their body of work while together. But they're the only quartet where all four champions went on to win a second championship with another quartet:

Tenor, Kipp Buckner: **The Gas House Gang**

Lead, Joe Connelly: **Keepsake, Platinum**

Bari, Paul Gilman: **Marquis**

Bass, Jay Hawkins: **Marquis**

Most would argue that all four of those quartets ultimately transcended the Rivals. On the "begat" principle, therefore, the Rivals deserve a mention.

The Management. These four young music teachers did literally thousands of youth outreach appearances at schools all over New England and elsewhere, promoting barbershop music to our youth even before it became an official Society cause. To Michael Martin, Larry Bean, Kirk Young, and Chris Peterson, thanks for helping lower the average age of Society membership. Thanks also to groups such as **The Ritz, Four Voices** and many others who have done similar work.

The Letterman Quartet. Tom LaMotte, Bob Seda, Al Fennell, and Steve Delehanty have appeared on "Late Show with David Letterman" five times—approximately 11.5 million folks have seen them, not counting reruns. Twice, they've sung a "Top Ten List" of "Things That Sound Funny When Sung By a Barbershop Quartet," (Example: "Hey, does this look infected to you?"), complete with the stage presence. Other times they've sung the opening announcements, or handled other silly chores. Close to home, their influence can be felt in the volume and vehemence of correspondence they've generated to *The Harmonizer* and the Harmonet. But they've reminded America that barbershop is alive and well, and shown that we have the ability to laugh at ourselves as well as make excellent music.

consistent excellence. Somehow, they maintain their warm, signature sound despite experiencing a fairly significant turnover between international contests.

They also have shown us that a barbershop chorus can be a highly successful, efficiently functioning business. They sell out Reunion Arena for a series of holiday shows every year. They have more recordings out there than any average Barbershopper could reasonably afford. They've fueled their marketing efforts by building bridges to the music and recording industry. In the person of Bob Arnold, their marketing genius, they've freely shared the techniques that have driven their business success.

They've dramatically increased the perception of barbershop as quality music with their appearances in prestigious venues. It's often said that the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, generally acknowledged as one of the

finest vocal ensembles in the world, took their first joint performance a bit lightly, and will never make that mistake again. They've represented barbershop at many chapter shows and overseas, and have never been anything but marvelous ambassadors for the best and brightest that barbershop can be in all its aspects.

For giving us all something to strive for, for the pure pleasure of listening to their music, and for giving us a musical way to say, "We'll be right back after we go to the bathroom," we thank the Vocal Majority.

Michigan Jake

2001 quartet champion

Admittedly, they're a little recent, so their lasting influence is not clear. And, as much as I love "You Make Me Feel So Young," I may snap if I have to judge another performance of it. But that's why Jake is in here. Under the guidance of Mark Hale, Jake and the Louisville Times pioneered the swing revolution in barbershop. It's not that we never had a swingular piece before that; it's that Jake did swing effortlessly, over and over again, in music that clearly could not be anything other than barbershop, offering us another avenue for joyous expression.

They didn't hammer us with beats two and four; they just let them live, and the swing took care of itself. Their triplets didn't cry out for attention; they just enhanced the music. Their sense of line in songs like "Louise," "Dinah," and "Sweet Lorraine" made swing tick. They started the trend, and it's bearing fruit—we're now hearing much less clumsy swing, and swing has retreated from a new fad to become an appropriate percentage of the music we hear at international.

And there's one more thing. God bless you, Greg Hollander, for reminding us that a booming bass voice isn't the only path to wonderful solo features within songs. Every time you poked your head out for one of those endearing little bass sojourns, I wanted to stand up and cheer, just like everyone else in the audience. ■

They didn't hammer us with beats two and four; they just let them live, and the swing took care of itself.

MICHIGAN JAKE: Drew Kirkman (T), Mark Hale (L), Greg Hollander (Bs), Joel Wilson (Br)



Voices United

Some chapters took the lead in their respective communities and helped themselves in the process. Don't miss out this year



Across the United States, Barbershoppers once again answered the call and sponsored meaningful, moving Sept. 11 tributes. Most chapters used the “United We Sing” script as a guide and reported great success. Still other chapters received financial support from several area businesses to defray all expenses associated with the event.

- In Wilmington, Del., outstanding leadership and close adherence to the suggested plan combined to create a premiere event. Barbershoppers even received corporate grants to defray the costs of staging the memorable musical tribute. The Dupont Corporation sent its Diversity Chorus to take part, and the tribute also included other local singers and groups from the Sweet Adelines.
- In San Diego, they had 2003 silver medalist **Gotcha!** on the program. Chris Vaughn flew in from Denver, and the quartet donated its time.
- The Southwestern District merits special recognition for staging the greatest number of events—14.
- The Men of Note of Kokomo, Ind., created a DVD of their observance.



Reed Sampson
Managing Director
of Public Relations

All successes took effort

Without exception, every event was a success. An emotionally significant experience for singers and audience members

In Wilmington, Del., the Chorus of the Brandywine joined with Sweet Adelines and Dupont corporation's Diversity Chorus in a stirring tribute to the victims and survivors of 9/11.

alike, media coverage was significant, as was the participation of many local political figures and other community leaders, law enforcement, fire fighters and the military. Many chapters also gained new members—one chapter had 20 new guests at chapter rehearsals as a result.

In each participating chapter, success was realized because someone stepped up and said “We can do that,” rather than sitting at home waiting to be called.

As a whole, could more Society chapters have participated? Of course. Clearly, the number of events across the Society was less than hoped for, and that is unfortunate. Not simply because of the numbers, but because so many of our members missed out on an opportunity to make a difference in their communities and to experience an emotionally uplifting event.

We have a similar event planned for Veterans Day—Remembrance Day in Canada—Nov. 11, 2004. We understand that some chapters may find organizing such an event to be somewhat daunting. So, for the rest of this article, we'll share some of the lessons learned by those groups that held events in 2003—lessons we hope will make your task a bit easier this year.

2003 Steering Committee
Congratulations to these Barbershoppers for a successful event.

- Bruce Koepcke, Chairman, MAD
- Gary Denton, CAR
- Clark Abrahamson, FWD
- Rick Barry, NED
- Roger Carls, ONT
- Reed Sampson, headquarters staff

Start now

It begins with the commitment to take part in the event. Once the commitment is there, form a committee to oversee the planning and publicity. Plan to use the “United We Sing” program as the basis for what you do and order the music right away.

“In Augusta, Georgia, we took that plan and ran with it. The short of it was a presentation on 9/11 in front of thousands.” —Randy Miller, Augusta, Ga.

Involve other singers

Prepare a press release inviting outside singers to join you and send it to your local media. Also send invitations to other choral groups in your community inviting their singers to take part in the Nov. 11 observances.

You’ll need to make a decision whether to include female singers. Electing to do so and/or working with a nearby chapter of Sweet Adelines will do two things: It will increase the level of participation and offer more variety in the program. It also will provide others to share the planning work load.

You might consider inviting students to participate. The St. George Chapter in Utah had 370 high school students on stage in a presentation that included a total of 450 singers.

“When we got the ‘United We Sing’ info, I thought, Aha! The perfect chance to give to the community, promote the chorus and involve young people singing together.” —John Scott, St. George, Utah

Involve community leaders

Secure the cooperation and support for the event from the mayor’s office at the outset. If your community has a parade on Veterans Day/Remembrance Day, you might consider holding the event at the conclusion of the parade. You’ll have a ready-made audience in place.

If you are near a military base, you have easy access to a keynote speaker for your event. The base could also

supply color guards, honor guards, even a band. Dare to think that you might be able to schedule a fly-over! Veterans organizations such as the American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars are obvious choices to enlist for support.

The governor and state legislators are also possible speakers; proclamations are easily obtained from the governor’s office.

In St. Paul, Minn., a popular television weather person emceed the Sept. 11 presentation.

Alert the media

Events such as this are unique—and that has great appeal to the media. The first media inquiry was received less than an hour after the national press release was sent from Society headquarters. Consider inviting your local media to a rehearsal a couple of weeks before the event. The coverage of the preparation is likely to increase the size of the audience.

If you have the participation of any political figures—local, state or national—that generally will bring the media out. They get a story and your chapter gets great, free coverage.

In San Marcos, Texas, coverage of the Sept. 11 tribute began more than a month in advance and continued up to the day of the performance.

“The Nashua Granite Statesmen were part of an event held in a park in Nashua, N.H., Sept. 10. The Northeastern District champions were featured on the WMUR

News, the ABC affiliate for New Hampshire.” —Rick

Barry, DVP Marketing & Public Relations, NED

Fringe benefits

In no way is this program ever to be presented as a membership campaign. But the reality is this: When non-Barbershoppers are invited to participate, they often do become members.

“We enlisted eight new men to sing with us, and we anticipate two or three will join the chorus.” —Lu Quinney, San Diego, Calif.

“In addition to tons of good will from all sides, we also made a lot of new friends among those other singing



Gotcha! was so determined to participate in the San Diego Commemoration that the quartet flew lead Chris Vaughn from his home in Denver just for the occasion.



The Augusta (Ga.) Garden City Chapter rehearsed and performed with 30 non-Society members at their city’s commemoration. Twenty of those non-members returned to the chapter meetings in the weeks after the performance, with many asking to join.

FYI Resources

- unitedwesing.org
- Harmony Marketplace for music orders: 800.876.7464 x8410

groups. Several of the men have indicated an interest in trying us out. We also put our chapter on the map in the community, and established ourselves as a legitimate music organization in the community.” —Bruce Koepcke, Wilmington, Del.



It was an emotional event for performers and audiences.

“What happened afterward is a bonus we couldn’t have designed any better: As our chapter has about 30 regulars, we wanted to show these guest singers more about barbershopping. We prepared a remembrance plaque with each singer’s name, framed in red, white and blue. Every regular member embraced these guests with true appreciation for their contribution.

To date, more than 20 of these men have returned to be with us at our regular meeting night. Many have asked for applications. —Randy Miller

The Sept. 11 tributes were all free to the public. However, one chapter did have a charitable fund-raising effort in conjunction with its performance.

“We raised about \$1,500 for Operation Homefront, a local non-profit organization that provides assistance to the families of deployed military personnel.” —Lu Quinney

By now it should be crystal clear: People respond to our music. In a typical community, there isn’t another

**The Barbershop Harmony Society
National Community Service Project**
Veterans Day, Remembrance Day 2004

Join with hundreds of Barbershop chapters across North America to honor our veterans and our national heroes Nov. 11, 2004. This is our second annual national community service project, and it is a great opportunity to show our cities and towns that Barbershoppers care and are involved in the community. By focusing on a single event, our Society can harness the energy and enthusiasm of thousands of singers throughout North America to show our strength and commitment.

By partnering with other singing groups for the event in our communities, Barbershoppers can extend their good will into the music community and build lasting relationships that can build membership and fellowship with other vocal musicians.

Put Nov. 11 on your chapter calendar. There will be more information coming over the next several months through *The Harmonizer*, e-mail and direct mail. Start your planning now!

group that has the capabilities and resources of the local barbershop chapter—especially with the support of the Society behind it.

Plan—right now—to take part in the Nov. 11, 2004 observances. ■

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Barbershopping in Baghdad

Victory Harmonizers ring barbershop chords in Saddam's former palace

Sergeant David Witt was often on guard duty during windy spring nights in Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom. As the desert sand swirled around and nestled into every crevice of his clothing, he'd often take his CD player out of its Ziploc bag long enough to slip in a CD of "How Sweet the Sound" by The Vocal Majority. Standing alone, his mind was on his fellow soldiers engaged in battle just over the border and on the family back home he hadn't seen for months. For the umpteenth time, he listened to this CD as the powerful words and harmonies hit home:

Precious Lord, take my hand, lead me on, help me stand.

I am tired, I am weak, I am worn;

Through the storm, thru the night, lead on to the light.

Take my hand Precious Lord, lead me home.

"When you sing a song you can never know where the words and melody will land, or the comfort and cheer they may bring someone else," he recalled in an e-mail to Harmony Hall. A tuba player in the 76th Army Band of the U.S. Army V Corps, his unit was moved to Baghdad in May, at which time his Dixie Commandos bluegrass band formed again and started practicing for official functions. Not long after, he and



The V Corps Dixie Commandos with the players who dreamed up the Victory Harmonizers: Sergeant David Bretz on trombone, Staff Sergeant Ronnie Hinkle on banjo and Sergeant David Witt with the tuba.

the other band members started thinking, "Why not pack some barbershop music in with all our stuff?"

Witt, who had sung for The Tone Cutters chorus in Bloomington, Ind., while in college, contacted VM director Jim Clancy about "How Sweet the Sound Hymn

Medley." Within hours, Jim had e-mailed back the music.

Free time is scarce on base, but on Aug. 12, eight soldiers gathered for the first weekly meeting of the Victory Harmonizers (named after the "Victory Corps") in one of Saddam Hussein's former palaces, where they practiced Clancy's arrangement and old standards like "Wild Irish Rose" and "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

"Did you ever attend a rehearsal and everyone brought a gun with ammunition?" Witt wrote. But

the setting was anything but tense, as the voices bounced off the marble walls and 80-foot ceilings, making the eight voices multiply into glorious harmonies that sounded more like 20 singers. Everyone looked forward to the Tuesday evening rehearsals, and soon four more soldiers joined the choir. By week three, the VH (not to be confused with the VM) were performing those and some military-themed songs at a camp talent show under the direction of Dixie Commandos trombone player Sergeant David Bretz.

However, by week four, assignments had changed and a whole new group of singers moved into camp. The director changed three times by November, and the "repertoire" started back at square one. By this time, however, the group received a package of music from Society headquarters (paid for out of pocket by staff members), increasing their repertoire greatly. They have begun working on a catchy World War One medley by Ed Waesche and planned to have Christmas arrangements for the holidays.

Even though most of the soldiers in Iraq are to rotate back to their home bases in February or March of this year, current members plan to pass on this collection of music to whoever is there at that time.

"I once heard someone say 'It's impossible to be angry when you're singing a song,'" Witt wrote. "That is a very true statement. Each week at rehearsal we close with 'Keep America Singing.' Those words capture the spirit of song and singing—especially barbershop singing!" ■

— David Witt, david.witt@us.army.mil



The Victory Harmonizers in photo taken Sept. 30, 2003, at Camp Victory in Baghdad, Iraq.

Start planning for the festival circuit

Between the international and district conventions are three festivals just for fun

A Two-Timer proposes ... and she *accepts!* The **Suntones** and **Autograph** take "Jezebel" out. Men battle women for top honors in quartet and chorus competition. Judges accept bribes for better scores.

Where can you find such unusual goings on and see performances by top men's and women's barbershop groups? At the three major barbershop festivals held in late summer each year: Buckeye Invitational, Labor Day Jamboree and Bolton Landing. Here's a taste of what went on last year—it's not too early to prepare your calendar for this year.

Mid-August: Buckeye Invitational

The Buckeye Invitational in Columbus, Ohio, kicks off the season around the middle of August. Three aspects make it unique. First, the Singing Buckeyes High School Harmony Camp runs concurrently with the festival. (The separate male and female camp choruses unite for a performance on the festival stage.)

Another unique aspect is the direct competition of men's choruses and quartets against women's groups from Sweet Adelines and Harmony, Inc. As a result, the judging panel consists of certified judges from each organization. Finally, the Buckeye contests follow the "performance package" format.

This year's invitational shows featured **Max Q**, the **Gem City Chorus**, **Uptown Sound**, **A Cappella Gold**, **Four Voices** and **Power Play** in a gracious last-minute substitution for **Bluegrass Student Union**.

In 2004, the Buckeye will run Aug. 19-23: www.singingbuckeyes.org

Labor Day Jamboree: Suntans and Suntones

It was suntans, Suntones and overtones in Florida at Labor Day Jamboree 2004 in Tarpon Springs.

FRED and representatives of the Sunshine District Association of District Champions, in-



ROBERT DAVIDSON: NATURAL IMAGE PHOTO



JAMIE BREEDEN

In August, audiences were watching the highly anticipated Max Q demonstrate its future potential at the Buckeye Invitational ... Two weeks later, festival-goers were watching the Suntones show what high potential looks like when fully realized ...

cluding the **Suntones**, **Keepsake**, **Backbeat**, **Endeavor**, **Autograph**, **Wise Guys**, **Done Deal**, **Raise the Roof**, and **Bayside Edition** entertained the crowds.

In fact, an impromptu octet of **Autograph** and the **Suntones** brought out the classic "Jezebel"

(with choreography) to the delight of all.

But the emotional highlight may have been the surprise public marriage proposal from Tom Bronson, bass of **Two-Timers**, current Sunshine district champ, to his new fiancée, Lauren, during the quartet's performance.

This year's dates are Sept. 3-6: www.sunshinenet.org

Buckeye champions

Quartet grand champion: **Impulse**

Comedy quartet: **Nonpareils** (Sweet Adelines)

Large chorus: **St. Louis Harmony Chorus** (Sweet Adelines)

Small chorus: **Long Island Sound**

Mixed quartet: **Sound Celebration**
www.singingbuckeyes.org



JAMIE BREEDEN

Lauren Levy laughed when **Rockapella** made its on-stage advances in Montreal. She couldn't stop the tears after Tom Bronson's own proposal during the **Two-Timers** set at the **Labor Day Jamboree**.

George in New York.

Shows were headlined by brand-name Society quartets like **Uptown Sound**, **Freestyle**, **Saturday Evening Post**, and **Wheelhouse**. There were also three Sweet Adelines champs: **A Cappella Gold** (2000), **Fanatix** (2002), **Swinglish Mix** (2003), and the just-before-they-won-it **Brava!** (2004). Other performers included **HEAT** (current college champs) and college medalist **Fortissimo**, the **Bolton Landing Festival Chorus**, **Reckless**, **Racing City Chorus**, **'Round Midnight**, **Vocaholics**, and **Le Dixieband**, a Montreal sextet that plays jazz in the New Orleans tradition. Whew! And then there were the competitors. Winning categories included oldest and youngest quartet, most flamboyant judge, and this sampling:

- Funniest quartet: **Anthology**
- Sexiest quartet: **Acapella Show-case**
- Best bribe (lunch, cleanup of judges' picnic tables): **Vocaholics**
- Audience favorite: **Gee Wil-A-Kerrs**
- Third place: **One of These Things Doesn't Belong Here**
- Second place: **Acapella Show-case**
- First place: **OK, Sure** (The quartet featured incoming Society President



... while on that same Labor Day, **Freestyle** was doing swimmingly for an appreciative **Bolton Landing crowd**. By the way, the funny guys announced that they are on quartet hiatus and won't be mic-testing in Louisville.

Rob Hopkins, but the bribe of Mike's Hard Lemonade didn't hurt)
This year's dates are Sept. 3-6: www.boltonlandingchapter.org ■

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Three weeks after fearing a stroke would take away tenor Jim Wiley's (left) speaking and singing ability, *What's In A Name* was back to business as usual. Other members of the quartet are (l-r) lead Brian Marriott (L), Victor Rivera (Bs), and Tom Ferguson (Br).

Barbershoppers know that there's no experience quite like sharing a song and shedding a tear with hospital patients. But in one case, it was not merely the singing but one singer himself who gave patients the most hope of all.

Jim Wiley of Langhorne, Pa., tenor of **What's In A Name**, recently sang in the halls of the Primary Stroke Unit at St. Mary Hospital and brought a powerful message to stroke patients—"Don't be dis-

couraged." Jim had himself suffered a stroke just a few weeks earlier and had been treated at the same stroke center. "I've been a patient in the stroke unit and in the cardiac care unit. I know what it's like to have a stroke, and how important it is to see that people do recover their lives after a stroke," said Wiley.

"When I came into the emergency room," Wiley told a packed audience, "I couldn't speak. I thought my career was over. Now here I am—just weeks later—singing as if nothing ever happened."

"An Invitation to the Barbershop Harmony," a book written in Japanese by Tetsuo Kanno and Kazuo Matsumura and subtitled "Fifty-two Tips to Enjoy Barbershopping in Japan," is available for a \$20 contribution to the Harmony Foundation. The book features forwards with comments by Darryl Flinn, Dr. Greg Lyne, Joe Liles and Reed Sampson. Contact Alan Wile, 4825 Little Falls Road, Arlington, VA 22207-2868 (703-538-6526; Alan.Wile@comcast.net) to order or for additional information.

Spreading music and good will throughout their community

The Chordbusters from Davenport, Iowa, are spreading harmony with local schools. They helped establish a music program at Alleman High School in neighboring Rock Island, Ill., by performing free show with all proceeds



going to Alleman, including an additional \$500 to get a music club started. The Davenport Chordbusters also provide coaching to high school quartets in the surrounding Quad Cities area and give \$2,500 yearly to a local summer camp operated by the YMCA.

Pictured are Kevin Carton, Mike Kendall, Cameron Rummans and Alex Knobloch, of Alleman's 4 Way Stop quartet, with Father Daniel Mirabelli of Alleman and chapter member Dick Sabbe presenting the \$500 check to Karen Manning, volunteer teacher and director of the newly formed music club. ■

Buckeyes find that patience brings results

From small beginnings, more than 270 students embrace barbershop

Three key words to remember when putting on a successful youth outreach program: momentum, talent and visibility. A few years ago, the **Singing Buckeyes** only had a few dozen boys show up to their first Buckeye High School Harmony Camp. While the young men had a good time, the chapter wanted to bring barbershop harmony to more youth. They built on the good experiences and word of mouth from previous years, keeping the quality of clinicians high and inviting young women to the camp.

As a result, they have watched the turnout steadily grow. This year, 270 young men and women showed up this summer to spend four days immersed in barbershop harmony. And not only are these young men and women getting the chance to fall in love with barbershop harmony, but their parents are as well. The boys', girls' and combined choruses all performed together for the big audience of the Buckeye Invitational, which not-so-coincidentally is also held that week.

Imagine what a transforming experience it must



ROBERT DAVIDSON: NATURAL IMAGE PHOTO

be to the hundreds of young barbershop singers. First, they get to spend four fun days under the tutelage of clinicians like R.D. Mathey, Eric Kauffman and Penny Mensik, learning to love barbershop harmonizing. Then, they get to show what they've learned in front of an audience of thousands of rabid barbershop fans. While still high from the wild ovations, the youth join their parents in the crowd and together watch one of the most fun barbershop shows of the year.

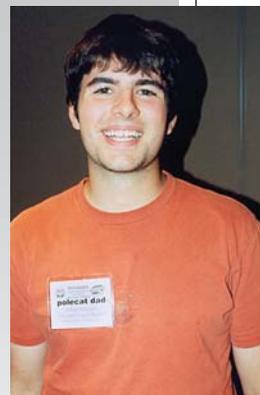
How many new barbershop fans do you think the Singing Buckeyes are making each year? What are the chapters in your area doing to build such a program?



“COSTUMES ... GREAT. SINGING ... GREAT. BUT THE FUNNY-LOOKING GUY ON THE LEFT HAS TO GO.” At six foot six, **Awesome Pumpkinman** can be choosy about who he sings with. Seen here at auditions are hopefuls **Steve Barrett**, future **Barbershopper Nathan Bigham**, **Pie-For-Brains** himself, and his almighty creator, **Chris Barrett**.

Four Voices' fifth voice sings four voices

As if those doggone Guytons Chad and Brandon didn't have enough talent between them ... wouldja believe they have an immensely talented kid brother too? The Ancient and Harmonious Society of Woodshedders (AHSOW) reports that at the tender age of 15, Chase Guyton qualified for induction *on all four voice parts*. Maybe a lifetime of harmonizing by ear with their mother helped. Maybe learning all four parts of the Barberpole Cat repertoire in a week helped. Maybe attending rehearsals of **Four Voices** four nights a week helped. Maybe it's in the genes. If so, look out: Now 17, high school senior Chase is reportedly singing in a quartet with older brother Dustin.





Three chapters, three shows, one chorus

Perhaps the single most daunting challenge to our smallest chapters is staging a chapter show with only, say, 12 singers. Budgets don't always allow for guest quartets, and a shortage of chapter quartets can mean that the chapter chorus must try to fill an entire

the local audiences. The members had a chance to develop new friends and enjoy singing in a larger chorus. We learned to sing under different directors, as all directors directed in all the shows. The last show brought forth much desire to do it again among the participants.

"We may be small in numbers, but we can still ... KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING!"



VLQ FROM LOTS-A-PLACES PERFORMS CHURCH SERVICE. Barbershoppers love the magical experience of greeting, shaking hands, then proceeding to blend beautiful chords. "Outsiders" are often astonished when men who only met for the first time 48 hours earlier can sing wonderful harmony.

Little wonder, then, that the congregation at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Racine was surprised and delighted when a Very Large Quartet (VLQ) of Barbershoppers from five states and one province brought music and praise to its worship service in November.

Organized for a second year by Tony Pranaitis, the singers had rehearsed at breaks during the Society's annual Leadership Forum



the preceding days. Pictured from left to right: Robin Harris (New Mexico), Quentin Gates (Washington), Aubrey Wallace (Nova Scotia), Gerry Swank (Colorado), John Krizek (California), Tony Pranaitis (Colorado), Don Fuson (Kansas).

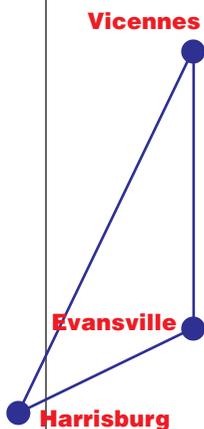
evening of entertainment—which may be beyond its musical ability.

Three chapters in the southern corners of Indiana and Illinois worked together to overcome these challenges, with great success. Physically separated by 50-100 miles, the Evansville and Vincennes Chapters of Indiana (Cardinal District) and the Harrisburg Chapter of Illinois combined for three shows in their respective hometowns, to great success.

Guest performers are nothing new, right? The twist here: The three choruses learned a common repertoire, which they then brought together for a few shared rehearsals in the final weeks before the show cycle stretching six weeks. All three chapters are small in numbers—19, 12 and 14 roster members respectively, so combining for 25 singers on stage represented a much larger chorus than any were accustomed to staging. They were also able to host a guest quartet

Operationally, the three chapters maintained their independent identities, meeting nights and rehearsals, and each was responsible for the show logistics in its hometown—advertising, guest quartets, ticket sales, sponsors, venue and so forth.

"Success!" reports Herman Snyder, secretary of the Vincennes Chapter. "All of the shows were well received by



Barbershop lifts spirits behind bars

A prison inmate recently sent this thank you note to Harmony Hall ...

My unknown fellow singers,

Please accept my profound thanks and the thanks of my friends in here as well for not only the barbershop sheet music, which I assure you will be put to good use, but also for the reminder that there are people out there like yourselves who still consider us in prison as worthy of your time. While I am extremely fortunate to have a family and loved ones who stay in contact and provide for my needs, it is a sad fact that a great many men in here have been written off by family and friends and do little more than exist from day to day.

There are 10 of us who sing weekly in the chapel service, though only four or five of us have musical backgrounds. I wish I could repay your kindness by letting you hear us sing—or would that be punishment? But no recording devices are allowed in prisons.

Singing to glorify God, Jim Bishop ■



SWIPES 'N' SWAPS

Not-for-profit classified ad bargains for Barbershoppers, published as a service to readers—all copy subject to editorial approval. Rate: \$25 per column inch.

Director wanted

The Albuquerque Chapter, SPEBSQSA, seeks a music director. **The New MexiChords** are a 70-member chapter with a long history of competition excellence, outstanding shows, and a strong belief in the fun to be found in singing barbershop well. We have a talented, committed music team, energetic and enthusiastic members, and an effective administration. The right candidate will receive a monthly compensation, expenses and help finding other employment. Albuquerque is a city of 750,000, with the best four-season climate in North America. We have more than 350 days of sunshine, low humidity, clean air, excellent affordable public golf courses, good fishing and skiing within a couple of hours drive, an excellent symphony orchestra, a healthy jazz and community theater community, and a triple A baseball club that plays in a new, state of the art stadium. For more information, contact chapter president Dick Lambert at dicklam@gbronline.com or call 505-867-4360.

The Greater Richmond Chorus in Richmond, Virginia, is accepting applications for front-line director. This award-winning, B+ level, mid-sized chorus seeks a respectful, self-confident leader who will maintain and enhance its musical education program. Compensation based on experience. Send inquires to Janet Joyce, 13901 Eastbluff Road, Midlothian, VA 23112 or search@grcsings.com.

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THE TAG

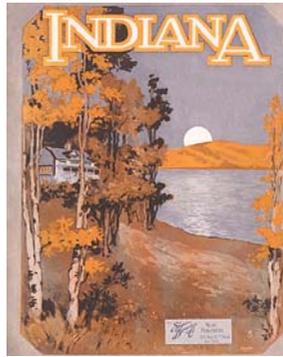
Joe Liles, Tagmaster



Hear the physics of a Jim Richards tag

I was looking over several neat tags for this issue when I received one from my very good friend, Jim Richards. He was asking about a solution for a little troublesome spot, and we worked it out and “walleye” (or is it “voilà?”). Anyway, Jim has arranged a lovely, fun tag for us. Let me tell you a little bit about this barbershop icon.

Jim discovered barbershop singing in 1953 while a graduate student in physics at Northwestern University. He sang a tag at his first chapter meeting and heard an overtone. Knowing what it took to produce overtones hooked him on barbershopping in general and singing tags in particular. He retired from the 3M Company in 1988 as a senior research physicist and now devotes nearly full time to his hobby. Jim is a 50-year member of the Society and Harmony College veteran faculty member, having taught the



Physics of Barbershop Sound for over 30 years. Active in chapter, district and Society affairs, Jim served as Society President in 1989.

An international contestant in both quartet and chorus, Jim sang bass in the 1990 International Seniors Quartet, **Grandma's Beaus**. Certified as a Sound judge in the original class of 1975, he served as Sound category specialist. He is now a Singing category judge and coach, having assisted in

developing the new category.

He and his wife, Ebie, have been married 55 years, have three children, four grandchildren, and live in Roseville, Minn., where Jim is a member of the **Minneapolis Commodores**.

Thanks, Jim, for sharing your life, talent, enthusiasm, leadership, and love for barbershop with us. And, thanks for this tag. ■

INDIANA TAG

Words by BALLARD MacDONALD

Music by JAMES F. HANLEY

Arranged by JIM RICHARDS

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

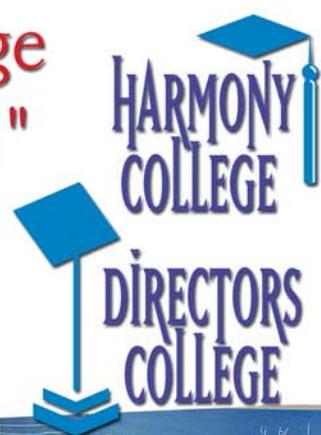
When I dream a-bout the moon-light on the Wa - bash, then I

long for my In - di - an - a home, my home.

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