

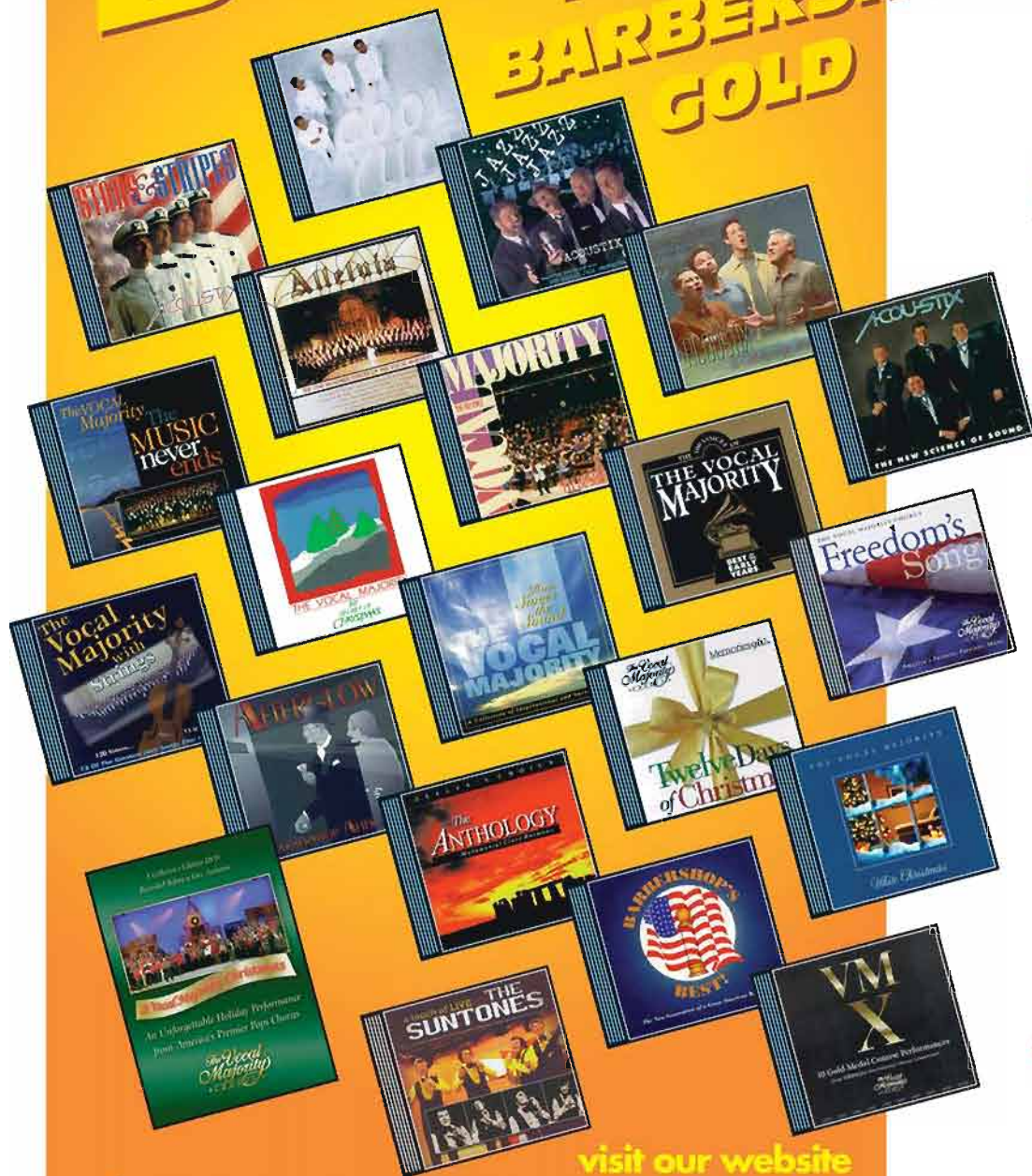
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Downstate Express



MATT BOSTICK

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Diversi-ties
Ray Yeh of the Big Apple Chorus
Photo by Koren Reyes
Cover by Lorin May



Don't bet against barbershop

"Out of change, oftentimes come great things"

Sociologists, anthropologists and others who study our society (small "s") might not bet on the future of barbershop harmony in North America. They might rank us among the likes of other pastimes like badminton, railroad travel, roadside diners and the like. They might think that we are as old-fashioned as ... well, as old-fashioned barbershops.

However, in a very short time, I've come to learn two things about barbershopping and Barbershoppers. First, the passion for the music is incredibly real, deep and emotional. And second, Barbershoppers are committed and genuine in their desire to keep this art form moving forward for generations to come.

Very seldom have I ever seen such a passion rage. What I didn't know several months ago was that for Barbershoppers, this is much more than just a hobby—it *is their life*. Throughout my time on this planet, I've been a part of dozens of other hobbies, professional pursuits and pastimes. Golf. Scouting. Camping. Bowling. Railroading. Antiques. Chili cookoffs. Politics.

Neighborhood groups. Professional groups and associations. Rock music and a couple of dozen others. But never have I met such a single-minded, focused group of people as I have with Barbershoppers. Anyone who hasn't touched barbershopping first-hand would never believe the dedication and all-consuming passion that Barbershoppers have for their craft. Without seeing it, they just wouldn't believe it.

What that passion means in practical terms is that the future of the music is indeed bright. Bright because we have so many people who are so willing to give fully of themselves, their talent and their resources to not only preserve barbershop, but to better barbershop for future generations. And, I believe, that's the real key. Not just preservation, but a flourishing state for barbershop. Not just status quo, but real growth.



How do we re-energize the love for barbershop singing in singers and audiences? The price for inaction is large.

Remembering the past with an eye toward the future

Recently at a luncheon of the Harmony Foundation in Orlando, Fla., Randy Loos, who is Foundation chairman, made the following comments, which I believe are pivotal for our future. Randy said, "The price of inaction is large." He also said, "Out of change, oftentimes come great things."

Randy was right on both statements. Sitting on our laurels and remembering solely the great times of the past makes for great coffee shop chatter, but it does little to grab the future. And grabbing the future is exactly what we must be doing. Grabbing the future on the chapter level, the district level and the international level. Grabbing for new ways and new structures to deliver our message that barbershop singing improves our world. Grabbing for new involvement from groups that haven't been involved in barbershopping before. Grabbing for ways to be more inclusive in what we do. Grabbing for those

methods that bring barbershopping to a far greater audience in bolder, more dramatic new ways.

Out of change will come great things, as Randy said. Great things that will grow this art form, both from a participatory status as well as from an appreciation status.

Harnessing our passion, keeping everyone pulling on the same rope in the same direction is the business of each one of us. If we do that, then there is no stopping our Society, and there is no end to barbershop. This music will be alive and well for our grandchildren's grandchildren. Anything less, however, doesn't bode well for the future.

Helping the world love barbershop harmony

So, how do we go about re-energizing the love for barbershop singing? Frankly, there isn't only one answer to that question. There are dozens of ways. Strengthening our chapters so that each

has great musical direction, a great pride in welcoming visitors, and a great program of activities. Strengthening our Young Men In Harmony program so that we are reaching out boldly in ways to attract young people to this art form. Strengthening the products and services offered by our headquarters and district offices. Reaching out to both recreational singers and competitive singers with equally fulfilling programs and services. And a dozen other things that we need to be doing as a Society that is passionate about barbershopping.

Finally, Randy told the group, "I can't imagine the world without barbershopping." You know, in only a short time onboard, I can't imagine that, either. And while sociologists and anthropologists might not fully understand what we're doing yet ... they don't know Barbershoppers.

One Last Note: I had the opportunity to be on site during the photographing of Jim Clancy for the July/August cover of *The Harmonizer*. What many Barbershoppers don't know is that as well-revered as Jim Clancy and **The Vocal Majority** are within the world of barbershop, they are equally revered in their hometown of Dallas. As a lifelong Texan, I've known of Jim and The Vocal Majority for years, even having hired the VM years ago to open a convention I was directing. And I know that in Dallas, Jim Clancy and The Vocal Majority rank right up there with the Dallas Cowboys (in their glory years) and Neiman Marcus (in its glory years) as local treasures.

For decades, Dallasites have feasted on the VM Christmas concerts (drawing almost 11,000 patrons this year) and Christmas albums. It's such a great thing to know that this outstanding group of men is equally appreciated throughout the world of barbershopping. In Texas, the only things hotter than a Dallas summer are Jim Clancy and The Vocal Majority ... okay, maybe the Dallas Cowboy cheerleaders, too, but who's counting?

Doc Harris

THE HARMONIZER

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May/June 2004



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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 x8446 for donation, gift-planning, grant or sponsorship information.

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Remaining true to our core values

On March 29, the Society Board adopted a statement on the core values of our Society. This came after collecting input from about 140 randomly selected members of the Society and after careful deliberations by the Society Board both at the Biloxi midwinter convention and at its March meeting.

The core values are those enduring, fundamental values that express what is authentically believed by our membership—what, as James Collins and Jerry Porras state in *Built to Last*, are an “organization’s essential and enduring tenets, a small set of guiding principles ... not to be compromised for financial gain or by short-term expediency.” Collins and Porras add:

If you are in the process of creating a statement of organizational values, you might ask yourself: “Which of these values would we strive to live up to, for a hundred years, regardless of changes in the external environment—even if the environment ceased to reward us for having these values, or perhaps even penalized us?”

To discover the Society’s core values, the Board followed a process set up by the Envisioning Task Force, chaired by Barbershopper Chuck Greene. The task force invited the participation of men from many different groups, including the Society staff, the AIC, Society committees, chapter members not holding any office, music directors, district-level quartet competitors, and Society, district, and chapter officers. Teleconference facilitations with these men provided an opportunity for them to discuss what the Society’s core values are—not what they might want them to be, but what they *are*—and their input was provided to the Society Board.

Board members contributed through their own facilitated examination of core values prior to discussing the input from other members. In its deliberations, the Board came to understand that the task was not to find the values that uniquely define us as a Society, but rather to discover core values that are authentic. For instance, Board members decided that our commitment to preserve the barbershop style, which sets us apart from most other organizations, was not a core value so much as a mission.

In reviewing the results of the facilitations on core values, Board members discerned a lot of agreement on five essential values. These values, though described in different words by different groups, are the core values that we discovered: singing, fellowship, fun, enrichment and creativity.

- **Singing.** We love to sing. Through singing in four-part harmony, we provide opportunities for personal expression, spread joy in performance, and enrich our lives and the lives of others.
- **Fellowship.** We foster rich relationships and a sense of belonging. Our common interests bond people of diverse backgrounds.
- **Fun.** We sing barbershop harmony for the sheer fun of it. Our singing is accompanied by laughter, camaraderie, and the thrill of performance.
- **Enrichment.** We realize lifelong personal growth and enrichment through singing. At every level, in every Society chapter, we teach, learn, and perform four-part harmony. We also develop skills in leadership and enrich others through our performances and community outreach.
- **Creativity.** We embrace and celebrate creativity. We create sound from silence. We inspire hope, joy, and other artistic expression. As performers, we experience the exhilaration of creativity in soul and voice. In turn, our audiences undergo their own emotional uplifting.

Our core values are the foundation for an examination of our Society’s fundamental reason for existence, our mission, and our vision. Changes in our Society’s priorities and objectives will be grounded in our core values. This is an exciting and ongoing process that promises to help us plan strategically for a better Society future—a future that will be true to our core.



When we asked ourselves what our authentic values are—not what they should be—we found agreement in five basic areas.

Robert G. Hopkins



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Welcoming guests, most influential groups

A lonely metal chair

As an “itinerant Barbershopper” who has belonged to chapters in five different districts, this story *really* hit home for me. When I moved to a new state, I consistently chose chapters with greater fellowship over those with greater performance scores. We don’t spread fellowship through our harmony, we spread harmony through our fellowship! I must also salute *The Harmonizer* staff for tackling some tough issues (membership loss, boring shows and guest alienation). These used to be some of the silent problems that chapters were hesitant to discuss, if they even acknowledged their existence! By bringing these issues out on the table, we ensure a healthier and more dynamic Society for the future.

JONATHAN FRIEDMAN
Temecula, Calif.

After joining the Society in September, I recently quit my chapter pretty much for the reasons stated in the cover story. I expected true acceptance, not just membership. Some few members reached out on a personal level; most others pretty much ignored me. Still others were, if not directly hostile, negative in what little feedback they provided me. There was little to no help to learn lyrics, music, programs, etc. I kept being asked for money without an explanation of why. I said I would participate in a New Year’s Eve concert and was told, “You are not ready yet.” I never really left “disoriented” mode.

My parents belonged to an ethnic/fraternal organization that had a lot of old people as members. Although they tried to interest and get youngsters involved, either their message was not the right one or they did not try hard enough. The organization is gone after being in existence for many years. On the other hand, I belong to an “airplane buff” group that is viable and growing. They have a lot of old members, too, but they display the knack for involving young people in their world and have successfully grown their membership.

JOHN M. MATUSZ

Great job on the article! The formatting and setup were super, and I really like using a “spy” that does not resemble me in the least. I sincerely hope that it accomplishes its purpose. It certainly works for me.

“THE SPY”

It was a complete surprise to hear that the “Spy” had been among us here in Silverdale, Wash. But I’m not surprised about the welcome he received. That was the reason I joined four years ago.

JON POWLESS
President, Kitsap Chordsmen

Congratulations for having the nerve to print a controversial story along the lines of “Spy.” It really set me on my ear. If the author is to be believed, we have an awful lot of members, based on his sample, who frankly act like jerks. I know it’s negative to even admit that some guys aren’t interested in doing “everything in their power to perpetuate the Society!” Judging by the “Spy” and the story of a member who joined a championship chorus, there are a lot of guys who are basically on an ego trip and apparently don’t much care who else comes along, so long as they get to do their thing.

RICK KEENER
Princeton Ill.

The cover story confirmed what I have felt for years: We are a singing organization—let’s get the guests to sing early on in their barbershop experience. **The Big Chicken Chorus** has always encouraged guests to join us on the risers and given a book with our current music. I was, however, disappointed that the “mystery guest” would look up a local name to match his name and put it on a chapter guest register. It is unnecessary to annoy an unsuspecting homeowner with a call from a membership VP. Besides, some of the first-time guests give phony information anyway, so we have plenty already. Overall, a good article that makes the clear point: Get your guests singing!

JEFFREY HARTE
Big Chicken Chorus

Most influential? Go back farther

It’s ludicrous that *The Harmonizer* published a six-page opinion piece of a member without knowledge prior to 1970 and then entitled his article, “The most influential groups of all time.” This is a glaring, but not entirely uncommon, example of a member who gets involved at a high level in the Society and assumes that nothing much happened before he arrived. He did in passing mention that he understood the **Mid States Four** brought “entertainment” into the barbershop equation somewhere back in the murky past ... but went on to credit his own quartet to bringing com-



edy to the realm of barbershop. That is tantamount to history revision.

Almost all Society growth occurred before Mr. Payne was around. Perhaps we should focus on what happened in those glorious days when we experienced all our fabulous growth and popularity. We might even solve all our problems by understanding what was truly influential.

TOM NEAL
Boulder City, Nev.

If we go by Roger's criteria of first-hand experience, I can tell you **The Chord Busters** (1941 champ) and Mid States Four were near the top. The Chord Busters was the first quartet to change the sound of barbershopping, the first to admit to using written arrangements, and the major innovators of bell chords. The Mid States Four (1949 champ) was one of the first highly entertaining quartets, with props, musical instruments and zaniness. They set the standard for entertainers to follow.

BOB McCULLOUGH
Tulsa, Okla.

National anthem

Regarding the National Anthem article (November/December 2003) Here's a tip to get you through the first level of consideration: learn "O Canada!" Most major league sports have Canadian teams, and there also are local minor league baseball and soccer teams that play in leagues with Canadian teams. My quartet, **After Midnight**, found that we achieved instant credibility with major sports team booking agents when we told them we could sing both the "Star-Spangled Banner" and "O Canada." So, make up a high quality demo CD or tape and put two songs on it, not just one. You could easily jump to the head of the line for that national anthem(s) gig!

JIM EMERY
Hilltop, Minn.

Crystal Cathedral

A small clarification: The Good News! ad on page 11 said a Gospel Sing was held in the Crystal Cathedral in Anaheim. The Crystal Cathedral is located in Garden Grove, not Anaheim. ■

DEANE SCOVILLE
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Quartet records barbershop with rock star

Chris Isaak busts some chords after a convention is written into his show

A writer for The Chris Isaak Show obviously has been to a barbershop convention sometime in her life; the experience made enough of an impression that the show staged a phony convention as a backdrop for part of an episode that aired on Showtime this January in the U.S.A. and in April on Much More Music in Canada.

The show is a slightly-off-reality take on the life of the real rock star and his band. In the episode titled "Family of Man," Chris is giving a benefit concert at a local motel, where, whaddya know, a barbershop competition is also being held. Evergreen District quartet **VocalWorks** appears for about seven seconds singing in a lobby while another quartet (non-singing actors mouthing to a pre-recorded VocalWorks recording) performs elsewhere in the lobby. Later in the show, the quartet of actors "serenades" one of the show's co-stars, lip-synching to VocalWorks' rendition of "Let Me Call You Sweetheart."

The quartet spent considerable time singing at breaks during the February 2003 filming in Vancouver,



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since the mid-1980s,
Chris Isaak also stars
in his acclaimed se-
ries that blurs the
line between reality and scripted television.
Inviting the quartet back into the studio to
ring some chords was entirely unscripted.**



where singer/star Chris (also executive producer) was intrigued by the blend and tightness of the sound. The quartet ended up teaching him a tag or two and belted a few chords with him. A few days after the filming, the star called the quartet back into the studio to record "Ain't She Sweet" with Chris at lead. During that recording session, the quartet ended up jamming with Chris and recording a new song he had just written, with VocalWorks woodshedding the harmony.

What's next? Shortly after filming, the Chris Isaak Show's music director hired the quartet to be four singing barn animals in the animated series "Yakkity Yak" on Teletoon, scheduled to air this summer.

VocalWorks (www.evg.org/~vocalworks) is David Cotton, tenor; Dan Hofkamp, lead; Mark West, bari; and Brian Hamm, bass. Dan, the lone American in the quartet, did the recording work but was replaced on screen by Canadian Barbershopper Dave Vincent for legal reasons. Check out Chris Isaak at his record studio Web site www.repriserec.com/chrisisaak.

Road Show makes the biggest a cappella show outside barbershop

International quartet competitor **Road Show** (NED) survived the first round in the biggest non-barbershop a cappella contest in the U.S.A. when they won the Harmony Sweepstakes Boston regional competition in March. The national finals will be held May 8 in San Francisco. Reportedly the overwhelming winner and crowd favorite, Road Show stood out with ringing chords and an ability to connect with the audience.

Real Time (EVG) finished second in the North-

west regional competition held in Olympia, Wash., and **Alchemy** (ILL) placed fourth in the Chicago event. Two current Society quartets have been national champions in the competition: **Metropolis** (1998) and **The Perfect Gentlemen** (2002). Quartets like these are showing that our style of music, when performed well, has no reason to take a back

seat. For Harmony Sweepstakes details, visit www.harmony-sweepstakes.com.



ROAD SHOW: Rick Spencer (T), Mike Maino (Bs), Bob O'Connell (L), Mike Gabriella (Br)

Society briefs

Help music educators use barbershop harmony.

Society music specialist Rick Spencer recently wrote a magazine article to help music educators use barbershop harmony in the classroom. The cover story for the Winter 2004 edition of *Texas Sings!* shows how barbershop harmony is an especially effective tool to teach a variety of general music principles, including ear training, part interdependence, sight reading, thematic uses and visual involvement. To view the story and obtain permission for its use, see www.ensemble.org/tcda/txsings.

More effective PR possible with a media list.

The Society can provide media lists for *specific functions* to chapter and district officers. (Due to limited staff support, we cannot provide general lists for groups to “keep on file.”) Lists are available for newspapers, radio and television stations for a specific state, county or city and by media outlet type. Six weeks before you expect to use the information, submit your contact name and phone, district or chapter name, type and date of event, state, county or city and the type of media list requested (TV, newspaper, radio, etc.) to PRMedia@spebsqsa.org. Responses will come in Excel spreadsheet format.

Requests will be completed in the order in which they are received. There should be no “rush” requests for media lists. Direct any questions to PRMedia@spebsqsa.org or to Reed Sampson, managing director of public relations at 800-876-7464 x8592.

Chapters: deal directly with our insurer. When requesting certificates of insurance in which additional insureds must be named, direct any and all questions to the Society’s insurance agency, Frank F Haack & Associates, 2323 N. Mayfair Road, Suite 600, Milwaukee, WI 53226; phone 800-637-3550 or 414-475-1344; fax 414-475-1833. A certificate of liability insurance is available on the Society Web site at: www.spebsqsa.org > *Doc Center* > *Print out the Certificate of Liability Insurance and Certificate Request Form*.

Legal/Unpublished arrangements are available on a “for-purchase” basis only. Basic charge per copy is \$1.65 for members, \$2.20 for non-members, plus publisher per-copy fees, arranger fees (if any) and \$6 shipping and handling per order (15 maximum). As fees vary, for total costs contact Nancy Foris at 800-876-7464 x8472; fax: 262-654-5552 or nforis@spebsqsa.org.

Ambassadors spread barbershop harmony on a tour of Sweden, Holland, Germany

The **Ambassadors of Harmony** lived up to their name during a European tour last March. Six audiences in Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden gave the groups and barbershop harmony a wildly enthusiastic reception.



A potentially auspicious beginning of the tour in Dortmund, Germany, turned out to be a launching point for the nine-day tour. Singing late at night on the day of their arrival, many singers hadn’t slept for more than 24 hours, and nine singers were absent due to a missed connection. But adrenaline took over for the first of three shows as part of the BinG! (Barbershop in Germany) convention, with a wild reception by an audience that roared with delight after every up-tune and wept during ballads. The final show, two days later, was recorded for rebroadcast on national German radio.

The tour was virtually a non-stop performance for Dr. Jim Henry, who directed the Ambassadors as well as Voices Only, Lindenwood University’s select vocal ensemble. He also performed in Germany with **The Gas House Gang** (Mike Slamka of Power Play singing bari), with shows that featured **Vocal Spectrum**, the Ambassador’s outstanding college quartet coached by Jim.

A visit to the Netherlands featured a performance in the Leiden concert hall, built in the 1600s, where an enthusiastic audience was thrilled to hear barbershop harmony in the hall’s marvelous acoustics. In Sweden, the chorus was hosted by **The EntertainMen**, who in their 25 years have performed at international conventions several times and appeared in Ambassadors of Harmony shows in St. Louis.

Freedom ringing with Acoustix

Acoustix, 1990 international quartet champion, has reached a licensing agreement with Megavisions, Inc. to provide music for the soundtrack of Megavision’s new DVD, “VOICES of Freedom—America Speaks.” The award-winning documentary features great music, heartfelt interviews and stirring images. It includes on-camera interviews with people of many different backgrounds answering the question: “What does freedom mean to you?” The song, “So Many Voices Sing America’s Song” was recorded by the quartet with the **Vocal Majority Chorus** and the American Pops Orchestra, conducted by Ned Battista, and was first released on the quartet’s 1993 CD release, “Stars & Stripes.” For information, visit: www.voicesoffreedom.com To order the DVD or video, call 866-266-1222.





Groups enjoy brief brushes with fame

One More Song, a quartet from the Greater Fort Smith (Arkansas) **Riverblenders Chorus**, is included in a new documentary called "Chasing the American Dream," produced by National Geographic. The chorus and quartet were invited to perform at the Heavener Oklahoma Intercultural Festival last year, and the quartet was taped. There's a short clip—20 seconds or less—of the quartet singing. The documentary is not about music, but about people who illegally cross the border from Mexico to the United States.

On St. Patrick's Day this year you can probably guess what one of Northern Ireland's top

disc jockeys was playing on his show: Barbershop harmony! The **Stone Mountain Chorus** of Atlanta received about nine minutes of air time March 17 during the "Just Jones" show hosted by George Jones on the BBC/Radio Ulster at the Children's Arts Museum in Duluth, Ga. Himself a musician, George didn't want to hear Irish music on this St. Patty's Day—he wanted to hear American music that evolved from the British colonists who first settled in the Atlanta area. Also featured were about a dozen other groups performing folk, bluegrass, country, barbershop, gospel, spirituals, and cabaret.



"Jesus was wearing my coat!" exclaimed Damon Sauer of Ain't Misbehavin' quartet after "The Passion of the Christ" star Jim Caviezel donned an old-time jacket between shots on the set of "Stroke of Genius: The Bobby Jones Story." The quartet had been hired to provide period atmosphere for the movie, largely set in the early 20th century. Caviezel plays the title role. The quartet got a bit of screen time at the

opening of a shot, singing "Slippery Slide Trombone" as the camera starts on a crane and then focuses on the quartet. Some Barbershoppers may cringe at the stereotypical red-and-white striped coats and straw hats the quartet was required to wear, but if they're good enough for ... er ... Jim Caviezel, they're good enough for us. The quartet at the time: tenor Richard Lyon, lead Alan Smart, bari Nathan Warmbrod, bass Damon Sauer.

Scott Werner helps Heart of Florida set modern membership record

Starting a new chapter is a lot of hard work and takes a lot of recruiting—at least half of a new chapter's members must be new Society members or must have been out of the Society for more than a year. All are success stories, even if not all charter with 92 members, as the Central Florida Chapter (Heart of Florida) did. Of course that chapter had as a draw retired gold-medal director Scott Werner. Let's welcome all our newest chapters and licensed chapters:

DIX	Lexington, S.C.	Licensed 3/19/04
EVG	Comox, B.C.	Chartered 3/01/04
FWD	Oakhurst, Calif.	Licensed 4/05/04
MAD	Inwood, W.V.	Chartered 2/02/04
ONT	Hamilton, Ont.	Chartered 4/01/04
RMD	Ogallala, Neb.	Chartered 9/30/02
SUN	Central Florida, Fla.	Chartered 2/02/04
SWD	Carlsbad, N.M.	Licensed 4/04/04 ■



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(between chorus & quartet finals)



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HARMONY HOW-TO

Jeff and Rich Gray

Wheelhouse, 2003 international quartet finalist

Stand out from the quartet crowd

Wheelhouse was one of the surprise quartets at the international contest in Montreal. These four younger men, relatively new to the international stage, reached the finals their first time out while employing a look and musical approach that made them stand out from the pack. I recently interviewed brothers Jeff and Rich Gray to learn what the quartet did to set themselves apart. This article is a distillation of the major points from that interview.

We're relative veterans of the very competitive Mid-Atlantic District, so when we formed **Wheelhouse** we knew we had to do something fresh and new to stand out even at the district level. However, our goal was to perform on the international stage, where we're relative novices. At that level, everyone sings well—if all we offered was good singing, we knew we would be lost in the shuffle.

When we asked our favorite international veterans how to stand out from the pack, they told us, "Do it your way." Likewise, our dad always taught us, "Don't be vanilla." The quartet took that advice to heart. We didn't have any coaches or arrangers working with us at first, so even before we started choosing repertoire we turned toward ourselves to find what worked best for us.

Only pursue vocal techniques that fit your style and sound. With Wheelhouse, the more we "tried" to make a unit sound like the best quartets have, the harder it was to find. That may be because we've been too easily distracted in the past—try three coaches and you may learn three different vocal techniques. It's not that all these coaches and judges are wrong; we've grown from their guidance our entire barbershop careers. It's just that we've had better success together when we've trusted our instincts and our own ears and asked, "What works for *this* group?"

For example, many coaches will tell you to sing each song exactly the same way every time. This is probably great advice for the majority of quartets—including those more talented than ours—but for a variety of reasons, *this* quartet performs best when we allow Rich to get caught up in the music and we just follow him, even if it's a bit different each time. What's true for most quartets is sometimes not true for *your* quartet.

Bring your own musicality to the table. We're all second-generation Barbershoppers who grew up singing along with the tapes and CDs of our barbershop heroes. If all we ever did was copy what we've heard them do, we don't think that would honor those groups or the barbershop style. We believe that our involvement in other musical styles helps us be better Barbershoppers—Jeff plays guitar in an instrumental jazz ensemble that always improvises, Mike sings in a five-part jazz quintet and Brandon is in a four-part doo-wop group. (Actually, our barbershop background has helped us in those other styles even more!) We don't push the barbershop envelope in our choice of arrangements, but we find that traditional barbershop can sparkle when we apply great musical and interpretive tricks we've gleaned from our heroes in other musical traditions. As long as you're true to the barbershop style, no one is going to have a problem with it.

Only choose songs you feel you can deliver effectively. We aspire to choose songs as effectively as **Power Play**—every chart they perform fits their image perfectly and is completely believable because they believe in every song. In our case, we've performed maybe one in 10 songs we've read through, although we're getting more efficient. We generally know quickly whether a song will work for us because we can get inside it with very little effort. "Dark" ballads and swing tunes tend to click for us, while we haven't found a Dixieland-style song that this quartet could sell to the audience.

We keep trying to expand our repertoire, but we realize our charts also tend to lose their magic quickly for us. We put many of our former favorites on the shelf while we work on newer arrangements that excite us. The older ones are often much better when we pick them up again.

Chose clothing that is true to your own individual style and taste. We figured all the other quartets were going to wear matching tuxedos or suits. We chose to wear clothing that fit not just the



Wheelhouse is Jeff Gray (Br), Rich Gray (L), Mike Kelly (Bs), Brandon Brooks (T). Their website defines Wheelhouse as "... that magical place where four voices become one, and the intensity of sound becomes greater than the sum of its parts." (harmonize.com/wheelhouse)



Lorin May
Editor, *The Harmonizer*

quartet but the individuals in the quartet. As a new quartet with no budget, we told each other to match colors and, "Wear something *you* would wear." If we look comfortable in our own skin, the clothing is part of the reason.

Focus more on serving the song and less on pleasing everyone. If you try to please everyone, sometimes you end up pleasing nobody. At our first rehearsal, Rich asked the group, "Are we willing to let two percent of the people cringe to let the majority jump out of their seats?" We certainly don't *want* people to cringe, but it can sometimes happen as we use our creativity to honor the musical geniuses who write and arrange all this incredible music we have in our Society. If a song calls for "mint chocolate chip," we're not going to serve a safe "vanilla" performance that doesn't show off the wonderful lyrics, melodies and chords. Listen to both positive and negative feedback about your performance; in the end, let the song determine the performance.

Find a coach who fits your personality. No doubt, we've had good sessions with the big names. But just like when you're looking for the girl of your dreams, "it" is either there or it's not. We've settled in with our one and only coach, Harrisburg, Penn., chapter director Hal Kraft, a lesser-known but talented guy who "gets it." He is very non-nonsense and very "in-your-face"; we need that, and it's what we respond to. He's not some genius; he's just a good friend with a vested interest in our success and someone who motivates us and understands what works and what doesn't. We feel that the best coaches don't just tell you what to do; instead, they guide you to discover the best that is inside you. If you find a coach that can do that, stick with him or her.

Do the necessary work. We may take our own path in certain areas, but hard work isn't one of them. Like everyone else, we have to work very hard at rehearsals and do all of the "tedious" work that helps us improve—a lot of duet work, a lot of vowel exercises, and full performance mode as often as we can. If it takes all night to lock in eight measures on two voice parts, we'll do it. Some of our rehearsals would probably put a lot of people to sleep, but we love it. We don't know any shortcuts to improvement. ■

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The **Massed Sing** will be brighter than ever, with more singers, **free ice cream** and the fabulous door prize drawing. You must be present to win—so have some fun!

Don't forget the World Harmony Jamboree and the AIC shows! Both the Kentucky Arts Center—site of the Swingle Singers and World Harmony Jamboree shows—and Freedom Hall—contest and AIC show site—have devices to help the hearing impaired. They are available without charge. To reserve one at KAC, call 502-562-0111 (voice) or 502-562-0140 (TTY). To reserve at Freedom Hall, call 502-367-5000.



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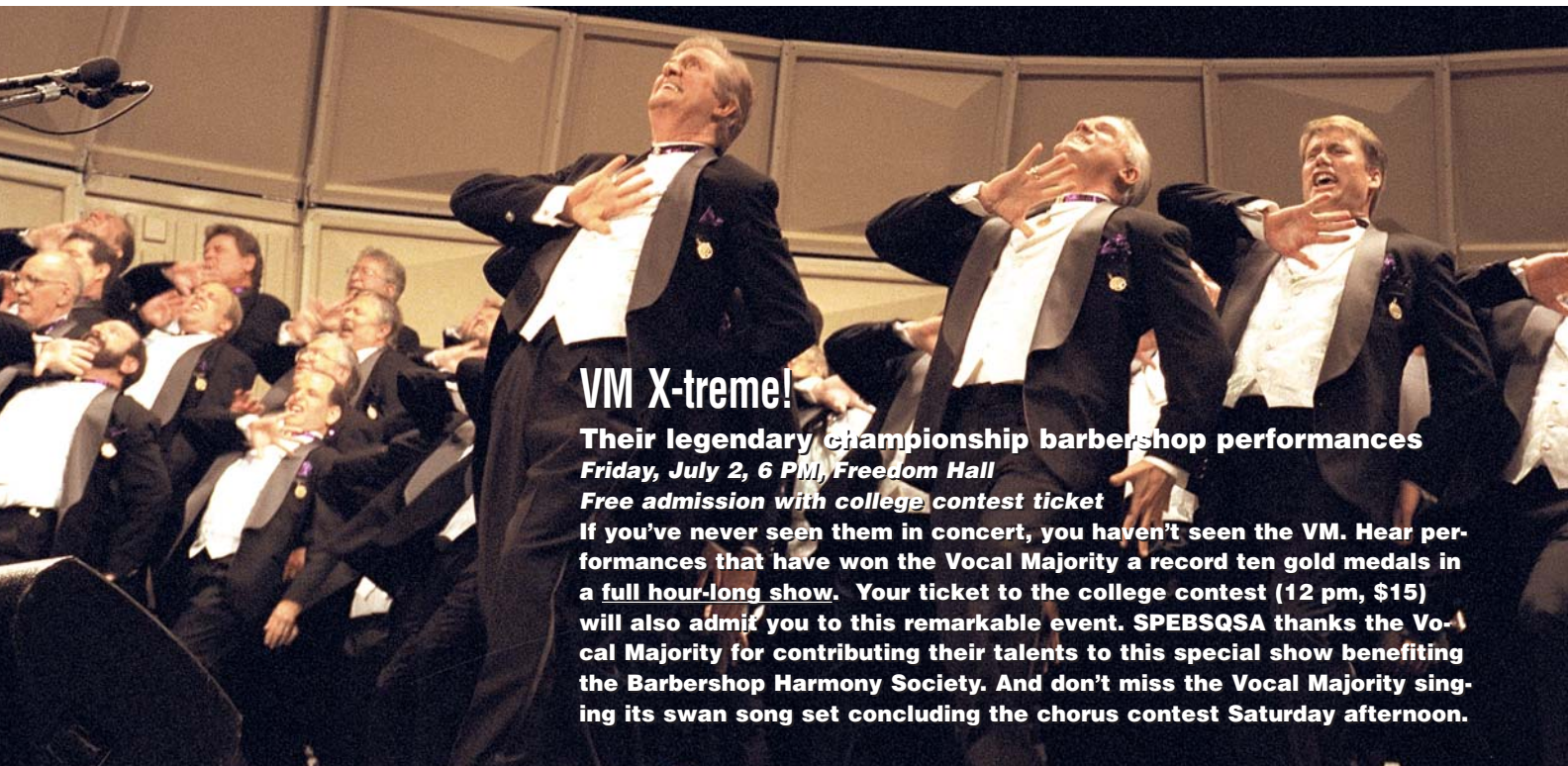
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Start the week with the Swingle Singers and "All Rise." The world-renowned Swingle Singers headline "Harmony Foundation Presents" Tuesday in the Kentucky Center for the Arts. Sharing the stage with the Swingle Singers will be guests **Four Voices** and the Voices of Lee—yes, they'll be performing "All Rise" once again!



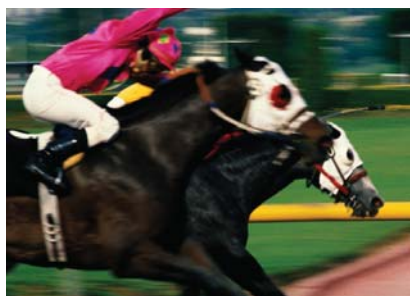
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Louisville chorus draw

1. The Grand Central Chorus (BABS)
2. Holland Land Harmonizers (SLD)
3. Sound of the Rockies (RMD)
4. New Tradition Chorus (ILL)
5. Ambassadors of Harmony (CSD)
6. Banks of the Wabash (CAR)
7. The Northern Lights (ONT)
8. Salem Senate-Aires (EVG)
9. The Alliance (JAD)
10. Granite Statesmen (NED)
11. The Big Chicken Chorus (DIX)
12. Harmony Heritage (PIO)
13. The Westminster Chorus (FWD)
14. Saltaires (RMD)
15. Great Northern Union (LOL)
16. Heart of America (CSD)
17. Alexandria Harmonizers (MAD)
18. Midwest Vocal Express (LOL)
19. Heralds of Harmony (SUN)
20. Tidelanders (SWD)
21. Southern Gateway Chorus (JAD)

Don't miss Louisville's biggest horse race—the contests!

Toronto's **Northern Lights Chorus** has earned three silver medals in a row, the first of which came behind the 2001 gold medalist **New Tradition Chorus**. Prior to its first-ever win three years ago, the New Tradition



Gotcha!



Metropolis



Riptide



Max Q

had won a record eight silver medals in a row. Neither chorus wants to pick up any more silver. The **Ambassadors of Harmony** don't care who is second as long as they're first—with the best qualifying score, the perennial medalists are poised like never before to win it all.



Northern Lights Chorus

Look for another tight quartet race this year, as the three returning quartet medalists from 2003—**Gotcha!**, **Metropolis** and **Riptide**—each finished within 1.5 percentage points of gold in Montreal. New quartet **Max Q** is a strong contender as well, with the highest qualifying score as of press time. But don't bet the farm on Max Q just yet—the highest qualifying quartet didn't win in either 2003 or 2002. Look forward to an exciting photo finish for this year's field. Look for a bigger field, too—this year only, the Society Board voted to allow 50 quartets to compete. There was no change in the qualifying score. ■



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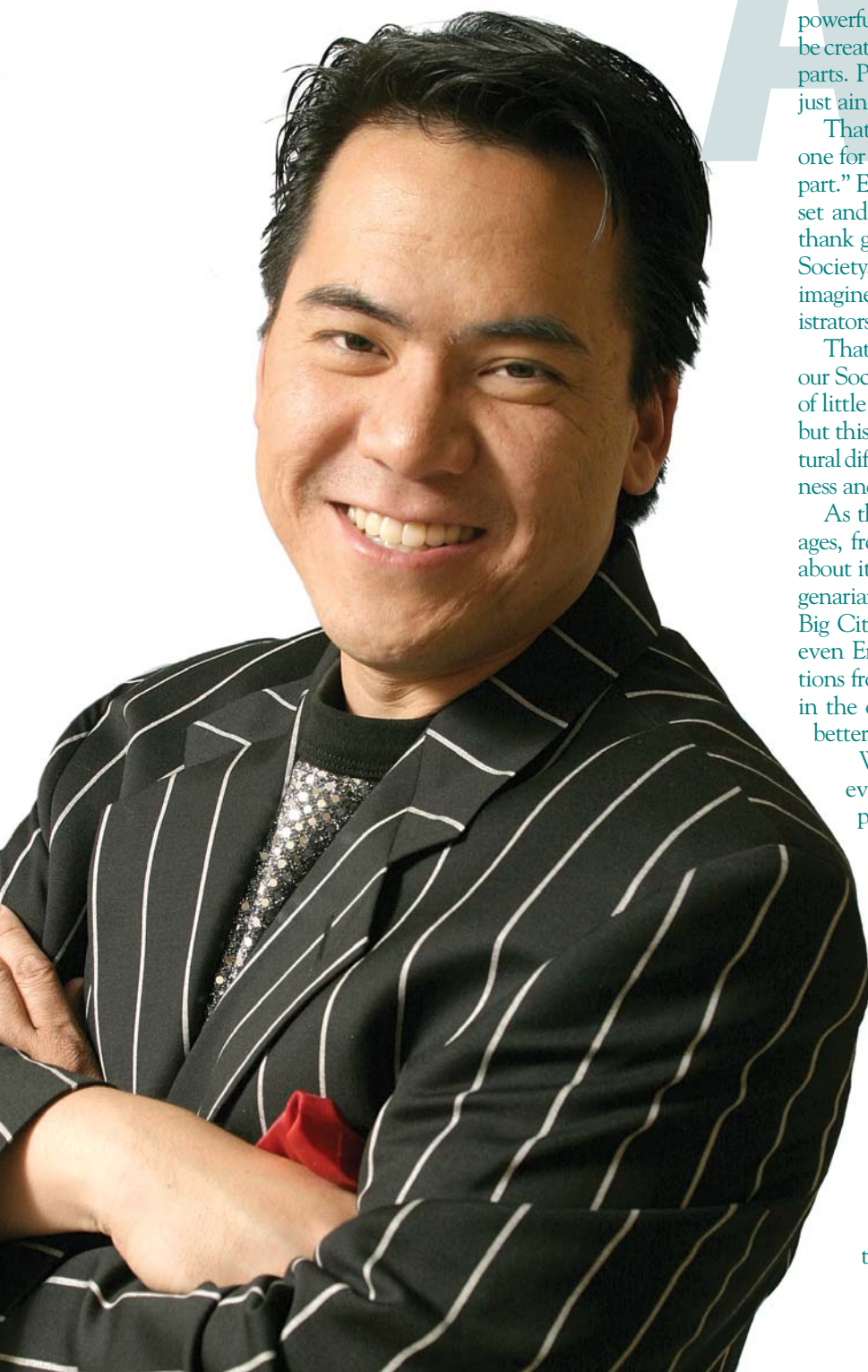
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☐ Check here if any physical needs require special accommodation for you to fully participate in the convention; convention staff will contact you to make arrangements.

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Strength in



According to traditional Navajo beliefs, all powerful forces come in groups of four. "There is no power in the one," goes the saying, "only in the four."

That philosophy easily applies to barbershop. The powerful expanded sound that is our hallmark cannot be created without the combination of four diverse voice parts. Pretty as any individual part or voice may be, it just ain't barbershop.

That model, the one our music is based on, is a good one for our Society as well. We can't all "sing the same part." Each member brings a different perspective, skill set and background to his role in the Society ... and thank goodness, for if we were too much the same, the Society, like our music, wouldn't be possible. Can you imagine a Society with 31,000 baritone contest administrators? (No offense, guys!)

That's why we deserve to celebrate the diversity within our Society. It isn't possible here to address the millions of little things that make us different from one another, but this issue does take a look at some of the broad cultural differences that our members contribute to the richness and complexity of our organization.

As the Society Web site puts it, "We are men of all ages, from all walks of life, who love to sing." Think about it: Chinese-American fathers of newborns, octogenarian Mayflower descendants, gay bachelors in the Big City, new Americans whose native language isn't even English, men from the African-American traditions from which barbershop grew all become brothers in the creation of musical and social harmony. What better inspiration could the world have?

We must be honest with ourselves, of course. Not everything's perfect in the Society. Even in the preparation of this "diversity" issue of *The Harmonizer*, debate arose as to what kind of diversity should and should not be acknowledged, discussed and celebrated. There are many kinds of diversity that challenge us as members of a varied Society: diversity in ethnic background, age, social station, racial make-up, physical ability, romantic partners, religious belief, musical talent, professional status, wealth, lifestyle. Differences between members in any of these aspects can pose a challenge to our interactions with one another and our joint mission to preserve and encourage the barbershop style.

But it's important to acknowledge and accept the diversity we have. Why?

• **It makes us stronger.** Only by understanding the diversity within our membership can we keep

our diversity

it from causing rifts or conflicts and, even better, start to harness that diversity as a tool for furthering our art form.

- **It helps our public image.** Rightly or wrongly, the Society has a rather old-fashioned, homogenous image in the public eye ... and perhaps we see ourselves that way, too. Perceiving our own diversity and sharing it with the general public helps show that barbershopping appeals to a wide variety of people.
- **It's key to expanding our membership.** The Society cannot simply sustain itself by signing up the sons of existing Barbershoppers as members. We must reach out to people who don't have barbershop backgrounds, and that means people from very diverse backgrounds indeed. By showing that we are a welcoming and understanding place for anyone who appreciates our music, regardless of his background, we'll have less difficulty attracting people from outside our ordinary circle.
- **It's essential in fulfilling our mission.** We're not here just to preserve the barbershop style like some dead bug in a jar. We're here to encourage it, to share

it with as many new people as possible. It's some people's natural instinct to say, "Let's not pay any attention to whether we have Irish members, gay members, or black members; that shouldn't matter." Perhaps not. But it does matter when such members may provide entry for a quartet or chorus to perform for a new audience during a parade, festival or celebration, thus helping to fulfill our mission of sharing the barbershop style with as many people as possible.

Those are four powerful reasons to take a look inside at the Society's diversity. And we've chosen four Barbershoppers from diverse backgrounds to share with you in this issue their own unique perspectives on being members of this organization. We're hoping that the Navajo saying holds true; that the coming together of the "fours" will help us become a more powerful Society, diverse in its membership and united in purpose. —*Scipio Garling*

After producing a diversity issue of *The Echo*, the bulletin of The Alexandria Harmonizers, Scipio Garling offered to

create a similar package for *The Harmonizer*. These six articles by six authors are the result.



Practical realities of singing in a more diverse chapter

Several years ago, a well-intentioned show chairman came backstage just minutes before our show opener to cheer on the guys. "The house is packed! We even have Orientals out there!"

That sentence struck me in a weird way. It was not because the term "Orientals" has long-ago disappeared in favor of "Asian" or "Asian-Americans"—frankly, I don't care as long as you don't use the Asian epithets popular during WWII, Korea or Vietnam. But the audience members to whom he was referring could have been my family. His comment implied that it was odd to see them there, as if they somehow did not belong in the audience.

I said nothing, though in an instant I had gone from feeling like simply a member of my chorus family to feeling singled out as "The Oriental Guy." I put the comment in the back of my head, and we went on to have a great performance, but the comment has stuck in my mind for years. Be sensitive to what you think and say about your audience, especially when that audience is your own chorus.

There's no "them," only "us"

I stress that my experiences have been immeasurably

positive as a Barbershopper. Rarely has anyone tried to make me "different" because of my race. Like everyone else, I come for the close harmonies, the performance excellence and the fraternity that is special to barbershop. That should be all that matters when a man shows up to sing.

Yes, I occasionally hear an odd comment such as, "Well, what do they do in *your* country?" *This* is my country. My hope with this article is to help us all be aware of words or actions that would make others feel like "outsiders." Men from all over the world live in North America, and increasing numbers are not outsiders at all.

Stage makeup

In every chorus I've joined, there have been two available shades in face paint: "pink white" and "slightly paler pink white," either of which make me look like a bad understudy for the lead of *Madame Butterfly*. A new member with a darker shade of skin won't be thinking stage makeup when he joins, and yes, the bright lights will wash out his facial features, too. You probably have one guy who picks up supplies at a theater store and some helpful wives to assist backstage—be sure appro-

priate shades are available for all members in advance of each stage performance.

Appropriate stage roles

Does an Asian guy look out of place in a Dixieland anthem or a Mississippi Delta paddle boat song? Is it odd to see a Chinese man sing “Please, Mr. Columbus”? (Why stop at Chinese? How many guys in your chorus actually *could* pass for Italian and Spanish sailors? And, how many audience members care?) On Broadway, they’ve largely gone colorblind; usually, that’s the way I prefer to go, too. Yet, in a New York-inspired *Guys and Dolls* set, I created an old Chinatown man outfit that seemed to fit in perfectly. I stress that it’s one thing if I decide to wear a Chinese period outfit in order to enhance a performance. It’s another thing if fellow chorus members suggest that I perform a crude Chinese caricature by play-

Yes, I occasionally hear an odd comment such as, “Well, what do they do in your country?” This is my country.

ing “Hop Sing” in a Western set with a broken English accent. (One chapter actually suggested this. I brushed it off, but other people would not so politely dismiss such a suggestion.)

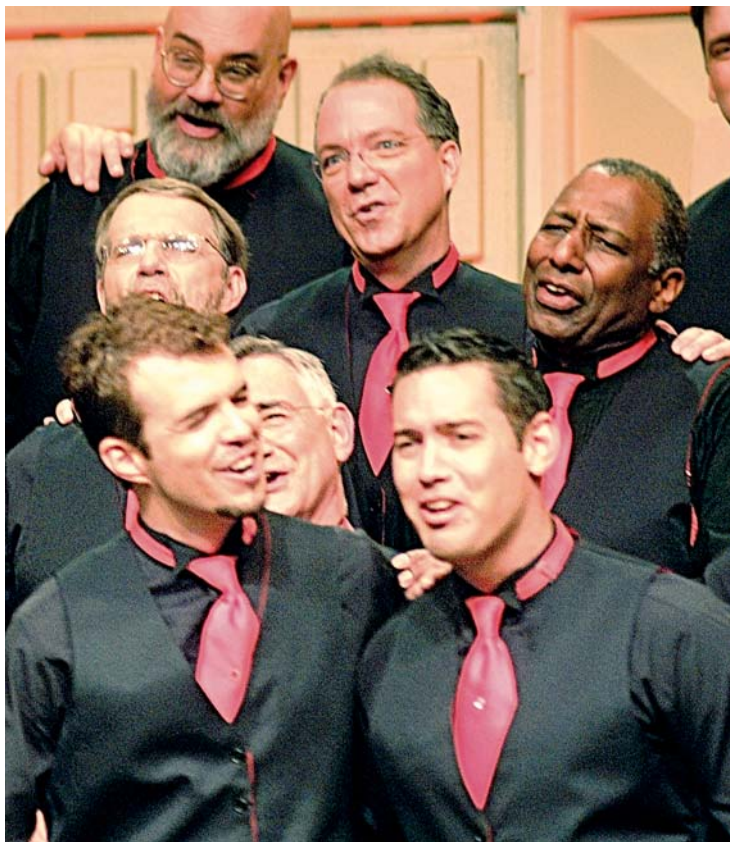
Keeping people straight

On the 2001 harmony tour to Russia, three Asian Barbershoppers came as members of **The Big Apple Chorus**. Now, I know all the old jokes about Asians looking the same, but the three of us really don’t look alike at all. Yet, some Barbershoppers and their spouses from other choruses frequently confused us and addressed us by each other’s names. I’m pretty thick-skinned, but after 11 days it was apparent that some of these people were barely aware of us as individuals—for some, the mix-up was because they kept applying “that Asian guy’s name” to three men. Recognize in yourself the difference between an honest mistake and an attitude in need of adjustment.

Some discomfort may be inevitable

Only once did I ever feel uncomfortable about my heri-

La Vida Loca:



No matter your background, all apparent differences vanish when you gather with your fellow chorus members to harmonize a ballad. Author Carlos Bermudez is on the lower left.

My life as a

I’ve always thought it should be more obvious, but I’ve been told many times that I don’t have much of an accent or Hispanic look. This has made for some amusing times as a Barbershopper.

I grew up singing different songs. The first clue was when the assistant director first tried to assess my vocal range:

“Sing ‘Home On The Range.’”

“I don’t know it,” I stammered.

“Oh ... let’s try ‘Yankee Doodle’.”

“Hmm ... don’t know it either.”

“‘America The Beautiful’?”

“No, *not really*...” (I have learned it since)

After a couple otherwise natural suggestions and puzzled expressions, I told the pleasant (but obviously puzzled) assistant director, “I should say I did not grow up in the United States.”

“Oh!” he exclaimed, relieved.

“Well, do they sing ‘Happy Birthday’ where you come from?” And so I passed my vocal assessment to the tune of a harmonizing duet of that international hit which, yes, made it to Perú.

The following week, I forewarned them before my visual assessment. They were less surprised when I complied with the request to “sing with passion, as if in love with a girl sitting on a chair in front of you,” with a rendition of “Limeña,” a traditional Creole ode to the

tage—when the **Alexandria Harmonizers** were asked to sing at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Memorial Day. Being born and bred in the U.S.A., I couldn't have been more proud to salute our servicemen, but privately, I worried that I might distract some audience members because of my Asian face. It may sound strange to others, but it really gave me cause to pause. My apprehensions began to dissipate when we began to sing "The Star Spangled Banner"; they disappeared as we sang a patriotic medley and I held my Vietnam veteran friend's shoulder as we both sang and shed tears for his fallen friends. It is still one of my proudest moments as a Barbershopper.

Standing out on stage

If something about your appearance makes you stand out on stage, you know what I'm talking about. My feeling is, in some ways it's nice to be the different face because it makes you more recognizable. On road trips in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Florida and Russia, audience members have readily recognized me outside the performance because they noticed me on-stage. (Adulation is always a fun thing!) Personally, I take the fact that I stand out a little as a challenge to be the best performer that I can be.

Appeal to the music in men

The Big Apple Chorus is diverse not because we have

had special diversity-focused membership drives, but because we focus on what makes our hobby fun to all audiences. In terms of membership growth, I think we try to be an audience-focused chorus—"Build it and they will come." Our repertoire, largely arranged by Society luminary Roger Payne, continues to challenge our members and audiences by its contemporary edgy sound and its appeal to pop culture—we have fun singing the songs that people know. That is one of the comments made most often by our guests. "You look like you are having fun." I do each and every day ...

Just think—men from various backgrounds having fun making music together. Remember, a man doesn't have to look like a stereotypical early-1900s Barbershopper to love singing and get hooked on barbershop harmony. For example, anyone who has traveled in modern Asia knows the popularity of karaoke. My parents and their friends have parties where fellow amateurs sing everything from Chinese and Japanese songs to "Moon River" to "Let It Be." Men who love to sing come from all backgrounds. It can't be just up to the Asians to bring more Asians to barbershop; the same applies to men of all races. Ask any man of any background if he likes to sing—you might be surprised.

—Raymond Yeh, Choreographer and former president and music VP, Big Apple Chorus



Author Ray Yeh and future Barbershopper Ray, Jr.

Peruvian-American

native woman of Perú's capital.

And so began my experience as a Hispanic Barbershopper, which I thought would thereafter be predominantly "normal." And then came the r's ...

My "good" consonants. Rolling r's are just *so* ingrained in my first language that it is extremely difficult for me to not sing them. In my chorus, we are encouraged to sing only our good notes—skip the notes you can't sing with quality. As I was making my qualifying tape for international contest in Portland, my two evaluators told me to likewise sing only my "good" consonants. I wondered if the men around me thought I had a frozen tongue as they could hear me singing, "eh-membeh, the time, the time, you said, I love you, eh-membeh? EH-MEMBEH? EH-MEMBEH we found ..."

Different gestures. It wasn't just singing. I was surprised to find difficulty in gestures and moves, too! I drove our presentation guys up the wall with my "rigid, unnatural hands" that slice through air when trying to gesture an invitation to the audience. Indeed, everyone else had relaxed hands, slightly open fingers, which was very

Barbershopper

odd to me. I started asking Hispanic and non-Hispanic non-Barbershopper friends to indulge me in making the move, and I discovered that all the Hispanics indeed motioned with tight-fingered, rigid hands while the non-Hispanics motioned with relaxed hands. Hmmm ... *muuy interesante!*

The lyrical gap. I also quickly learned not to participate in informal holiday sing-outs until I learned the carols. You see, all those "easy lyrics" that my English-raised brethren know as second nature actually *did* make it to South America ... but in Spanish! So beyond "Feliz Navidad," I couldn't sing a Christmas carol you would understand, even if my life depended on it!

So my being Hispanic has added a few funny moments to this great barbershopping experience. I cannot imagine what other Americanisms I will trip on, but I bet they will give us a chuckle or two more!

—Carlos Bermudez
Alexandria Harmonizers

When a guest is a member of a so-called minority, he is there as a man who wants to sing—not as a “representative” of an ethnic group.

Roots of Barbershop Harmony” (*The Harmonizer*, July/August 2001). We know of many instances in which black guests, members and community leaders have taken a greater interest in barbershop harmony once they have learned of the important contribution of black culture to the development of the barbershop art form. Use the examples of our recent college quartet champs, and our affiliates from Asia, the South Pacific, Europe and beyond, to exhibit the universal appeal of barbershop harmony.

Stay tuned for more assistance. The Multicultural Task Force is undertaking a number of initiatives to provide additional support, including

- presentations to minority music educators and groups
- the publication of barbershop arrangements of songs

- to appeal to multicultural audiences
- the production of audio and video tools that can be used in educational circumstances

It’s a long road, but the process of opening doors has just begun. There is no absolute recipe for success. It’s a long road, but we’re already on it. We are constantly searching for examples and success stories such as those included here. Mostly it takes courtesy, common sense and a determination to truly expand our horizons and “Keep The Whole World Singing.”

— John Krizek, chairman
Multicultural Task Force



This is not your grandfather’s barbershop society

Hello. My name is Kendall. I am black. I have been a Barbershopper for 18 years, and it has been three days since my last chapter meeting ...

As a district president, I am considered one of the Society’s prominent black Barbershoppers. I am still laughing about this one. Exactly how many black Barbershoppers do you know? I’ve seen more, but I personally know three. Or is it four? So being prominent is not difficult.

My barbershopping “career” started in Seattle back in the late ’70s—yes, I am that old—when I attended the shows of my mother’s and one of my sister’s Sweet Adelines chapter, to which they still belong. One of their shows was with a local SPEBSQSA chapter, **The Seachordsmen**. Once I heard male voices singing barbershop harmony, I was hooked—big time. A member of the Seachordsmen invited me to his chapter. I turned him down because I thought I would not have time. After all, I was still in high school and was planning to go away to college. Believe it or not, the fact that this was an all-white group at the time did not even factor into my decision to wait.

Upon returning from college, I tracked down the Seachordsmen and joined the chapter. That same year, I went to my first district convention. And yes, I did realize that I was the only black person there. Do you know what? It did not matter—

not to the other Barbershoppers there and not to me. Really. There were three things people wanted to know, and this is still true today: What part do you sing? What song do you want to sing? Do you know any tags?

That was 1986. I have met many Barbershoppers along the way to my current chapter (Bellevue), and I could probably count on one hand the number of times I have felt that someone reacted to my race rather than my ability—which is pretty good. Yes, once in a great while I have been mistaken for another black Barbershopper, but between you and me, I have done the same to my white brothers.

The past is past

Most of you realize that the Society started in the early part of the 20th century when exclusive groups were prominent. Men of color were not allowed to join our Soci-



Kendall Williams stands out visually at a barbershop convention, but finds there are only three things there that people want to know: (1) What part do you sing? (2) What song do you want to sing? (3) Do you know any tags?

ety, despite their heavy role in the origins of the barbershop style. Some of you may be shocked by this, but trust me, if there were any men of color on that rooftop in Tulsa in 1938, they were not invited as singers. Some of you may not be surprised; after all segregation existed at golf courses, at restaurants and in schools. Good or bad, it was what *some* people thought of as normal.

It is interesting to note that in July of 1963—before the “I have a dream” speech and before the U.S. Civil Rights Act—the Society Board passed a motion to reword the Standard Chapter Constitution and By-Laws. The original text under membership eligibility said, “Any adult white male resident of (city) ...” The motion was to put membership “on a local option basis permitting chapters to

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accept any they desire, assuming they met all qualifications other than those involving race, color, or creed.” I won’t go into any other detail about this change other than to say it was brought up, discussed and passed. About two weeks later, I was born. (Things that make you go, “hmmmm.”)

Racism is going away, but most of us still discriminate unfairly

Obviously, times have changed. The color of a man’s skin is not the issue it once was, either in North American society or in *our* Society. We have seen an end to most racism. However, do not be fooled into thinking there is no discrimination. We all have done it—yes, me too. Now before you get your seventh chord out of tune, let me explain. If you have not sung a tag with someone because they were not a past district champion, if you have not sung a song with someone because they were not “as good” as you are, if you have ever discounted the opinion of someone who was coaching you because they were half your age, then you, my friend, have done the deed.

Not engaging in discrimination also means we don’t always have to agree on the definition of the barbershop style of music to sing in the same chorus or even the same quartet. And yes, that means we need to be able to laugh at ourselves. We can give each other some good-natured ribbing—but you have to know the person well enough to do that. (There are things that my friends and I say to each other that some might find offensive. We recognize it as such and keep it to ourselves.) Again, the point is that we belong to this group of ours because of our love of the barbershop style of singing. Nothing else should matter.

Just look for men who love to sing

What I have seen in my 18 years of barbershopping is that most people judge you on your personality and your ability to perform. In general, we have all learned that what makes us Barbershoppers is not our race, color or creed, but our love of this hobby of ours. We often make the mistake of looking, for example, for black men who sing instead of singers who happen to be black.

Trust me, there is a fundamental difference between the two approaches. I would be insulted if I were recruited based only on my race and not on my ability or potential as a singer. Wouldn’t you?

Being one of the few black Barbershoppers has its good and bad points. Obviously, “everybody” knows who I am; I literally stick out in a crowd. This is only enhanced by being a district president. On the other hand, standing in the front row of my chorus as I do, the chance of being seen by the audience is pretty high. So I have to work hard on my stage performance—no chance to become unfocused. You would think being the first black district president would be

Happy and gay as a Barbershopper

If you had told me years ago that I would have some of the best times of my life hanging out with straight married men, I would have said you were crazy. How could I enjoy hanging out with guys that are so different from me? Impossible, right?

Nothing could be further from the truth for me. On Tuesday nights, I have the privilege of sharing the risers with a great bunch of guys who are a lot like me. Guys who love to sing and to perform and to really move an audience with our lyrical messages. Guys who are willing to work hard to reach higher and higher standards of excellence. Guys with heart who sing our patriotic songs with pride, and love songs with the honest vulnerability required of real love. In many ways, these guys aren’t so different from me. Who would have guessed?



Sometimes, the differences are real. To emotionally prepare us for our 2001 performance in Nashville, we were asked to close our eyes and imagine saying good-bye to the girl we loved because our family didn’t approve. I had no problem relating to the fact my family didn’t approve of my love. I know the pressure of being asked to marry the “right” person when I loved another. It wasn’t a big stretch to imagine the heartbreak of saying good-bye to that important first love because polite society just wouldn’t approve. I’ve known that kind of heartbreak. I’ve often felt society’s disapproval of the love I have experienced. Remembering the pain, the sense of loss and injustice of much of my adult life helped me to sing with the honest emotion required by the message of the song’s lyrics. My tears were real. It just wasn’t the girl I was picturing.

But those differences are easy to put aside because I have felt welcomed and accepted into the Alexandria Harmonizer family. My sexual preference has never become an issue. The Harmonizers have embraced our gay members and the many talents that we bring, and the chorus as a whole is richer for its diversity; so am I. Not all chapters, I’m sure, create that kind of warm atmosphere. Just another reason that I’m proud to be with the Harmonizers and to be one of them.

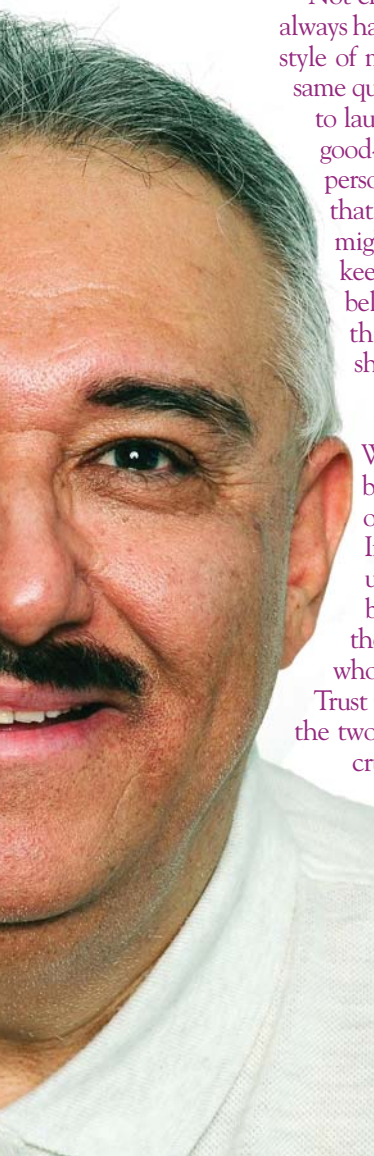
— Tim Emery
Alexandria Harmonizers

stressful, but it isn’t. There are four past district presidents active in my chapter—that’s pressure.

I believe that the opportunities that I have been given as a Barbershopper are based on others’ belief in my skills, not on race. If that’s not the case, we need to have a serious talk. One of us may have to be smacked upside the head. Guess which one?

Hello. My name is Kendall, and I am a Barbershopper... who happens to be black. ■

— Kendall Williams,
Evergreen District president



Preparing for purposeful change ...



The Marketing Task Force is surveying the terrain to create an accurate map. Soon, our leaders will plot the destination and the course

Look around. Count. If yours is like most chapters, that takes less time than it once took. That personal experience reflects a long, national trend. From a high of about 36,000 members in 1983, we have seen a steady decline in our total numbers to just over 31,000 members today, a continual slide of about one percent per year.

It's clearly time that something new and different be done to reverse what one Marketing Task Force member has called the "going-out-of-business curve." The shape of that curve startles: the median age of Society members is 64, and 35 percent of members are 70 and older. That means that in the coming decade, the Society stands to lose an accelerating number of members to a force greater than music: the inevitable passage of time.

As our brothers become unable to sing, who will replace them? We're not doing a great job of replacing them today. While an average of 3,500 new members join our chapters every year, another 4,000 leave out the back door for a net loss of more than 500 members per year.

Facts such as these are just that: facts, neither morally good nor bad, but inexorable in their implications for our survival.

Recognizing a need for action, the Board in 2002 commissioned a Marketing Task Force to develop an action-

able marketing plan for the Society, a plan with clear objectives and tasks to be accomplished within certain time frames. Phase One—a professional market research project—was completed in 2003 by Harris Interactive, "The Harris Poll People." Phase Two—a comprehen-

Marketing Task Force members

It has been my privilege to work with individuals on the Marketing Task Force who I believe are among the brightest in the Society when it comes to marketing and research. They have devoted countless hours to the research and marketing projects, which have produced top-notch results from the firms the Society has hired. Here are the task force members, followed by their city of residence and their specialty.

- **Sam Vigil, Jr.** (chairman): Gresham, Ore. – public relations/business communication
- **Hugh Devine:** Plainsboro, N.J. – research
- **Chris Kirkham:** Littleton, Colo. – marketing and branding
- **Bob Morrissey:** Terra Verde, Fla. – corporate communications specialist
- **Brian Lynch** (staff liaison): Kenosha, Wis. – public relations and marketing communications



Sam Vigil Jr.
Chairman,
Marketing Task
Force

3 Things You Can Do Now

Based on the Harris Interactive research, you can start doing a few things right now in your very own chapter to help improve the Society's image and reverse membership decline.

1. Begin using the name "Barbershop Harmony Society." Our research found the name is more appealing to our target audience than SPEBSQSA in any form. For a transition period, use both names together. In my public appearances and chapter press releases I refer to "the Barbershop Harmony Society, SPEBSQSA" to help people associate the names.

2. Talk up the benefits of singing when talking with guests and prospective members—improved health, an increased sense of well-being.

3. Become involved in the community where your chapter is based. Research has shown that we in our chapters tend to be insular, just focusing on our own activities, our own chapter, and not becoming involved in or becoming active members of the community.

know about barbershop don't know about the Society. We suffer from a devastating lack of awareness of the Society among our target audience (men ages 35-54 who like to sing). Awareness of the "Society for the ..." or "SPEBSQSA" is terribly low: only 5 percent of prospects are very familiar and another 18 percent somewhat familiar with either form of the name. In total, 33

percent are very/somewhat familiar with one or more names. In fact, fewer recognize these names than recognize Sweet Adelines International (39 percent). We told you there would be truths you just didn't want to believe.

"I might be interested, but ..."

The good news is that once people hear good quality quartets and choruses, they are favorably impressed. About half the prospects described the sound as "high quality" and a third said it was "appealing." Again, Barbershoppers' experience bears this out: when people hear a good performance, they like it, and more than half our members joined after hearing or seeing a barbershop performance.

The biggest barrier to joining the Society? No surprise: time, family commitments, and lack of space to add another social activity to their already busy lives.

Now that we know, what do we do?

For the first time ever, the Society is taking a systematic, coordinated approach to marketing, membership development and music. Related parallel work being conducted by the Envisioning Task Force will further impact the process and we will need to accept all possibilities areas borne out by research and professional marketing approaches. Many of you have already contributed to this dialogue; the Envisioning Task Force conducted discussion groups with more than 400 members, and more than 600 members have offered suggestions to the e-mail suggestion box established at Clarke Communication Group.

So many words and images we commonly use to describe our hobby do not always communicate well with the uninitiated. A second research phase is now under-

sive marketing and communications strategy—is currently under development by Clarke Communication Group, with a final presentation scheduled for the Board meeting in Louisville.

Fundamental— obvious?—truths

"There are two kind of research: the kind that tells you what you already know, and the kind you don't believe," said MTF member Hugh

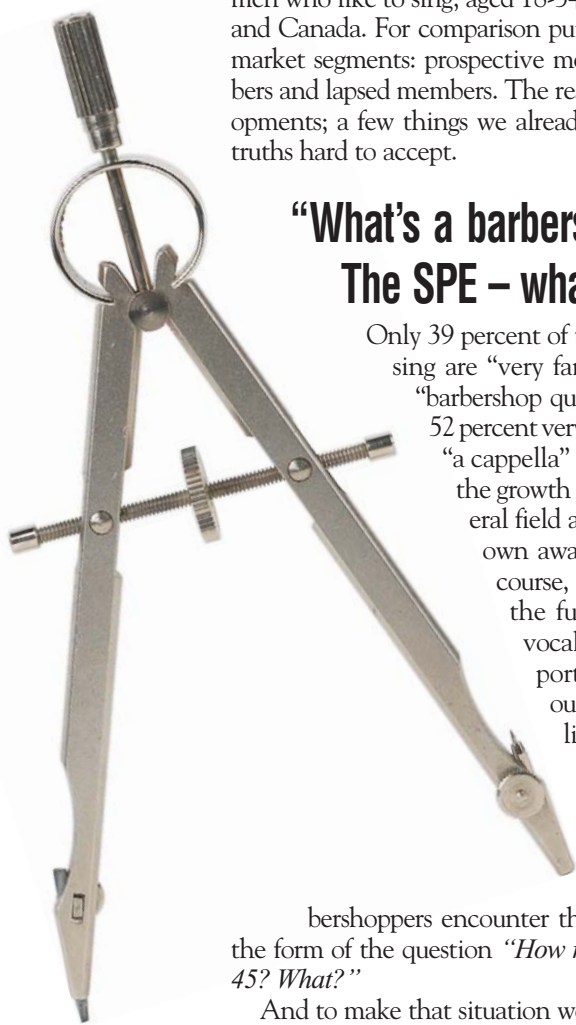
Devine, a career research professional, at the outset of the project. How true that's been. Harris Interactive applied rigorous, world-class research methods to study men who like to sing, aged 18-54, throughout the U.S. and Canada. For comparison purposes, we sampled all market segments: prospective members, current members and lapsed members. The results: a few new developments; a few things we already "knew"—and a few truths hard to accept.

"What's a barbershop quartet? The SPE – what?"

Only 39 percent of these men who like to sing are "very familiar" with the term "barbershop quartet," compared with 52 percent very familiar with the term "a cappella" singing—evidence of the growth of interest in that general field and of weakness in our own awareness. Conversely, of course, this high awareness of the fun of unaccompanied vocal music represents opportunity for us to share our style with others who like to sing.

Still, only 21 percent of prospects are very familiar with idea of a barbershop chorus. Barbershoppers encounter this truth constantly in the form of the question "How many in your quartet? 45? What?"

And to make that situation worse, even people who



QualCore Research

way, managed by QualCore, Inc. (see sidebar), which is testing reactions and understanding of our brand names and images. Certainly, we'll be ready to act aggressively on numerous fronts.

The plan created by Clarke Communication Group calls for initiatives at the Society, district and chapter levels. And since the chapter is where the "rubber meets the road"—where the most "customer" contact takes place—for the first time the marketing plan includes a number of methods and approaches for chapters to use. The goal: an integrated approach to chapter and member development, and the promotion of your chapter and barbershop harmony.

For many chapters, this may mean doing things differently and, it is hoped, better. For some, it will mean doing *something... anything!* Above all, it will require a shift in mindset to becoming "customer-focused,"

The Society has contracted with an outside firm (QualCore) to conduct an important marketing research project regarding the name of our organization. This note is to inform you that you may receive an e-mail from Jeff Walkowski of QualCore inviting you to participate in a part of this study. If you see an e-mail from him in May or early June, rest assured that this is a legitimate request being issued on behalf of the Barbershop Harmony Society. If you are contacted, please offer whatever support you can provide to this research effort.

If you have any further questions about this research project, please contact me at the number below.

Brian Lynch (BLynch@spebsqsa.org)
or 800-876-7764 x 8554

whether that customer is the chapter member, the people who attend your chapter shows, or the communities in which your chapter is located.

Exciting times, tremendous opportunity

These are exciting times for the Society. A number of forces are converging, offering a tremendous opportunity for growth and change for the good of the Society and advancement of the art form. This is not change and new things just for change sake. The current effort is the largest strategic effort toward change in the Society ever.

Let's make it purposeful change. Effective change. Lasting change. ■



Gotcha



A Cappella Gold



Swinglish Mix



Metropolis



Flipside



Wheelhouse



Fortissimo



Chicago Shuffle



Perfect Gentlemen



Q

Bolton Landing Barbershop Festival September 3 - 5, 2004

() Festival Registration (pre- 8/31)	\$ 55.00 ea	\$ _____
() Festival Chorus	\$100.00 ea	\$ _____
() Foundation Dinner	\$150.00 ea	\$ _____

All items are WILL CALL!

Total \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

AC / Phone Number _____

E-mail _____

Card Number _____ Exp. _____

Name on Card _____

"Bolton Foundation Inaugural Dinner" - Friday, Sept. 3

Limited to 100 individuals, an evening of stories, singing and fun!
Dinner and a Full Festival Registration! Benefits Youth Outreach!

"139th Street Quartet" - The 1st 30 Years!

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Face to face with Don Harris

Our new CEO envisions long-term growth and strength for the Society

Don A. Harris made history in February when he became the first chief executive officer in the Society's 66 years who had not come from the ranks of Barbershoppers. The decision to hire a non-Barbershopper was a bold and controversial decision by the Society's Board of Directors.

Harris, a certified association executive (CAE), had led three other large national/international trade associations in the automotive, sports and telecom industries, and had achieved success in the marketing and publishing professions. In his marketing career, Harris worked for large and small advertising and public relations agencies (having run his own for 10 years), and worked for clients such as Sears Roebuck, Lawry's Restaurants, Prudential, Xerox, Four Seasons Hotel and others. However, SPEBSQSA was something totally new to Harris, as it would be to anyone not previously experienced in this hobby.

Where did you hear about the job opening at SPEBSQSA?

Initially, I had seen an ad in a trade journal advertising the position, and then I saw it on several Web sites dealing with trade associations and non-profit organizations. And finally, a friend called and asked me if I had seen the ad.

What did you think when you first saw the ad for the position?

Honestly, I thought it could be a fun job, particularly since they (the Board) were advertising for someone who had experience with change management and generating new interest in a similar organization. That had been my background in all three of the non-profits I have led in the past, and so I thought that this could be right up my alley.

Speaking of "right up your alley," you had been CEO of the Bowling Proprietors Association. Were you a bowler before you accepted that post?

Not really. I had bowled like everyone else on a recreational basis and at an occasional birthday party, but I've never been a league bowler.



So, how could you run a bowling organization without being a bowler?

The same way that I ran a car dealer organization without being a car dealer, and a telecom organization without being a telecom manager. My forte is marketing, administration and management. In each case, I've gained enormous knowledge about those industries and tremendous insight into what makes them tick. However, my training cuts across industry lines to the core elements of a business or any interest. There are vast similarities between bowling and barbershopping, and similarities in the challenges both face, so I believe that my experience and my training are a perfect fit for this position.

Speaking of challenges, what do you think SPEB-SQSA's most immediate challenges are?

There's no doubt that we have to stop the membership slide and start recruiting more members into our Society. Going right along with that are the publicity and exposure opportunities that I feel we are missing. Both of these elements go hand-in-hand, along with provid-

Don Harris, CAE, has a wide-ranging professional resume, and his personal interests are equally as varied. Included among his hobbies are golf, chili cook-offs and writing.

"Honestly, I spend most of my time focused on my job, but when I do get out, I love to play golf, and I love anything involving water sports," Harris said. "I also have three novels in the works that I hope to finish some day."

A native Texan, Harris was raised in Dallas and graduated from North Texas State University where he was a journalism and political science major. "It was during Watergate, and we were all going to be the next Woodward and Bernstein," he remarked, "but few of us stayed in journalism after a half dozen years or so of chasing ambulances and writing obituaries for a living."

Actually, while he was a journalist with the *Dallas Morning News*, Harris won awards from the Associated Press, the Press Club of Dallas and the Ted Dealey Award for reporting from the News. "At one point I was on a team of reporters who investigated one story for almost an entire year. That will take it out of you quick."

In terms of his music career, the Society's new CEO played drums throughout his school days, including gigs with a number of rock bands such as Cement Parachute and Albino.

"If you went to an apartment pool party in Dallas in the '70s, there's a good chance you heard one of our bands. For a while, I wasn't able to play unless I smelled chlorine nearby."

ing for excellent music direction on the chapter level, programs that assist chapters and districts with membership growth, and a renewed sense of vitality for bringing new members into our Society.

Tell me about your management style and your philosophy about non-profit management.

I believe firmly in accountability, but also that authority comes with accountability. In other words, first hire the best people available to do the job. Then, give them the authority, resources and tools they need to do the job, plus provide constant motivation and encouragement. And finally, expect results. If you give a running back a tremendous offensive line, a great quarterback, receivers who will block, and excellent offensive schemes, then you should expect that running back to get the ball across the

line, and you shouldn't settle for anything else. Organizations, whether they are for-profit or not-for-profit, should be run the same way. Hire great people. Give them clear direction and excellent tools. Then expect them to get the ball across the line.

On my bookcase is a quote from Gene Stallings, the former head coach from the University of Alabama. It reads: "Never confuse activities with accomplishments ... results are what count."

That's not the situation in many non-profit organizations, is it?

No, it's not. But it's one that I firmly believe in, and it's one that has proven to be successful over and over again.

What should the volunteers' or members' role be

KNOWING A PRESIDENT is one thing; having one listen to your counsel is yet another. Don served on the White House Council on Small Business during the administration of President George H.W. Bush.



in an organization like that?

Our members and our volunteers are why SPEBSQSA has been as successful as it has been over the last 66 years. It's been the members who have built and sustained this organization, and they will always have crucial leadership roles in the success of the Society. Staff receives its marching orders from the volunteer leaders of our organization, but at the same time we need to make sure that the work being done by volunteers and the work being done by staff are in concert and working toward the same goals. Coordination and communication are key to that success.

One of the things that has impressed me more than anything is the broad scope of expertise we have within our 31,000 membership. There is virtually not an area of knowledge we could name where we couldn't find a group of highly skilled professionals from our membership. That's a tremendous gold mine for a person in my position.

Why do you think membership growth is so important?

We will live or die on our ability to grow our membership. I truly believe in the axiom, "If you're not growing, you're dying." The rate at which our world buries its traditions and institutions is amazing. You can see it everywhere from the decline in sports like golf and bowling, to appreciation for the arts, to fashion and food fads that come and go faster than the speed of light. Within the world of barbershop, we face a double-whammy of normal attrition coupled with a large foreseeable drop in membership because of the mounting age of our membership. If we can't get that turned around, then our grandchildren will not be able to enjoy this art form except on recordings.

So, is the youth movement our panacea?

Yes and no. Certainly, I believe that we have to lower our average age of membership and recruit more young men into the Society. There's no question about that. But I also believe that there is great opportunity for us among men who now have time for



PRESERVING THE BEST OF THE PAST suits Don's style, and he likes to have fun while doing it. His new passion is to ensure that decades from now men will be singing barbershop harmony in a Society that is not only strong but flourishing.

their personal interests because their children have grown and left home. Talented Barbershoppers give enormous time to this hobby, and it takes an individual who has that time to give.

But, why isn't just recruiting young men the answer to our problems?

We absolutely have to recruit young men, and I believe in our Young Men In Harmony programs. However, young men are targeted by every pastime and every activity. They generally have less time on their hands because they are still battling their way through school, new jobs, young families and building a life in general. And while I strongly believe in targeting this group, I also believe we have low-hanging fruit among men who are 45 years old and older, who now have the time to dedicate to barbershopping.

I strongly believe in targeting young men, but I also believe we have low-hanging fruit among men who are 45 years old and older, who now have the time to dedicate to barbershopping.

Your marketing background gives you a unique opportunity to look over the work of the Marketing Task Force and its pending marketing plan roll-out. What have you seen of this plan so far, and what are your thoughts about the work of the Marketing Task Force? The work being done by Sam Vigil and the Marketing Task Force, along with Terry Clarke and Clarke Communication Group of Boston, was one of my first interests when I came on board. As a matter of fact, I met most frequently with that group during my time in Biloxi. As soon as I

Odd Personal Facts about the Society's new CEO, Don Harris

- Twice served as a chili judge at the International World Championship Chili Cook-off in Terlingua, Texas
- Covered Elvis' last concert in Dallas for the *Dallas Morning News*; also got to sleep in the 25,000-square-foot "Elvis suite" in Las Vegas last year
- Has written for a dozen or more publications including *Texas Business Magazine*, *Dallas-Fort Worth Home & Garden Magazine*, *Golfweek*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*, among others
- Is a train buff (not the model ones, the big ones) and collects railroadia
- Plays golf to about a 17-handicap; worked for the Byron Nelson Golf Classic, PGA Senior Skins Game, LPGA Ladies Skins Game and other golf tournaments
- Has shared the stage with the likes of George H.W. Bush, the Dixie Chicks, Jim Belushi, Tony Robbins, Percy Sledge, Stanley Marcus, H. Ross Perot and others
- Hired LeAnn Rimes to sing the national anthem at a convention when she was 10 years old
- Hired the Vocal Majority to open a convention he produced several years ago
- One of his former employees was Nancy Reagan's Social Secretary and another employee invented Barney, the purple dinosaur
- Served on the White House Council on Small Business

came on board, I went to Boston to meet with Terry and his team directly. I've seen many, many marketing plans with aims like ours go awry. I wanted to make sure that I felt confident that the plan, the work and strategy were all sound.

What did you find?

I found that what Sam and Terry were leading was methodical, logical and on-target for what the Society needed. They were going about their work with experienced professionals on both the Society side as well as the agency side, and I thought their work would most probably develop into a sound marketing direction for our Society. Team members had their heads on straight and were truly working in the fashion that works for organizations like SPEBSQSA.

What do you expect from their final plan?

I expect great things from the final plan. I expect a definitive direction the Society can pursue to match the marketplace and its demands. And I expect a plan that will fit both our existing membership as well as potential new members out there who want to belong to an organization like ours. The guys on the team are very good at what they do, and they all have given this mission enormous effort and professionalism. I truly believe that what they are doing is designing the pivotal work for our Society's future and its success for generations to come.

That's a huge burden to put on one task force.

Yes, it is. But this team of Society members and agency professionals is up to the challenge. They are some of the most capable people I have ever worked with during any part of my professional career, and I have complete faith in their abilities.

What else do you feel we're doing right as a Society?

There's a lot. First, our product is phenomenal. The singing, the fellowship, the spirit of camaraderie is almost beyond belief in what it means to people's lives ... and

what it can mean to so many more people's lives. Additionally, we have dedicated Society volunteers both at the committee level and the Board level who truly want to do what it takes to make this Society not just survive, but flourish. The commitment here is incredible. With that kind of dedication, we won't lose; we will flourish.

You like to say "flourish" a lot.

Yes, I do, because I don't think it's good enough just to survive. I believe that we have to focus on doing what we need to do to flourish for the next generations. Just surviving isn't enough for me, and I don't think it's enough for our membership. We want to flourish

as brightly and brilliantly as a seventh chord sung by the best Barbershoppers in the world.

Speaking of the world, what do you believe is our international mission?

Undoubtedly, we have great opportunity to take barbershop music to the world outside of North America. That's easy to see in our alliances already in place in Europe and elsewhere. But I believe we can always do more, and we can have great growth for barbershopping throughout the rest of Europe, Asia and Central and South America. I've had considerable experience building organizations in those areas, and I know some of what it takes to go to other parts of the world and build organizations like ours. I also know of the success that can be realized there.

Clarke Caldwell, president of the Harmony Foundation, is another non-barbershop executive that has been brought onboard in the last year or so. How do the two of you get along, and how do you see our future with the Foundation?

One of the first people I met with during my interviews was Clarke Caldwell, and I was instantly impressed. He's a very smart and talented individual who can seize opportunity on our behalf. I'm glad that the Foundation has a man of his caliber heading its operations, because

*Just surviving
isn't enough for
me, and I don't
think it's
enough for our
membership.
We want to
flourish.*

I feel that we can work together easily and productively to realize gain for both groups. And truthfully, our gains are shared gains. Whatever helps the Foundation helps the Society. And whatever helps the Society helps the Foundation. We just have to make sure that we are always on the same track and that we are constantly helping each other move ahead in tandem.

The Foundation has announced a move out of Kenosha to a new location in downtown Chicago. Does the Society plan to do the same thing, especially in light of the sale of its buildings last year?

In those terms, the Society's goals are somewhat different than Harmony Foundation's. The Foundation is moving its offices to downtown Chicago for two primary reasons: 1) to be closer to the charitable organizations that normally give to foundations like ours; and 2) to be in a location where we can hire the best fundraising executives possible. For the Society, our need is instead to make sure that we do business in a

place where we can easily access an affordable, centrally located airport; we want to establish a permanent headquarters that can be productive and efficient for our employees and our members who must come to our offices on a regular basis. Over the course of the next year, I'm sure our Board will discuss those issues and develop a strategy.

Last, what's your personal future in terms of being a Barbershopper?

Well, first I joined the Foundation's President's Council so that I could show a commitment to our Society's future from a financial standpoint. And second, I am proud to announce that I have recently become a member of the Dallas Metro Chapter and passed my audition with **The Vocal Majority**. Ever since I first heard the VM in the mid-1970s, I have wanted to perform with them. Now I'll have my chance.

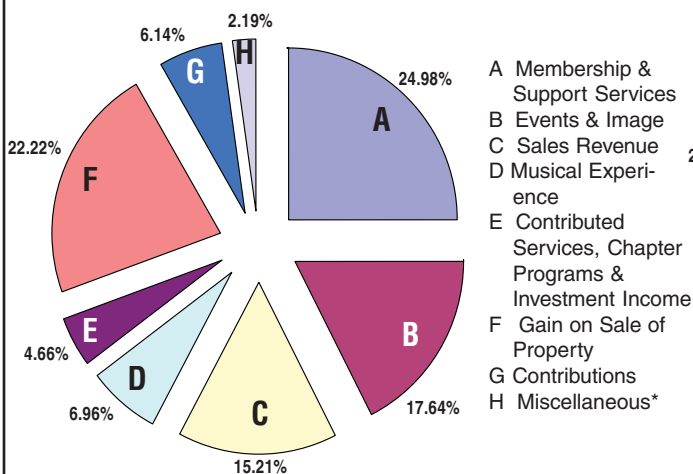
What part will you sing with the VM?

Bass for now, but watch out leads, I'm coming. ■

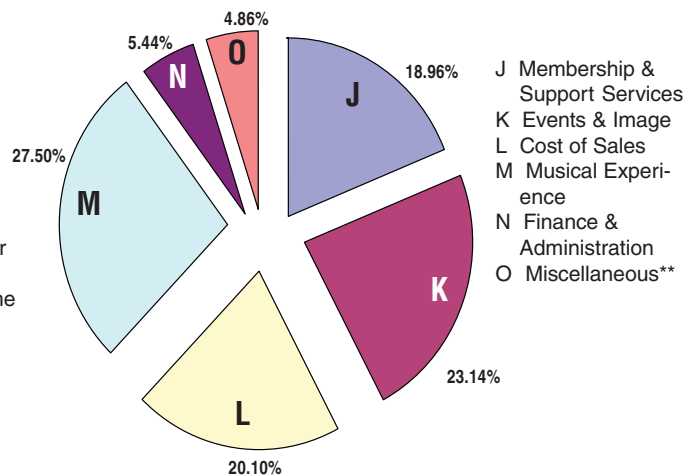
SPEBSQSA & Harmony Foundation annual financial report Year ending December 31, 2003

For a copy of the complete spreadsheet report, including the accompanying notes that are an integral part of the report, send a stamped (\$1.98) self-addressed envelope to the headquarters office or visit the Web site at www.spebsqsa.org for a more complete report.

Total Income \$9,171,365



Total Expense \$7,237,828



* Governance & Management, World Harmony, Income on Investments, Net Assets Released from Restrictions.

** Governance & Management, Foundation & Corporate, Recruitment & Training, Communication, Fundraising.

Gain, before Gains on Investments and Reclassifications	\$1,933,537
Net Realized Gains (Losses) on Investments	\$ 339,472
Net Income	\$2,273,009

In addition, the Society holds \$9.4 million in assets, including cash on hand, investments and property.



Staying together

The only score these champs track is how much fun they're having

For a group that was formed almost entirely by accident, **Downstate Express** is having a long, successful run! But in our 23 years together, our best success has not been winning our district championship, our multiple appearances on the international stage or even winning the 2004 International Seniors Quartet Championship. We still count our biggest success as the fact that we're still intact and still having the time of our lives singing together.

Lucky coincidence turns into a decades-long gig

In March of 1981, we were just four casual friends who usually only saw each other at district events. Ed, Bruce, Warren Hettinga and Gary, were at a division contest singing at the back of a room—just four guys ringing chords

for a few minutes while we waited for the quartets and judges to get out of the evaluation sessions so that the afterglow could start in earnest.

The crowd was antsy for somebody—anybody—to sing, and that's when someone approached the four of us and asked us to get on stage.

The crowd was antsy for somebody—anybody—to sing, and that's when someone approached the four of us and asked us to get on stage. Frankly, it was only coincidence that the four of us were together, but we decided to give it a shot. Warren wanted to sing bari, so we chose the other three parts and picked out three songs that we thought we could get through and went up on stage. We felt pretty good about how we sounded for four guys with literally minutes of experience singing together, but we left it at that. Bruce was still singing in the **Roadrunners**, so it wasn't like we were thinking of forming a new quartet.

By the Land O' Lakes District fall convention the next October, Bruce had dropped out of the Roadrun-

By
Downstate
Express

ners, and we were all thinking back to our experience at the division contest. We started to explore the possibility of forming a quartet. One drawback was that we all lived in different cities, and it was about 150 miles between Warren and Bruce, with Ed and Gary in between. We got together a few times in November and December and registered as a quartet in January of 1982. About seven weeks later, with a three-song repertoire, we entered the division contest and won. Now we had to get serious and get ready for the district contest in October.

Thriving under a mentor

The next—and probably one of the best—decisions we ever made was to drive to Minneapolis and meet with Richard Dick, who became our coach and mentor. He had a wealth of knowledge and experience and had coached many quartets. He relentlessly drilled us on vowels, attacks and releases and wouldn't let us slide over the little things. We had set a goal to win the district championship in two years. We all agree that Richard is the reason we instead won the first time out.

Richard coached us for many years and was truly the fifth man and best friend of Downstate Express. The next three years we represented LOL at the international quartet contest and placed as high as 22nd. Then, after an 11-year layoff from competing, we entered the 1996 international prelim contest and qualified to represent LOL in Salt Lake City.

Warren dropped out in 1997 and eventually ended up in Las Vegas. We were lucky to have Richard "Trep" Treptow available to sing with us. Trep has been a great asset to Downstate Express. When Trep joined, he had three weeks to learn 16 songs for our next show. He made two mistakes in the 16 songs, and we have never let him forget it.

Contest results do not equal growth and enjoyment

How is it that Downstate has lasted so long? Maybe a bit of quartet philosophy will help. Most quartets peak at some point, reaching a natural barrier such as time, jobs, or possibly the talent of individual members. Unfortunately, for too many quartets, their peak is measured solely by their contest rankings. What does a quartet do when it bumps up against one of those limits and can't reach its competition goals? Many simply

Ed Wirtz, tenor, joined the Society at age 13 after the **Four Teens** sang at his New Ulm, Minn., high school in 1951. A former chorus director, with two district quartet championships, Ed has been a member of the **Mankato Riverblenders** since 1973. He is retired from working in international engineering sales. He and his wife, Barbara, live in Wabasha, Minn.

Bruce Odell, lead, has been quartetting in the Society continuously since he joined in 1964—in only three quartets. He lives in Winona, Minn., with his wife, Karen, and is a member of the Winona Area Barbershop Chorus, for which he is a former director. He has 20 Man of Note awards and has served as a clinician, faculty member for many Land O' Lakes schools and programs, and as coach for many choruses and quartets.

Richard "Trep" Treptow, bari, has three district quartet championships to his credit and sang with the international champion, **Happiness Emporium**. Richard is the Society's current Presentation category specialist. He lives in Indianapolis, Ind., where he is a financial advisor to state and local governments. He is engaged to Ms. Jan Clause.

Gary Rogness, bass, has been a Barbershopper since 1975. Gary lives with his wife, Ginger, in Rochester, Minn., where he is an electrical component technician. They have three children: Ryan, Laura and David. He's held numerous chapter officer positions and was recipient of the Chapter Barbershopper of the Year. He has 11 Man of Note awards.

break up when one or more members feels the barrier is not his doing, and he wants to keep "progressing." But, what is "progress"?

For Downstate Express, the measuring stick for the quartet was simply: Are we enjoying (1) being together as friends, (2) singing together as a quartet, and (3) entertaining audiences together, OR is there another quartet opportunity where we would receive more enjoyment than from the four of us in the Downstate Express? If there's not, why break up a good thing?

In terms of competition, Downstate Express probably peaked several years ago, but we are yet to peak in the very important areas of our hobby: enjoying our friendship, the joy of singing together, and the positive feedback we receive from our show audiences.

It may be a fact that strictly competition quartets don't last as long as quartets who measure their success in broader terms. Downstate won its district contest more than 20 years ago and a few years later we stopped competing in international preliminaries. But we kept singing simply because it's fun to do. That alone is a very good reason.

If you are in a competing quartet, ask yourself what would happen if you eliminated competition as a factor in your quartet experience. Ask:

- Are we having a good time together?
- Are we making good music?
- Do audiences like us?

If the answer is yes to all three, then what is to be gained by breaking up? For Downstate Express, even if we had come in dead last in Biloxi, we'd be singing and entertaining and enjoying our time together, doing what we love to do. ■

Even if we had come in dead last, we'd be singing and entertaining and enjoying our time together, doing what we love to do.

2004 International Seniors Medalists



1. Downstate Express (LOL)

Edward Wirtz (T), Bruce Odell (L), Gary Rogness (Bs), Richard Treptow (Br)

Gary Rogness:
downstateexpress@juno.com;
Home (507) 288-0606; Work
(507) 288-0000



2. Antique Gold (EVG)

Charlie Metzger (Br), George Metzger (Bs), Wally Coe (L), Tom Bates (T)

Tom Bates: musikman2@shaw.ca; Home (604) 526-8715



3. Antiques Roadshow (PIO)

Roger Lewis (Br), Denny Gore (L), Lee Hanson (Bs), Raleigh Bloch (T)

Dennis Gore: dgore132@comcast.net; Home (586) 263-4840



3. (tie) Senior Class Reunion (RMD)

Ben West (Br), Lon Szymanski (Bs), Dave Thorell (L), Jim Wheeler (T)

James Wheeler: Jimwheels@aol.com; Home: (801) 424-3037



5. Savoir Four (ILL)

Richard Anthony (T), Dick Bek (L), George Sotos (Bs), Lynn Hauldren (Br)

Richard Bek: dbek@spebsqsa.org; Home (262) 705-5954; Work
(800) 876-7464



President's Council will make huge impact It's about helping Harmony Foundation make a difference—today

Harmony Foundation's new flagship annual giving program, the President's Council, is a leadership opportunity that creates the financial resources for immediate and near-future projects that promote barber-shop harmony and enrich people's lives.

The President's Council is designed to achieve the critical balance between endowment and annual funds. The Foundation today has more than \$10 million in current and planned gifts through the Founder's Club. That investment in our future is crucial, but we will not fully benefit from that money for 10 to 15 years or more. We need a substantial increase in the funds that come through annual, unrestricted giving.

We must have a strong Foundation today to ensure there will be singing tomorrow. Kids need to attend Harmony Explosion camps *this* summer, directors need training at Directors College *this* year and young men must be inspired and trained *now*. But the Foundation also needs to provide the funds the Society needs for exciting new growth programs critical to our future. These very real needs can be met through the President's Council.

Harmony Foundation needs the infusion of cash, not only to be strong internally, but also to become more attractive to national or international sources of grants. Those grants, in turn, add to the Foundation's ability to fund Society programs.

According to co-chairs Roger and Sue Lewis, the President's Council "provides the ideal opportunity for those of us who truly enjoy the life-changing benefits of singing to make Harmony Foundation vital and successful today."

In helping to meet today's needs, the President's Council of-

fers an attractive option to individuals who have the means to make significant contributions and see the results of their deep commitment at work today. Membership in the President's Council requires a minimum annual gift of \$1000 and is open to individuals and couples, Society members and non-members. (See chart for giving levels.)

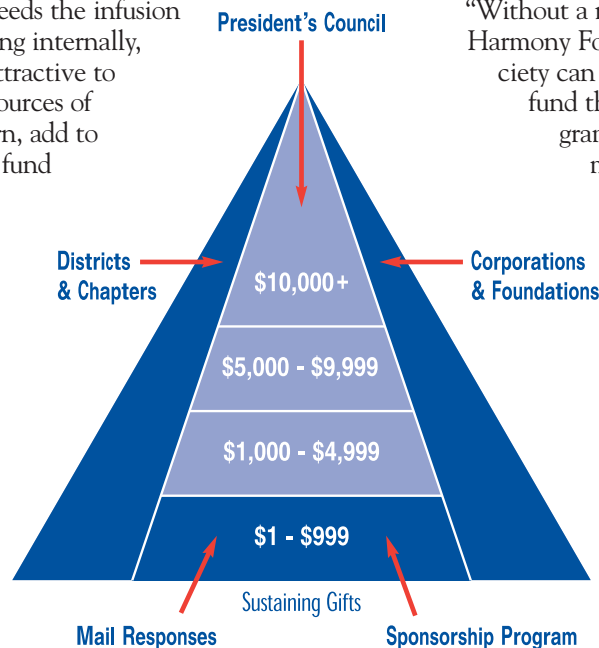
With a \$4000 minimum gift, quartets also can become members.



Helping to make the Foundation vital ensures the future of the Society's current and future outreach programs, according to President's Council vice-chairs, Al and Joan Bonney. "Understanding that we cannot fund this outreach through our traditional revenue sources—Society membership dues, Harmony Marketplace and conventions—we must turn to the fourth leg of our financial stool: Harmony Foundation," Al Bonney said.

"Without a robust and vibrant Harmony Foundation, the Society can never expect to fund the important programs that extend its mission: Directors College scholarships, youth activities, and perhaps, things like extended leadership training or external affairs or diversity programs."

The Lewises and the Bonneys are joined on the Council Cabinet by Bob



Clarke Caldwell
CEO, Harmony Foundation

Annual Giving

***Kids need to attend
Harmony Explosion
camps this summer,
directors need training
at Directors College
this year and young
men must be inspired
and trained now.***

and Ellen Brutsman, Chris and Heather Kirkham, Jim and Doris Sams, Joe Jenkins and Barbara Bruning. The Cabinet is responsible for establishing overall program policies and operating guidelines.

Aside from the satisfaction of enriching lives and creating a viable Harmony Foundation, all President's Council members receive an exclusive invitation to the President's Council reception and front-of-the-line privilege of purchasing two tickets in preferred seating sections at the conventions. They also will receive, at mini-

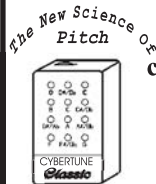
mum, a complimentary compact disc, video or DVD of quartet or chorus contests. Benefits, of course, increase according to the membership level.

For more information, call Harmony Foundation at 800-876-7464 x8446.

— Julie Siepler, assistant editor of The Harmonizer, contributed to this article. ■



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Champs making it big off-Broadway

On-stage admiration of Marx (Groucho) doesn't extend to Lennon (John)

The versatile Dan Jordan is at it again! The lead of **The Perfect Gentlemen**, **139th Street Quartet**, **New Tradition** (gold medalist in 1985) and recording, television, and stage artist now co-stars with Tim Piper in "A Day in His Life," a traveling musical. Jordan co-stars as Douglas Michaels, fictional host of a little-known talk show in 1972. The terminally un-hip Michaels is mortified to be stuck with John Lennon as his only guest when the others are stranded in a blizzard. Piper, singing and acting a spot-on Lennon, fills up the taping with interviews and performances of 20 Lennon/Beatles hits with Michaels' studio band. Meanwhile, Jordan's character provides comic relief as he gradually slides from professional showman to drunken buffoon. The musical stage production will be seen in various parts of the U.S.A. this year and next as the 25th anniversary of Lennon's death approaches. For show dates and more info, visit www adayinhislife.com.



Dan Jordan (left, second from left) acted the role of Chico in 1985 champ New Tradition ...

... a role remembered on his necktie for his latest acting gig. Steve Iannacchione (below photo, far right) has the stage name Steven Wilde in remembrance of his days with 1994 champion Joker's Wild.



Joker carries the Bills' torch

Steve Iannacchione, tenor of 1994 quartet champion **Joker's Wild**, has been spending the last couple of years carrying the **Buffalo Bills'** torch as a champion



turned "Music Man" cast member. Steve's been a member of the School Board Quartet in the major traveling production of "Music Man." Pictured with the Board are members of the South Bend-Mishawaka chapter after Steve's 500th performance: tenors Kyle Kitzmiller and Joaquin Stevens, leads Wayne Keppler and Bert Rodriguez, basses Dave Shadinger and Joseph Torello, reluctant baris Scott Kitzmiller and Steve Iannacchione (stage name Steven Wilde). The chapter turned the event into quite a PR promotion for its show the following week. Chapter quartets performed in the theater lobby all four nights the show was in town, entertaining a combined audience of 6,000.

THREE-WAY CALLING, FOUR-PART HARMONY. If there are any telephone executives reading this, have we got a television ad idea for you! Lead Ron Riley wanted to surprise his wife, Geri, with a birthday greeting sung by his quartet, Presto! But alas, it was not to be—not in person, anyway. They couldn't get together, but since three members had three-way calling, Ron did the next-best thing. The guys set a time and Geri answered her phone to a four-part rendition of "Happy Birthday"—with tenor Grant Warning at his BNSF office, baritone Ricky Chaddock at his computer at United Defense Systems, bass Ron Middlestaedt at home in his Jacuzzi and Ron outdoors with his construction company. No report as to whether they've ever rehearsed in the same manner.



Three ways chapters have spread harmony in their communities

Need some ideas on how to spread the barbershop word? Here are two ideas that work.

Sing for the children:

What's the reward of singing for school children? How about 100 thank-you notes a week. **The Blue Ridge Connection** of the **Jeffersonland Chorus** in Charlottesville, Va., sang for two elementary schools with audiences of 400 kids each. The experience, they say, is among the most memorable they've had as a quartet. During the 20-minute program, the quartet



divided the children into four groups to teach them the "Sleepy Time Down South" tag. The "reviews"

all were positive and ranged from "we hope you can come next year and amaze the new kids and us again" to "I like the song that yall messtup on." Quartet members are Bob Ellison, tenor; Art Grahame, lead; George Grattan, bass, and Ken Wallenborn, bari.

Go to church: They spend a lot of time in church during the summers, but the Central Jersey Ecumenical Barbershop choir spreads the barbershop gospel. The group, founded in 1976 by Bob Dickson of the Iselin chapter, travels New Jersey filling in when church choirs are on vacation. Director John Huetz, member of the Red Bank Area and Greater Atlantic City chapters, rehearses the group in the fall and spring. In summer, with a quick rehearsal before each service, members are ready to go. The idea behind CJBE, Inc., is not a new one, but it is one that creates positive attitudes toward barbershop and Barbershoppers in the community.

Return to the roots. The **Hunterdon Harmonizers** in New Jersey returned to barbershop's roots—so to speak—to recruit new members. The chorus is inviting men in Hunterdon and Warren County to join them by posting framed photo invitations in area barbershops. Even the follicly challenged need to have a trim now and then. Pictured are Harmonizer Bruce Budde and Lora Back, proprietor of the Boro Barbershop in Flemington.



CHAPTER ETERNAL

Society Members reported as deceased between Jan. 1 and March 31, 2004

Cardinal

Hepp, Henry
Lake County, IN
Morton, Robert
Lexington, KY
Terry, William
Kokomo, IN
Logansport, IN
Central States
Bohnenkamper, Lee
Greater Ozarks, AR
Brunk, Bruce
Mc Pherson, KS
Hansen, Jerald
Viborg, SD
Hunt, Robert
Salina, KS
Ries, Thomas
Watertown, SD
Rusche, Leonard
Sioux Falls, SD

Dixie

Bartlett, Roy
Birmingham, AL
Bevensee, Ronald
Greensboro, NC
Field, Carl
Beaufort, SC
Hoskins, Harlow
Asheville, NC
Howard, Wayne
Marietta, GA
Munson, William
Greater Knoxville, TN

Evergreen

Bastian, Allen
Eugene, OR
Dusseau, Parker
Kalispell, MT
Kelly, Jeffry
Seattle, WA
Owsley, Gary
Spokane, WA
Rowlee, Robert
Snohomish County
Sellers, Earl
Missoula, MT

Smith, Glenn
Tacoma, WA
Whaley Sr, Don
Coeur D'Alene, ID
Young, Roy
Olympia, WA

Far Western

Boyd, Jack
San Francisco Bay Cities, CA
San Jose, CA
Hamlin, Gordon
Central Arizona Quartet, AZ

Phoenix (Saguaro), AZ

Himot, Nathan
Coachella Valley, CA
Janssen, Arthur
Ventura, CA
Johnson, Vernon
San Jose, CA
Jones, Paul
Monterey Peninsula, CA

Lloyd, Jerry

Marin, CA
Monroe, Edward
Napa Valley, CA
Reese, Douglas
South Bay, CA
Scott, Donald
Santa Barbara, CA
Young, Jack
Santa Rosa, CA

Frank Thorne

Boehm, Oscar
Mechesney, William
Phillips, Garrett
Terry, William

Illinois

Adams, Keith
Carbondale, IL
Boehm, Oscar
Oak Lawn, IL
Field, Carl
Northbrook, IL
Gamis, Sol
Peoria, IL

Gossmann, Paul
Aurora, IL
Johnson, Albert
Decatur, IL
May, Leroy
Aurora, IL
Reedy, Leonard
Decatur, IL
Starcevic, Louis
Bloomington, IL
Johnny Appleseed
Barry, John
Miami-Shelby, OH
Fox, Dale
Frank Thorne
Hough, Bill
Dayton Metro, OH
Long, Robert
Zanesville, OH
Madachy, Richard
Buckeye-Columbus, OH
McClelland, Donald
Shenango Valley, PA
Morton, Robert
Frank Thorne
Rogers, Wesley
Miami-Shelby, OH
Rowe, Richard
Maumee Valley, OH
Schilpp, William
Pittsburgh North Hills, PA
Tidwell, Herbert
Dayton Metro, OH
Land O' Lakes
Brund, Richard
Menomonee Falls, WI
Kalinsky, John
Dauphin, MB
Osland, Harold
Le Roy, MN
Schuler, Don
Duluth-Superior, WI
Mid-Atlantic
Avakian, Leon
Red Bank Area, NJ



Visits by champs lift hearts and spirits

When **Happiness Emporium** visited Glenn Van Tassell and his wife, Donna, they thought they'd be cheering him up. Little did they know, Glenn would make their day unforgettable. The two-time gold medalist (**Auto Towners** and **Gentlemen's Agreement**) is suffering from ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). The quartet sang for a small gathering of friends and family at the Van Tassell home. Good conversation and great quartet stories followed. But the highlight came when Glenn played a recording of his solo version of "The Lord's Prayer."

"For all the times we've heard him sing in a quartet, we never knew of the tremendous solo voice he had," said Happiness lead Rod Johnson. "Glenn is one of the true treasures of our Society. His spirit is such that he lifts up those who are trying to lift him up." From left: Bob Dowma, tenor; Glenn Van Tassell; Rod Johnson, lead; Jim Foy, bass; and Rick Anderson, bari.

Everyone knows **Power Play's** reputation for having big hearts. Still, a visit by Jack and Kitty Slamka on Christmas Eve day deeply touched their friends Rick and Beth Anderson and their children: Grace, 2; Rose, 4; and Christian, 8.



Christian was born with Cerebral Palsy and is confined to a wheelchair. He can't walk, talk, or feed himself, but he sure can smile! And the kid knows good music when he hears it (maybe because he was born in Kenosha, home of the Society's headquarters). See, Christian's a huge Power Play fan and won't go to sleep at night unless "Love at Home" is playing.

During a conversation with Jack at the fall Pioneer District convention, Rick learned the quartet had a plethora of copies of *The Harmonizer* with Power Play on the front cover and mentioned that Christian would like a copy. On Christmas Eve day, Jack and Kitty made a surprise visit to the Anderson's with presents for the girls and something very special for Christian—a framed copy of *The Harmonizer* signed by all four guys. The smile on Christian's face says it all.

Helping 32 step-dads to victory

Few grade-schoolers sing in Society choruses, but even fewer show up despite having no relatives in the chapter. Neal Long is an exception to that rule, and an exceptional tenor in Reno's **Silver Dollar Chorus**. His fifth-grade teacher at Roy Gomm Elementary School recognized his advanced talent and arranged a visit with the chorus. Neal was soon hooked on the harmonies and developed a friendship with music director Bill Weiser and several dozen other men who watch over Neal after his parents drop him off at rehearsal. Five months after joining, Neal, now 12, helped 32 other performers win a recent Far Western District division contest in Sparks. Not a bad debut! Broadway musicals are in his long-range plans, but Neal thinks he'd like to sing in a quartet first, and—already looking toward a barbershop career—possibly with the **Dapper Dans of Disneyland**. ■



CHAPTER ETERNAL

<p> <i>Teaneck, NJ</i> <i>Cardin, E Robert</i> <i>Wilmington, MD</i> <i>Carper, Garland</i> <i>Roanoke Valley, VA</i> <i>Cassedy, Thomas</i> <i>Dundalk, MD</i> <i>Dove, Arthur</i> <i>Ocean County, NJ</i> <i>Eckart, Jr., George</i> <i>Patapsco Valley, MD</i> <i>Gapetz, Wilford</i> <i>Frank Thorne</i> <i>Ginder, Marvin</i> <i>Mahanoy City, PA</i> <i>Gutt, Alvin</i> <i>Bryn Mawr, PA</i> <i>Harris, Thomas</i> <i>Richmond, VA</i> <i>Koenig, Newton</i> <i>Patapsco Valley, MD</i> <i>Lawton, Ken</i> <i>Dundalk, MD</i> <i>Marshall, Gilbert</i> <i>Greater Brunswick Area, NJ</i> <i>McMahon, John</i> <i>Red Bank Area, NJ</i> <i>Ramsteck, Edward</i> <i>Nassau-Mid Island, NY</i> <i>Tibbels, C Morris</i> <i>Harford County, MD</i> <i>Trapp Jr, J Max</i> <i>Ocean View, DE</i> <i>Trimble, Jr., Henry</i> <i>Montclair, NJ</i> Northeastern <i>Brewer, Victor</i> <i>Cape Cod, MA</i> <i>Scituate, MA</i> <i>Dearborn, George</i> <i>Portland, ME</i> </p>	<p> <i>LaFosse, Harold</i> <i>St John's, NL</i> <i>Mansfield, Charles</i> <i>Portland, ME</i> <i>Packard, Donald</i> <i>Pittsfield, MA</i> <i>Page, Robert</i> <i>Bridgeport, CT</i> <i>Pare, Guy</i> <i>South Shore, QC</i> <i>Sklar, Roger</i> <i>Portland, ME</i> <i>Varney, Newell</i> <i>Frank Thorne</i> Ontario <i>Banks, Monty</i> <i>Ottawa, ON</i> <i>Bell, George</i> <i>Huntsville, ON</i> <i>Hendry, Pat</i> <i>Guelph, ON</i> <i>Larmer, Kenneth</i> <i>London, ON</i> <i>Mardon, Alan</i> <i>Newmarket, ON</i> <i>Parkinson, John</i> <i>East York, ON</i> <i>Van Osch, Marinus</i> <i>Simcoe, ON</i> Pioneer <i>Burchenal, Selden</i> <i>Grosse Pointe, MI</i> <i>Calderwood, Matthew</i> <i>Detroit-Oakland, MI</i> <i>Hein, Donald</i> <i>Grosse Pointe, MI</i> <i>Jones, Arthur</i> <i>Grosse Pointe, MI</i> <i>Miller, William</i> <i>Pontiac-Waterford, MI</i> <i>Grosse Pointe, MI</i> </p>	<p> <i>Schell, John</i> <i>Detroit-Oakland, MI</i> <i>Shrader, David</i> <i>Lansing, MI</i> <i>Smith, John</i> <i>Pontiac-Waterford, MI</i> Rocky Mountain <i>Halpin, F. Paul</i> <i>Billings, MT</i> <i>Rapple, Foster</i> <i>Utah Valley, UT</i> <i>Segrist, Sam</i> <i>Scottsbluff, NE</i> Seneca Land <i>Deichman, Richard</i> <i>Canandaigua, NY</i> Southwestern <i>Bohnenkamper, Lee C</i> <i>Greater Fort Smith, AR</i> <i>Grundner, Kenneth</i> <i>Northwest Louisiana, LA</i> <i>Rector, Morris</i> <i>Tulsa, OK</i> <i>Stange, Robert</i> <i>Lake Jackson, TX</i> Sunshine <i>Schoener, George</i> <i>Martin - St Lucie, FL</i> <i>Smith, John</i> <i>Cape Coral, FL</i> <i>Smith, John</i> <i>Naples, FL</i> <i>Wilcox Jr, William</i> <i>Sarasota, FL</i> </p>
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THE TAG

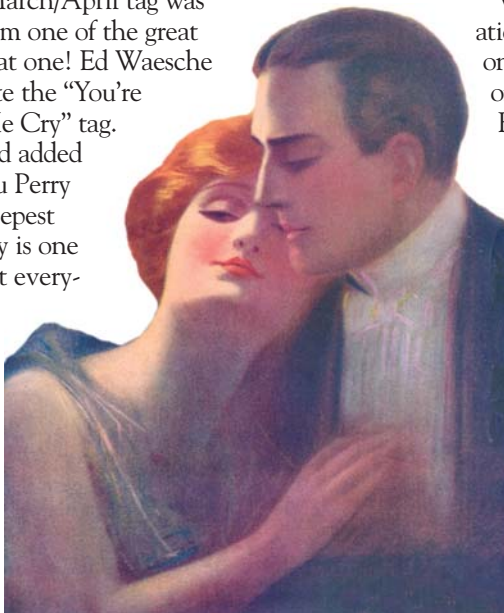
Joe Liles, Tagmaster



Thanks Ed! Here's a real Lou Perry tag!

STOP THE PRESSES! The March/April tag was headlined as "A great one from one of the great ones." Right tag ... wrong great one! Ed Waesche was the "great one" who wrote the "You're The Only Girl That Made Me Cry" tag. On my file copy, someone had added "Lou Perry," and it wasn't Lou Perry who added Lou Perry. Our deepest apologies to Ed, who certainly is one the Society's all-time greats at everything, especially arranging.

I have made the correction on the Web site. You do know about the free songs and tags on the Web site, don't you? They are grouped under the Free 'n' Easy Music in Sing & Perform > Get Music. Almost every tag that has been in *The Harmonizer* is available there for anyone to download and copy.



Well, here is one that is truly a creation by Lou Perry. He wrote this one in the early '70s and it's been one of my favorites ever since.

Here's a strange thing: This tag has been published in two versions, each with a different last four measures, swapping the lead and baritone parts. Try singing as shown here, then sing it again with the lead/bari switching parts on the last four measures. It works both ways, of course, but the way it is here seems to be a bit more "lead-like." I'm not positive about how Lou really wrote it, but my best guess would be as it is here.

Either way, it's a wonderful tag. There's an optional

bass note in measure six. ■

GIVE ME YOUR HAND

1 2 3 4

Tenor Lead

8

Give me your hand to hold in mine, and

Bari Bass

5 6 7 8

I will give you my heart, my heart.

heart.

heart.

Lou Perry, circa 1972

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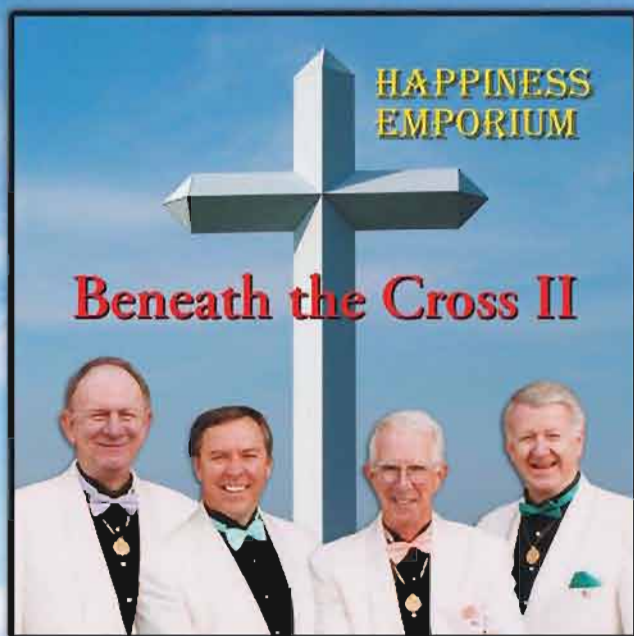
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