

November/December 2004

THE HARMONIZER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY



HEARTS OF GOLD

The Ambassadors of Harmony Journey to the Championship

POST MID-WINTER JACKSONVILLE CRUISE



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11

**Total
commitment,
total belief:
the
Ambassadors
of Harmony
throw it all on
the line.**

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Original photo illustration
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www.theafterglowlounge.org



Keep the main thing the main thing

Last Saturday night, I experienced one of the most meaningful moments in my short barbershop life. After the last performance of the Central States District convention, everyone filed back to the headquarters hotel for afterglows, parties etc., when about seventy of us were stuck at slow-operating elevators. During our wait, a young couple, apparently straight from their wedding, walked through our crowd in tux and wedding gown.

While we were all waiting and waiting on the elevators, someone yelled to the group, "*let's sing for the newlyweds,*" and within a minute or so the group was singing, "Heart of My Heart," for the pair.

As you can imagine we weren't a minute into the song when the bride teared up, the groom broke into a huge smile, and nearby bridesmaids started to cry as well.

I bring this up here because it represents the true power of what we do as a Society. Take all the politics out of it, remove all the strategic plans and category schools, forget about all the judges points for a minute, and so much of what we do comes down to those bride's tears.

In other words, making people... exceedingly happy. Creating special moments of joy for others.

John Schneider tells me of a time in a restaurant when several staff members stopped at a nearby table to sing "Happy Birthday" to an elderly woman. And just last month, our brilliant collegiate champs **Vocal Spectrum** sang at a special U.S.O. function.

As the saying goes, "Sometimes when you are up to your neck in alligators, it's hard to remember that your mission was just to drain the swamp." In barbershopping, sometimes when you are up to your neck in the controversies and politics of any Society, it's hard to remember that your purpose is to make people happy with singing barbershop music.

In 2005, the Society's Music Department, led by Dr. Greg Lyne, will be refocusing its efforts on providing more training for our music directors, as well as providing more benefits for the "man on the riser."

We already have an excellent music department, filled with talented and gifted musicians who understand the barbershop style and are well-experienced in teaching the teachers and training the trainers. Now we have to focus their activities on those tasks

for the year ahead.

In doing so, Greg, Jim Debusman, Bill Rashleigh, Rick Spencer, Joe Liles and Linda Neuenfeld will take on a broader assignment of tasks, trying to influence better musicality through our Society. I've heard over and over and over again since arriving at the Society that our chapters will flourish in direct proportion to how our music leadership flourishes. In other words, the time, effort and funds we invest in music directors will drive membership growth and membership retention. It will also result in greater acceptance of our music by the public and more opportunities to perform.

That's why a lot of what our music department will be doing in 2005 will be centered around giving our chapters' music directors the resources, assistance and training that they want and need. Equipping the men in front of the risers, so that the men on the risers get the most joy and most satisfaction from their barbershop experience.

Let's try never to forget that the music is our message. Let's try never to forget that it's the music that caused people to join this Society... not committee meetings, not mission statements, not strategic plans, and certainly not politics. It's the music.

As we move toward a New Year and refreshed enthusiasm, let's pledge to always put the music in the forefront. Always.

I love the way our Board sings its votes at Board meetings. I love the way we always sing at every meeting we hold. I love the ways we try to reach out to as many people as possible. And I love knowing that it will always be the music that causes this Society to flourish and grow.

We will do all we can to aid that effort. But it will always be the music... barbershop music that is the heart and soul of this Society. I'm sure that the bride and groom already know that fact.



The power of what we do is in making people happy... exceedingly happy.

November/December 2004

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For complete staff listing,
please see our Members Service section, page 33

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We enrich lives through singing

You'd be amazed by the amount of time that Society Board members have devoted to discussions about our Society's future and what the mission and vision of the Society should be. With the able assistance of the Envisioning Task Force (Chuck Greene, chairman; Clarke Caldwell, Gary Denton, Don Harris, Rob Hopkins, Digger MacDougall), and with the valuable input of about 150 Barbershoppers from



*Imagine
our impact
if we made
these
precepts
our guide.*

throughout the organization, the Society Board has crafted statements about the purpose of our Society (our mission) and about what we aim to become, create, and achieve (our vision).

One outgrowth of the discussions has been the adoption of a vision slogan: "Building a Better World Through Singing." That says a lot about who we are and what we aim to achieve. It's a great slogan to use so that the world gets to know that we have a vision that extends far beyond our own membership. Our vision is nothing short of a better world through singing. Soon the Society Board will also announce a vision statement that will describe what Board members envision the Society will be in the future.

For now, though, I want to focus on our Society's mission. In October the Board approved an expanded mission statement that reflects what our Society is, whom it serves, what it does, and what we expect to accomplish.

We perpetuate and celebrate the barbershop harmony style.

This is obviously a crucial and central fact about who we are. Note that our mission is to perpetuate, not just preserve, the barbershop style.

OUR MISSION:

We enrich lives through singing.

- **We perpetuate and celebrate the barbershop harmony style.**
- **We serve each new generation of singers through support of vocal music education.**
- **We serve audiences through an uplifting, wholesome variety of a cappella musical entertainment.**
- **We serve our members by sharing fellowship, performance skills, and leadership development.**
- **We help build better communities and a better world, bonding diverse people through the pure fun of a cappella harmony as we "Keep the Whole World Singing!"**

My *Webster's Dictionary* defines perpetuate as "to make perpetual; to eternize; to cause to endure or to be continued indefinitely; to preserve from extinction or oblivion." We aim to ensure that the barbershop style endures for future generations to enjoy the thrill of ringing chords.

One important way to accomplish that is to make sure that our choruses and quartets sing and perform well. That starts with a sensible, careful study of what music to sing. Our best performing ensembles can sing very difficult music and make it sound easy. Let them continue doing that, but the rest of us need to avoid getting trapped into singing very difficult music and making it sound, well, very difficult! It's not fun to sing poorly, and it certainly isn't fun to constantly struggle to ring chords when either the music is too hard or there aren't many chords to ring. For many of our performers, choosing relatively simple music with a lot of ringable chords is an important foundation for successful performance, and for fun. Then we can truly celebrate the barbershop style.

We serve each new generation of singers through support of vocal music education. For years now we have seen many examples of chapters, quartets, and individual Barbershoppers reaching out to encourage vocal music in our schools. Let's face it: vocal music education in North America is in need of our help. Teachers do not have the resources they need. Young boys, in particular, are more likely to be listeners than singers. What more can your district do? What can your chapter do? How can you help?

We serve audiences through an uplifting, wholesome variety of a cappella musical entertainment. Today more than ever family audiences



LETTERS

hzrletters@spebsqsa.org

need wholesome entertainment, and let's not forget to provide the variety, too. Careful attention to the script, order of songs, and staging will enable you to inspire your audiences; you may get the standing ovation you want! Keep in mind that there are Standing Ovation reviewers who, for the price of two tickets to your show, will come to your show and provide you thoughts on what you did well and what you might do to improve the entertainment value in your performance. Contact your district president to find out who is in charge of the Standing Ovation program in your district.

We serve our members by sharing fellowship, performance skills, and leadership development. The fellowship that we share is very special and is a big part of why we continue to be Society members. I wonder if we are as aware of the many ways in which we help members grow as performers, leaders, and warmhearted people who share their joy of singing with others.

We help build better communities and a better world, bonding diverse people through the pure fun of a cappella harmony as we "Keep the Whole World Singing!" Only if we reach out beyond our current membership can we achieve this noble purpose. Be active in your community. Work with others who share a commitment to the benefits of singing. Get the audience to do some singing when you give a public performance. Choose music that will help you to attract a variety of people to your chapter. Above all, talk to people about the difference that singing makes in your life, and can make in theirs. Only if we do all of this can we hope to "Keep the Whole World Singing!"

Robert G. Hopkins

Writers sought — *The Harmonizer* is committed to "Getting the most from the barbershop hobby" Pitch your story ideas, tidbits and experiences to harmonizer@spebsqsa.org

I didn't go to Louisville with my husband this year. I thought I had made the right decision, but Lorin May's presentation in the September/October *Harmonizer* made me question it. The photography and captions are deeply engaging, often hilarious, sometimes poignant. The layout is very effective. The spirit of Internationals, and of this one is particular, was captured as well as I can imagine it ever being captured. It made me almost feel I was there, and certainly wish I had been there for at least the events featured. What a pleasure to read! Surely destined to be a barbershop classic.

ANN SOMERS
a resigned barbershop widow

What a fine article of great pictures and very engaging commentaries on them.. Very creative and interesting writing.

I was particularly drawn to the picture of the Rounders. It reminded me of my own experience with a fly at International.

I had a fly crawling around my eyes,

nose and mouth during the last 3/4 of our final song ("Ah, Sweet Mystery Of Life") on Saturday night in Kansas City in 1962. We won 5th place medals because, we were told, of extra points awarded to us for the manner in which I handled the situation and how I didn't let it "bug me."

JERRY FAIRCHILD
Tenor, **Sidewinders**, 1964 Champs

Just finished reading the Sept/Oct *Harmonizer* cover to cover. Congratulations on a fantastic piece of work with respect to your convention coverage. Your photo commentaries were both enlightened and clever. Keep up the good work.

Also, the Wilmington, NC chapter deeply appreciates the space devoted to our youth program. You cannot believe what a morale booster it is to a small, obscure chapter when it is recognized in *The Harmonizer*.

PAUL PARKER
Wilmington, NC

TAKE TWO:

No sooner had the September issue hit the streets than the phone started ringing: did we realize that we had used a photo of Men In Black (MIB) in place of MUSICAL ISLAND BOYS (MIB)? Nope. We do now, though.



**MIB II:
THE RIGHT STUFF
(oops!)**



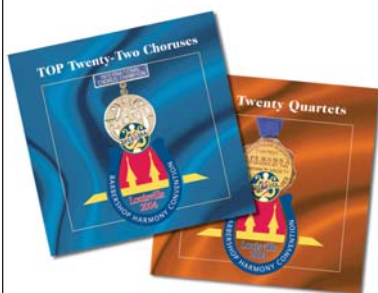


Louisville DVD features VM tracks

The show everyone talked about will be the bonus feature everyone talks about when the 2004 convention recordings are released on DVD in November. The Vocal Majority, which performed its "VM X-treme" show pro bono, is releasing ZZ tracks for the DVD: "Song Number One Can't Be Beat" and "Song Number Two Is Even Better."

Of course, this is icing on the cake of a superb disc packed with memorable barbershop performances, including the first championship of the Ambassadors of Harmony.

Order DVDs and CDs now from Harmony Marketplace, 800-876-7464 or www.harmonymarketplace.com



College contest gears up for bigger, better 2005

Tired of waiting around to be "old enough" to sing in a good quartet? That thinking is quickly disappearing with the MBNA America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet Contest. Now is the time to find three other guys your own age (they don't even have to be members of the Society if they choose) and put together a quartet to compete. *All it takes is two songs!* Coaching and financial support is out there in your district, so if you do not know how to get started, the Society can help.

College quartets have become some of the most popular groups in barbershop. They are invited to perform on chapter shows, go on tours to high schools, colleges and universities, make CDs, and have their own websites. Just look at previous college champions who have gone on to great success in the "big show": **Four Voices**, **Reprise**, or **Vocal Spectrum**.

Chapters: You can get involved too. Adopt a college quartet by providing coaching, travel assistance, performance opportunities and an enthusiastic audience of fans — yourselves! What a tremendous opportunity to get involved in Young Men In Harmony!

Last year, 54 college quartets competed throughout the Society. Wouldn't it be great to double that number? Contact Rick Spencer at headquarters: email college@spebsqsa.org or visit www.spebsqsa.org/cbqc

Since 2003, XM Satellite Radio (www.xmradio.com) has featured great barbershop sounds on "Harmony Square," a one-hour show that airs at Sundays at 8 PM Eastern with a repeat at midnight.

If your quartet or chorus would like a world-wide audience on XM, send your compact disc to:

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XM Satellite is just one outlet among hundreds of radio stations playing barbershop. From Phil DeBar's "Human Voice" show in Santa Rosa to The Harmony Network in New Jersey, enterprising Barbershoppers have found air time for close harmony — not to mention the many a cappella radio shows which embrace a still broader range of singing. Donate a disc to any of these fine programs that you'll find at www.spebsqsa.org/radio






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July 31 - August 7

Save Harmony College/Director College dates for next summer

The best barbershop week of the year will get better still in 2005, when we debut an all-new Harmony College/Directors College experience in a new location.

Scheduling conflicts prevent us from returning to Missouri Western State College, our Harmony College home for many years. So, we're transforming that inconvenience into an opportunity to re-engineer our premier educational event to bring ever greater value to ever more members.

Bids from suitable university sites are now being received at our meetings department (meetings@spebsqsa.org) and we anticipate a selection by January.

Check back often at www.spebsqsa.org/hcdc for information on our new location, new dates... and a curriculum and faculty better than anything yet.

The best from the past... the best for the future: Harmony College 2005.

Cabaret postponed

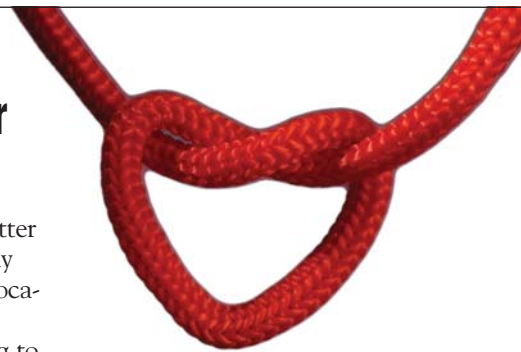
Rule one of comedy: wait for the punchline. Hence, the Comedy Cabaret which had been scheduled for the 2005 International Convention in Salt Lake City has been postponed until a future convention.

Enter the Contemporary A Cappella Recording Awards

Make yourself famous! The annual Contemporary A Cappella Recording Awards recognize the best recorded a cappella. An album is eligible for the 2005 CARAs if it was released to the public in the 2004 calendar year, and is received at the CASA office no later than January 1, 2005.

Recent years have seen burgeoning interest in barbershop music in the CARAs, and special awards for best barbershop album, song. Better still, barbershop performances are being well-received in comedy, religious and production categories, too.

Learn more about nominating an album, or becoming a judge, at www.casa.org/cara/home.php



Link up with customers at SingingValentines.com

Register your chapter or quartet with singingvalentines.com to receive referrals from across the country. Chapter Singing Valentines chairs and registration contacts will receive email in November reminding them to update their chapter listing. Our aim is to have every chapter involved in putting this outstanding community relations tool on the street. Visit www.singingvalentines.com for ideas on ways your chapter can increase its business and involve more singers in this joyful quartet activity.

Sacred Gold Chorus to debut in 2005

What do you get when you roll the AIC Chorus into the Vocal Majority into the Best of CBQC into the Mormon Tabernacle Choir?

You get Sacred Gold -- a first-ever event at the international convention Salt Lake City.

Every man ever to win a Society gold medal—quartet champ, chorus singer, college champ, seniors champ, director—is invited to take to the risers in the incredible LDS Conference Center for an incredible singing experience led by Jim Clancy, Greg Lyne, and Dr. Craig Jessop, director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Space is limited to the first 600 gold medalists to reply, so reserve your space now: visit www.spebsqsa.org/goldmedalchorus or email GoldMedalChorus@spebsqsa.org for complete info and registration.

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Ten Commandments for quartet joy

I don't care if I never sing rock and roll ever again," I told my wife, Lori.

Within two weeks of the barbershop guest night, I had been approached by a variety of members who wanted me in their quartet, or members who wanted to start a quartet. I found out very quickly that I was a much sought-after tenor.

Eventually I joined a duo that was just waiting for a lead and a tenor. Our lead was a walk-in, who had just moved to Quebec from the Maritimes.

We started learning material immediately, and competed quickly as well. Our overall evolution was quick and soon, around these parts, we were considered an entertaining quartet with a good reputation.

Small squabbles erupted from time to time within the quartet. The usual frustrations generated by the usual peccadilloes. Time healed a lot of these minor spats, but what really held us together was the love of barbershop, a sense of humors and friendship.

Recently our baritone decided to step down because **The Cavaliers'** direction was becoming less and less comfortable for him. A traditionalist and strong preservationist, our baritone became less and less satisfied with the antics and performance methods that were being generated by the quartet. This growing irritation led to our baritone quitting for self-preservation and ease of mind. A fair and mature decision on his part, no pun intended.

This will not be the first time such a situation will arise in a quartet; it will not

be the last. I have, since then, thought that there should be template describing the ideal moral obligations that quartet members should have to one another.

Quartet's 10 Commandments

1. Quartet members have an obligation at all times to be honest with each other.
2. A quartet (or trio) looking for another member will NOT approach a member of another quartet.
3. If a quartet member wishes to leave, he should be treated with dignity and respect for the decision he must take. The leaving member should not feel ashamed, or disloyal. The member should be encouraged to follow what his heart is telling him.
4. Members of a quartet, and ex-quartet members will not speak ill of each other.
5. Members should encourage each other to be all they can be.
6. If a quartet member becomes a liability (lack of effort, ability, personality clash) to the quartet, members have an obligation to be honest with him, and take the necessary steps to correct the situation.
7. Quartet members will support other quartets in their quest for excellence and not speak against

FINGER-POINTING IS OUTLAWED in a quartet, but The Cavaliers sometimes forget.

From left:
Andrew Wheaton, bari;
Steve Wheaton, bass;
Dan Deon, lead;
Andy Doré, tenor.



HARMONY HOW-TO

those other quartets.

8. Quartets members should all agree that any member, at any time, can leave the quartet to join another quartet or musical group.
9. Quartet members must support decisions that a member makes due to family considerations.
10. Quartet members' wives/girl-friends/better halves should never be treated as outsiders.

Note that these "commandments" do not touch on financial, performance, competition, or musical issues. These are guidelines to help create the best possible environment where fairness, understanding and respect are the backbone of quartet's existence.

Like the real Ten Commandments, these may not be easy to follow. But if quartet members out there, at least *try* to follow these guidelines, perhaps our chapters would be retaining more members and our districts would see more of their quartets reach the international stage!

Andy Doré is VP/Music and assistant director with the **South Shore Saints**. Email Andy at: adore@doreliaison.com

FYI

Quartet Resources online:
www.spebsqsa.org/quartet

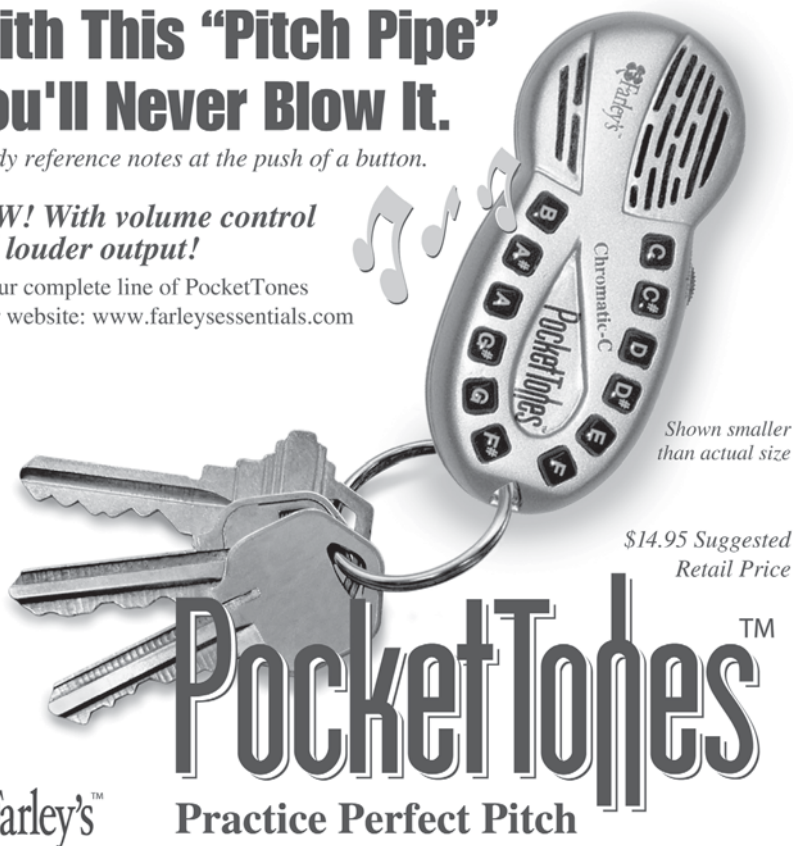
- Explore a wide range of stories on forming, running and growing a quartet
- Sign up to receive **on the QT**, the electronic newsletter for quartet singer. Or read past issues online at www.spebsqsa.org/ontheqt
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Hearts of Gold

A guy can wear a gold medal over his heart,
but what really makes the difference is whether
he has a heart of gold.



We won gold medals. Somebody pinch me!
The Ambassadors of Harmony, a group of regular Joes — church-choir sort of guys, college students, retired fellas and a few music teachers — won the Barbershop Harmony Society's International Chorus Championship and 160 gold medals on Saturday, July 3, 2004.

That afternoon, my wife and two of my kids sat with me in Section 344 at Freedom Hall in Louisville, as the contest administrator announced: "And in second place, from Toronto..." and that was about all we heard, because the group around me knew that it meant we had finished first. We erupted as if our local baseball team, the St. Louis Cardinals, had just won the World Series. It was a gold-medal moment.

But gold-medal moments are measured not only in who finishes first.

Just after the contest announcement, when one of the **Toronto Northern Lights'** directors came up to our section of the arena and congratulated our director, Jim Henry — that was class, a gold-medal moment. And when the guys from perennial contest-winners **The Vocal Majority** lent us some of their medals so that all 160 AOH guys could be wearing gold on stage for our victory set that night — that was brotherhood, a gold-medal moment.

Over the past few years, the Ambassadors of Harmony became a gold-medal chorus when we realized that it wasn't all about winning a gold medal — it was about an attitude that creates gold-medal moments.

A guy can wear a gold medal over his heart, but what really makes the difference is whether the guy has a heart of gold.

We could argue philosophy and religion about how a guy gets a heart of gold, but I don't think you'd get much argument from our chorus that our gold-medal attitude flows to us strongly through our director, Jim Henry.

A few minutes before we walked onto the contest stage in Louisville, Jim told us that we could take all our nervousness and pour it into him. He would take it. Jim told us, "When you get out on that stage, it's just you and me."

A shift in attitude

Guys with hearts of gold have always graced the risers of our St. Charles, Missouri, chapter, but musically, it took us 25 years before we even won our first District Championship. Then, under the leadership of directors David Wright and Jim Henry, the Ambassadors broke into the medalist class at international contests. By the time I joined the chorus in 1997, AOH had finished third at international for its third consecutive year.

Nevertheless, it was mostly a bunch of regular guys, including me. We joined the chorus the way most barbershoppers do. Somebody had invited us. Although we won a few more medals over the next few years, and we had some grand experiences, we weren't yet a chorus that consistently created gold-medal moments. The number on the risers dropped from 141 in

by
Michael Kunz
Ambassadors
of Harmony

"The Ambassadors of Harmony became a gold-medal chorus when we realized that it wasn't all about winning a gold medal — it was about an attitude that creates gold-medal moments."



Pieces of the Puzzle: Why do guys like Vocal Spectrum fit in at AOH?

The Ambassadors of Harmony Chorus places a great deal of emphasis on Young Men In Harmony. In their work life the Ambassadors' directors are teachers of youth. Young men like this year's collegiate champion, **Vocal Spectrum**, have been a big part of the Ambassadors' growth and development. Jonny Moroni, their great baritone, became involved with AOH when he was just fifteen, was quickly hooked on barbershop, and loves to sing and teach tags to anyone who'll jump in. Eric Dalbey, lead, also joined as a teenager and has developed one of the finest solo, quartet and chorus voices to come along in quite a while. Chris Hallam is a super bass (and we

mean awesome) who also joined while in college, and is steadily improving his craft. Tim Waurick joined both Vocal Spectrum and the Ambassadors about a year ago, after having already competed on the International stage, and sings a fantastic tenor. They and other young men have been directly involved in bringing more young men into the group, drawing new guys into tag quartets, encouraging them in their singing and teaching the craft. All four are assistant section leaders for the Ambassadors, and they've all been to Harmony College on multiple occasions.

Each year, AOH has hosted "A Cappella Explosion" which is a one-day clinic in harmony singing for high school men in the St. Louis area. 293 Men attended the 2003 Explosion, from 14 area high schools. Under Jim Henry's direction, they spent the day learning several songs, and were entertained by Vocal Spectrum and **Expanded Sound**, the Ambassadors' great comedy quartet. The 2004 event, scheduled for October 12th, is called "Acappellooza!"

1996 down to 90 in 2000.

Then, in early 2001, master arranger/composer David Wright created "The Toy Song" to go along with "Toyland" for our contest set. We found, as we looked within us for those special child-like feelings that the songs convey, that we were moving our audiences in ways we had never expected.

Kevin Keller, one of our assistant directors, told us that when we brought the right attitude to our music and performance, we could change people's lives. 2001 was the first year that I remember Jim Henry telling us, "I don't care where we finish in the contest, but let's change some people's lives." And we did.

"Only once before had I cried at a concert," one listener wrote to us, "until now." And there were the wives of audience members who told us that, as we sang "Toyland" they watched tears pouring down the faces of their husbands. The music transported them to a place in their hearts that many had closed off for so long.

Oh, yes. Now we knew what we were up to. I still get chills up and down my spine as I write about it. "Change people's lives" became our mantra.

Creating a new sound... and a bigger chorus

Jim Henry knew we loved changing

people's lives with our music, but he also knew that if we didn't sing well, our efforts would fall flat. Literally. For the next few years, we continued to not only follow David Wright's charge to "get on top of that pitch," we also began to work harder in sectional rehearsals.

Three of our section leaders come from the 2003 CSD district champion quartet **Cadence**. Tenor Alex Brandt, lead Doug Brooks and baritone Dave Brooks took to heart their charge to be the voice of the director in our sectionals, with all that that implied. And Vince Smith, the bass from Cadence, backed up bass section leader Rob Henry from time to time.

Bob and Rosemary Calderon, the highly talented choreographers, provided us with tremendous visual packages that helped us tell musical stories that could move the hearts and souls of our audiences.

During this period we also got some great coaching from guys who knew how to create that big, beautiful choral sound.

Greg Clancy from The Vocal Majority coached us several times and taught us to sing tall and forward, with beauty and lift. Jay Giallombardo from **The New Tradition Chorus** taught us the value of singing with beautifully round vowels

and unit sound. Rob Henry exhorted us to sing big, not puny.

And speaking of big, two guys stand out as people who helped our chorus grow from being big to huge. First there's Jonny Moroni. When he was 16, he attended one of the Ambassadors' 1997 Christmas concerts and immediately gave up high-school hockey to join our chorus. Over the next several years, he got the nickname Jonny "One More-oni" because he always wanted to sing "one more" tag. His enthusiasm and involvement with so many high school and college singers gave AOH a youthful aspect that invigorated the whole chorus. Incidentally, baritone Jonny's incessant dedication to barbershop paid off to the tune of a collegiate gold medal in Louisville, along with Vocal Spectrum pals Chris Hallam, Eric Dalbey and Tim Waurick. The guys from Vocal Spectrum now serve as assistant section leaders in AOH, and, along with Cadence, have recorded the chorus' learning tapes over the past year.

Then, there's

**Jonny
"One-More-oni"
traded hockey
pads for
pinstripes – and
won gold twice
in the same
day.**



our vice president of chapter development, Steve Knese, who organized some of the most amazing guest nights the Society has ever seen. Over the past few years, our guest nights have brought in more than 70 guests at a time, thanks in large part to Steve's efforts.

By the time we headed for the contest in Montreal in 2003, AOH was back up to 120 singers and singing at a level that was producing more and more gold-medal moments. The day before we competed in Montreal, Jay Giallombardo listened to us rehearse "Just a Kid Named Joe," and he was moved to speechless tears. We knew we were on our way.

Putting in the work

But it wasn't just Jay who was crying by that time. In the spring and summer of 2003, the entire AOH family and barbershoppers worldwide were hit in the stomach by the cancer and rapidly failing health of Rob Henry. Not only had Rob been our assistant director and bass section leader, Rob was the brother of Jim Henry and sang baritone to Jim's bass in the incomparable international quartet champs **The Gas House Gang**.

In a sense, although Rob was not with us in body in Montreal, he was with each of us in our hearts as we sang our way to a third-place finish. Rob listened to the competition on the Webcast, and he said after the contest, "You'll win the gold next year." And we committed ourselves to that task.

Rob died in September 2003, and it was a great loss. A true test of any family or group that functions like a family is how it responds to loss and sorrow. The Ambassadors came together like never before. Several chorus members organized to help Rob's family during his final days and after his passing. We sang at his funeral and came out of the loss with a particular gain: We knew that we were there for each other, both on and off the risers.

Another guest night and perhaps just word-of-mouth swelled our ranks into the 140s, then the 150s. This time around at the international contest, we decided to forego colorful theme costumes. We would instead wear our new tuxedos and just stand up and "sing the snot" out of our contest set, as Greg Clancy would put it.

Over the next several months, with a burning in our hearts to share the emo-

Mountains to climb: what's ahead?

The Ambassadors of Harmony has always seen the competition as an important goal, but it is secondary to our mission of creating the most meaningful and artistic music possible. Only then can we truly make a difference in the lives of the people who hear us. We can only accomplish this goal effectively by being at the top of our form every time we put our feet on the risers, and then growing from there. — Jim Henry



tion of our music, AOH sang, performed and practiced at a level it had never previously approached. The Clancys, Greg and Jim, coached us again, and the telling moment arrived the week after one of the coaching sessions with Greg.

We stepped onto the risers for a Thursday night rehearsal, and immediately sang at a level that surpassed anything we had done in the coaching session. We could feel that we were going to finish first in Louisville.

But it was time to do more than that. It was time to sing with the emotion, unity and commitment that would bring our audience into our music. And when, in Louisville, we sang "I Have Dreamed", I have little doubt that each chorus member knew that it was a gold-medal moment. We thank everyone in the Society for letting us share that gold-medal



**Learn more about
the Ambassadors of Harmony:
visit www.AOH.org
for show schedules, recordings
and merchandise.**

"We joined the way most Barbershoppers do: somebody invited us."

Hal Maples— "I'd been a member of the St. Charles Chapter in the mid '70's when it was the **Daniel Boone Chorus**, and we were unable to crack the top ten in Central States District or even win the St. Louis Area Contest. After having pursued other musical activities for 25 years, I attended a visitors' night after **about a year of gentle persuasion** from an old friend and quartet partner. I finally said to myself 'OK, I'll go and visit, just this once.' I've been visualizing what that winning moment would be like — and y'know, it was only about a hundred times better than I had imagined!"

Michael Kunz — "A member heard me singing in a pickup gospel quartet at my church's annual talent show. I had sung in the barbershop chorus in St. Joseph, MO., back when I was in high school in 1974, but I had never sung with a chorus like the Ambassadors. One night at an AOH rehearsal had me hooked."

Jim Prince — living in Idaho, he attended the international contest in Salt Lake City that year, and he saw 141 AOH members sing "Birth of the Blues." Right then and there, he decided to move to St. Louis and join the Ambassadors. "I was planning a move anyway, but chose St. Louis because it looked like a great bunch of guys having a great time."

AOH CONFIDENTIAL: SECRETS OF THE CHAMPS

How do they do it?

*This is the Ambassadors' first International Championship, following eleven years of International competition and nine Bronze medals. Topping the tough competition – including past champs **The New Tradition** and **The Alexandria Harmonizers**, and rising stars such as **Toronto Northern Lights** and **The Alliance** – took personal fortitude, and organizational strength. “We overcame some psychological barriers,” says AOH bass Hal Maples. “We felt it was important to break the perception, that only certain choruses have a lock on the gold. Just as important was shifting our group self-image from that of perennial medallists to – Winners!”*

What characterizes The Ambassadors of Harmony?

We're a barbershop chorus that explores the relationship between barbershop and other styles of a cappella music, including jazz, folk, gospel, and classical.

How does that perspective color the performance in the barbershop core?

It tends to bring more musicality and finesse to barbershop music. Rather than singing like a “barbershop bass”, for example, you learn to sing with the approach of a musician, and bring the quality of the cello into it. You learn to avoid putting on an effort-laden “barbershop face”, and instead bring the emotional content of the music into your facial and body expression.

It has the additional benefit of attracting members from across the country and from many musical backgrounds.

How do you keep it at that level so long? What is it about the chapter that keeps it vibrant even without winning the big one?

We love the process! – our year-round agenda and process of learning new music, making it as perfect as we can, and doing a lot of singing and performing of songs other than the contest numbers, keeps us continually renewed and refreshed. This carries us through some difficult times too, like returning from our ten-day Eu-

ropean Tour last March on a Sunday, and attending our first contest choreography session the following evening, jet lag and all.

We sing great music and great arrangements. We love the process of striving toward perfection, loving the music, loving the performance, recognizing that contest is 6 minutes of our lives, and that the real gift is being able to give the gift back to the audience in performance. Our rehearsals are often like a show, with up to 50 or 60 visitors who come just to watch us rehearse.

How do you run a chapter of this size at this level this long?

We have a strong support organization in our Board of Directors, who believe that excellence in non-singing activities begets excellence on the risers. Their dedication, leadership and plain hard work have contributed greatly to the Ambassadors' success.

We've continued to improve our internal communications, particularly through the use of email and the Internet for sharing information. Nothing, however, can take the place of good face-to-face conversation when it comes to making decisions, solving problems, and resolving differences of opinion. We're resolved to continue to improve that, as well as all the activities that support the music.

The ultimate secret: superb music leadership

Jim Henry and David Wright have alternated as Director and Associate Director of the Ambassadors of Harmony, with David directing from 1980-1990, and again in 1999-2000, and Jim up front 1991-1999 and 2001-present; both sang in the chorus throughout those years, always supporting the groups' musical efforts. Their collaboration has been a truly symbiotic one, characterized by mutual respect and common goals.

“Simply stated, the **Ambassadors of Harmony would never have won the gold medal without David,**” says Jim. “A true genius in a world where that word is overused, David is one of the most creative and effective arrangers in the history of barbershop music. The Ambassadors' musical style is almost completely a reflection of David's creative vision. But it was David in his capacity as our musical director who twenty years ago started our march to the gold, by fostering a more professional attitude towards our musical and performance choices. His impact continues as our associate director, our primary coach, a section leader, a member of our front row, and the true musical visionary of the Ambassadors of Harmony.”

“**Jim Henry's direction has taken on the character of an artist with a fine detail brush,**” says David. “He's become an inspirational leader who can fire the imagination of any singer.” Jim Henry began singing barbershop at age eleven. Working under the teaching of his dad, the late Bob Henry, who at one time was Musical Director of the chapter, he quickly became a barbershop fanatic, and longed to sing with the best. As AOH Director, he provides a wonderful model for the chorus when it comes to vocal production, unit sound, and vocal color. When it comes to the emotional message of any song, he serves as the best possible visual “mirror” for the men on the risers

The winning package

The choice of this year's contest songs, "I Have Dreamed" and "New Ashmolean" was a collaborative effort for Jim and David. The idea for using "I Have Dreamed" came up in conversation between them at a music committee meeting. David had some concerns about the song as a contest number because of its harmonic content. He consulted with some other judges, and after receiving some good feedback, decided to proceed with writing the arrangement, which at first hearing blew the chorus members away with excitement.

"New Ashmolean" was Jim's idea. Both he and David liked the possibility because it's a "downbeat" song, which they knew the Ambassadors could perform well. Because of the story they wanted to tell, starting out with the clumsy band, and having that evolve into the wonderful band of the imagination, it was necessary to go through the main body of the song three times and add some material to make the story work. This created a need to keep the song musically and visually interesting over three and a half minutes. The result was a rendition of an arrangement that simultaneously recalled the nostalgia of an old barbershop tune while making it "brand new" and totally exciting.



10 medals too few

When the first place chorus was announced after the chorus contest, total joy erupted in the Ambassadors of Harmony seating section. After several minutes of cheering and more hugging than most guys would like to tell you about, thoughts of "what comes next?" began to evolve. Almost immediately, Greg Clancy from the Vocal Majority, who had been our wonderful coach this year was right in the midst of the celebration, and Steve Armstrong, director of the silver medalist Toronto Northern Lights Chorus was there to congratulate us. The only word that comes to mind is *class!* Soon someone mentioned the exciting prospect of gold medals, and it was discovered that because the Ambassadors number on stage was 160, and there were only 150 medals available, we were ten medals short. Within just a few minutes, someone from the Vocal Majority was there with ten medals loaned by members of the VM for Ambassadors to wear that day and use for our evening performance as the new champions. It's difficult for any of us to think of this without tears. Our gratitude goes to all the guys in the Vocal Majority for their continued support and good will. They were praising us and wishing us well last year after they won their tenth gold medal. We got a chance to learn this year from the guys who've done it the best for the longest, and we count it an esteemed privilege.





The
**Ambassadors
Of Harmony**

2004 International Champions



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“Everything was too much”

How Gotcha! melded four voices into one big quartet sound

Everything about **Gotcha!**, from the first moment they formed, was always too much. They were too young and too brash and too bright and too loud and too ambitious and they sang too darn high and, well, they were just TOO everything. They were like an out-of-control thrill ride, and Far Western District audiences adored them for never holding back, for always going over the edge. I remember sitting in audiences watching them perform and waiting for something to break, either inside one of them or in the room. Lord, they were unpredictable, fun and always exhilarating.

When we first talked about forming a coaching relationship I was convinced such an alliance would never work and advised them to try someone else, someone who was willing to let them continue their crash into the future. But they had somehow been convinced we would make a great partnership and eventually, they were right. Actually, they've always been right.

The members of Gotcha! have somehow always known that greatness was possible for them and have worked tirelessly for it. Many have asked how they are able to sing like they do and I can provide just a few hints. First they searched

and searched and searched some more for the best barbershop songs and arrangements, many of which were personalized for their specific vocal strengths by great arrangers. They spent hours repeating chords and refining their vocal skills until every chord rang. They polished words and phrases constantly searching for the most sincere delivery, the true emotion.

Gotcha! practiced and coached and learned to perform at an awesome rate. And when they were joined by Jim Kline on bass they found that perfect combination of musical energy that rings chords and epitomizes championship barbershop today. They're still daredevils on a high wire, that's for sure. But with love and pride I tell you they also share a passion for the barbershop art form that has combined brilliantly with superb vocal skills.

Kim Hulbert
coach and
friend



***Our 2004 champs are
lifelong Barbershopper,
passionate quartet singers...
and often the last standing
at the afterglow.***



Caught up in the emotion: baritone Alan Gordon, bass Jim Kline, lead Chris Vaughn, and tenor Garry Texeira.

GOTCHA!



Developing the Package:

How a championship quartet defines its musical persona through song selection and musical approach.

The key to developing repertoire is finding arrangements that exploit the quartet's natural assets. A few appropriate choices can transform what seems to be weakness into strength.

The thing I immediately perceived when I heard **Gotcha!** was the quartet's tremendous power, energy, and endurance on stage. In their early days, this often manifested itself in raw volume that, while amazing the listener, could certainly leave the impression of overdrive. However, it is precisely this ability, when harnessed, that allows a quartet to sing an arrangement that has an extended agenda without losing fidelity and unity as the song unfolds. I suspected that if this quartet could use its explosive energy musically and judiciously they would win the international championship. A test of endurance came when the quartet picked up my arrangement of "Royal Garden Blues," which had been arranged for the Ambassadors of Harmony, eliciting a huge reaction at International in 1999. Then they made a hit with Bob Rund's excellent chart of "What More Can A Soldier Give," which entails a slow, dramatic development toward its concluding climax. It was clear Gotcha! had the right stuff.

When the quartet approached me to help them with contest repertoire, we all realized they needed uptunes more than ballads. To date I have arranged three songs for Gotcha!, all contest uptunes: "At the Jazz Band Ball," "Night Time in Dixie Land," and "Play That Barber Shop Chord." The latter two were used in Louisville. The goals were clear: create arrangements that provide abundant opportunity for contrast and musi-

cal interest; intersperse playfulness with power; use the quartet's ability to sustain a high ringing tessitura but don't let it become overbearing. Having had the pleasure of being a part of the quartet's coaching ensemble, I had opportunity, with my wife Sandi, to observe at close hand the individual voices. And what marvelous voices they are.

Gotcha! is blessed with a commanding lead — the melody is never in doubt. Chris Vaughn has what every barbershop lead covets: a clarion, ringing tone, amazing vocal range, and unbelievable endurance. I remember Sandi and I working with the quartet to get the right pacing on one of their tags. Worried that Chris might simply wear out, I gave him the option of laying out. But Chris chose to stay in there, rendering those high, full-voice notes time after time in good quality. Being the youngest and least experienced member of the quartet, Chris has worked hard to develop skills in artistry, variation, and control. He accepted these challenges and conquered them.

Tenor Garry Texeira is certainly a master in the art of singing barbershop tenor. He seamlessly blends full-voice and falsetto and has the power to complement the quartet's powerful sound. His falsetto has the focus and edge that helps put the "ping" in the ring, and he has the savvy and instinct to do the right thing at the right time, making him a delight to work with. A coach's comments to Garry amount to a few perfunctory precautions—"careful to keep that line tucked in" or "a little more tenor on that note"—that's about it; he takes it from there. Beyond all that, Garry's infec-

David Wright,
arranger



Quartetology: the path to becoming Gotcha!

Garry	1985-86 High School Quartet	1985-86 Pops & Kids	1986 Out of Sight, Out of Mind	1987-88 Razzle Dazzle	1988 Applause
Chris					
Alan					
Jim	1961-62 Junior High School Quartet	1965-67 Missile Tones	1968-74 Crown City Good Time Music Company	1975-96 139th Street Quartet	

tious humor and warmth help give the quartet its engaging presence.

Providing the classic “fill” required of the baritone part is no small issue in a quartet as powerful as Gotcha!, and baritone Alan Gordon is more than up to the task. A naturally intense singer, he has learned to effectively hold back and save the big ones for the right moment. And when that big baritone note is needed, man does he deliver! It has been a joy to observe Alan’s artistry progress from good to excellent in the last few years. He enhances the song, not just with a strong baritone line, but also with a beautiful and lyrical line, anticipating and supporting Chris’s every nuance. His voice is a huge factor in the quartet’s sound and personality.

And what a delight to see Jim Kline—my hero—win the gold as the bass of Gotcha! Jim joined the quartet in 2000, replacing Gotcha!’s original bass Scott Wilson, whose strong voice and commanding presence helped define the quartet’s image in the early years. Jim had sung bass in the legendary **139th Street Quartet**, whose style was quite different, and many wondered whether he would be a good fit for Gotcha! It is a reflection of Jim’s versatility that he not only made it work, he became integral to the quartet’s persona. His voice possesses a natural brightness that, with only a little enhancement, blended right into the rich sound of Gotcha! In addition, his melodic delivery has made an important musical contribution to the quartet’s style and personality. Bass melodies are certainly a staple for this quartet, giving the quartet another ace to play.

The voices and musical diversity of Gotcha! are an arranger’s delight. Musical ideas come to life on stage. They have trademarked an “in your face” style that still has artistry and charm. What a thrill to hear these guys crank. When they hit a good one, it lifts me right out of my chair.

Beyond that, they are four great human beings. I am honored to know them.



**It’s not great
because it’s a Polecat
— it’s great because
it’s great for us!**

Our life as Barberpole Cats

Why a quartet with a shot at the gold, and proficiency to manage any chart in the world, would CHOOSE to sing polecats.

Why would a quartet with the apparent drive and ability to conquer any fast-paced uptune choose to sing Barberpole Cat songs in an international contest? The answer may be simpler than you think.

The Gotcha! style is to lock and ring chords. Rather than using the music as the attraction, the quartet’s strength is to maximize the resonances that can stack up in major chords. If a song fits that mold, as many classic barbershop tunes do, then we’ll take it.

“Wait ‘Till the Sun Shines Nellie” originated when a chapter had us sing a number during a pre-show social they had set up for premium paying customers. Without being warmed up, having a sick member (can’t recall who it was, anymore), and having quite a bit of vocal theatrics yet to come on the show, we decided a Polecat would have to do. Barely deciding on the bass hanger right before the pitch was blown, the small crowd went nuts.

It wasn’t until Jimmy joined the quartet that our idea for competing with this song came to fruition. It became our most requested tune, and something fun to sing on the contest stage instead of something stressful.

“Old Mill Stream” came simply from listening to old recordings of **139th Street Quartet** singing the wonderful Doug Anderson arrangement. It tickled our collective fancy, and received the music on April 20th. The three of who didn’t know it learned it by Friday. It was debuted on the matinee performance of the Saratoga Springs, NY, chapter that Saturday, the 24th. I guess you can say it was just a natural fit for us.

So, our intention isn’t to prove a point, we sing them because it serves our vocal strengths quite well!

1989 Point Blank	1990-91 Power Source	1992-93 The Phonics	1993-96 Hometown Favorites
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1996-Present
Gotcha!

1996 Mother’s Favorite	1996-Present Gotcha!
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1989-90
Gas Lampe Serenade

1991-93
A Formal Affair

1993-94
Flashback!

1995
Flash In the Pan!

1995-96
Three Friends Favorite

1996-Present
Gotcha!

1997-2000 Buck 39	2001--Present Gotcha!
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The Show:

What makes Gotcha! a great show quartet in addition to singing six songs superlatively for the contest?

CHRIS VAUGHN, GOTCHA! LEAD, HAD COME DOWN WITH "VOCAL MUNG," a viral throat infection that threatened several long-booked chapter shows. and knowing that Gotcha! would not want to disappoint anyone by canceling out on their many show commitments, the quartet enlisted the services of a couple of semi-talented lead singers (Bob Hartley of **Metropolis** and yours truly!), to help them keep up with the rigorous show schedule, all leading up to the international prelims in about three weeks time.

Worried? Not these guys... professionals through and through. Having been in the trenches a few times myself, dealing with throat ailments and the flu, I can tell you from personal experience, that it's not easy to "step aside" and "hope" that someone will step in and deliver a championship level performance for the paying customers. Even though I've won plenty of medals and awards, sung on hundreds of shows, TV and radio, you can imagine my feelings: excitement, nerves, and the desire to do the job and do it right. Here I was, learning music to sing with the current silver medalists... but in my mind, and certainly after we rehearsed together, I knew I was singing with the next barbershop quartet champions.

Imagine this... you get a call at 8:00am on Tuesday. The shows are on Saturday. The music is faxed to you on Wednesday, and with the aid of the quartets CDs (not downloaded from the Internet), you set out to learn a show and a glow set... 8 to 10 songs... their interpretation, where to breath, volume relationships... and did I mention insanely high and long winded tags!!!! Then there's clothing issues, travel plans... am I nuts or what?!

Well, I started in on the music, packed up my music and CDs, and set out on my road trip, for a rendezvous in Las Vegas to meet up with the guys. After

meeting them and our host, the late Val Hicks (what a great time we all had), we continued on into St. George, arriving about 11:30 pm.

Bright and early Saturday morning, not having sung a single note with them yet, we started our warm up session and rehearsal at 8:00 am. Things went very well. The next thing I knew, we were traveling to the show site for the matinee performance. All the while, the guys were very supportive, telling me that although I was "old," and when I won my gold medal they had a chocolate center beneath the foil, I had to remind them that Jimmy was older than me, and that Alan and Chris could both be sons of mine.

The shows (and glow) went off without a hitch. We sang ourselves silly. And did I mention that their tags are high and held out until the **Rural Route 4's** cow came home? Man...what a thrill.

Their show package is as intense as any contest session I've ever experienced. The dedication to "solid gold" performances is what makes this quartet excel on all levels. Being there and witnessing it first hand, I can tell you that there's a reason why people achieve greatness. They work and critique and redefine themselves constantly. Once you've won the gold, it's much like bowling a 300 game. What do you do next? You've reached the pinnacle. You can't win the gold twice and you can't roll a 301. So... you have to keep perfecting, expanding, adding, changing, and most importantly, keep entertaining. That's what will last long after the quartet becomes a memory to those who were fortunate to see and hear you perform.

I know that Gotcha! will be long remembered for their music, their "take no prisoners" approach and their willingness to give to their audiences every time they take the stage.

Winning the gold is like bowling a 300 game. What do you do next? You can't roll a 301.



Dan Jordan, Lead The New Tradition, 1985 International Quartet Champions; Grand Tradition; 139th Street Quartet; Perfect Gentlemen; and wanna sing?



BASS JIM KLINE CAN ALWAYS REMEMBER being surrounded with music. His dad joined the society in 1953 and his quartets practiced at his house. Since his bed was on the other side of the wall from the piano, Jim usually knew the tenor part before he fell asleep. His aunt was the organist at the church, and by the age of eleven she was putting him in front of the congregation to sing solos. At age 12, a music teacher put together a barbershop quartet with Jim as tenor and his brother as baritone. They ended up going to one of the rehearsals of the Indian Wells Valley Chapter, and stayed on to participate in the meeting.

And thus it was in the spring of 1965 that Jim competed in his first International Prelims, as tenor of the **Missile Tones**, with Jim on tenor and his dad the baritone. Little did Jim know that there would be 36 more Preliminary contests in his future!

It took only one high "F" tag note from John Sherburn to convince Jim his own days as a tenor were over. Switching to bass, he formed the **Crown City Good Time Music Company** with Bob Elder and Bob Mathis in 1968, and it took three months of singing tags before they realized that maybe they should try learning a song. They did, and made five appearances on the international stage, placing high as 11th.

He sat out the '75 convention because he was forming the **139th Street Quartet** with Pete Neushul, Doug Anderson, and Jim Meehan. They placed 10th in San Francisco (1976) and then 2nd the next year in Philadelphia for Jim's first medal. Unfortunately, they lost their lead due to a judge's dispute over an arrangement they had done that changed some melody notes.

Thus began an incredible 20 year run for 139th Street Quartet, a span which included four different leads (Meehan, Larry Wright, John Sherburn, Dan Jordan), some noticeably high profile appearances (*Cheers*, *Night Court*, Neal Diamond TV and

recording projects,) and hundreds of shows across North America and around the world. As 139th Street wound down, Jim and Pete moved on to form **Buck 39** with Dean Waters and Ken Potter, competing twice at International twice. The best times were had when they did a tour of New Zealand in 1998.

Finally, Jim heard of the opening in Gotcha! and showed up with his three tryout songs memorized. He knew this could be his chance to finally win the elusive gold medal. His two children were in college and he had the time and desire to do what it took to make the sound work. That included learning how to sing all over again. Kim Hulbert fit the bill along with training garnered by the other three during tie singing in the Masters.

And now his career is complete, with the highlight being Saturday night in Louisville where he could feel the collective sigh of relief from the many people who have watched his striving throughout the 34 years he has been competing. It was like watching Susan Lucci finally get her Emmy.

Jim is still working in his busy practice in Manhattan Beach. He lives with his lovely fiance Marlene who is one of the best cooks in the world. Her real job is working in the county emergency room as a registered nurse. His children, Jason (24), and Talia (23), are pursuing their studies in Northern California. Both of them were there in Louisville to watch their dad win with Gotcha! And of course his dad, Ken, was present. Ken has never missed a contest his son has been in. Thanks to him, Jim has been given the gift of a lifetime... the barbershop family.

Chestful of medals: Jim's totals

- Thirty International Quartet Contests.
- Nine medals, three silver; each silver earned thirteen years apart
- Top Ten 21 times, semifinalist 27 times



BASS JIM KLINE and family hold the long-sought quartet trophy.



BARITONE ALAN GORDON with wife Cyndi, kids and grand-baby

the early influence of directors Chuck Hunter, Jr., Terry Aramian, and Chris Hebert for teaching him the passion of the hobby and the fundamental craft that launched his singing career.

And busy it was; through his teens, Alan enjoyed quartet stints in **A Formal Affair**, **Flashback!**, **Flash In the Pan!**, **Three Friends**, and **Hometown Favorites**. While renting a room in college, he became friends with Royce Ferguson, new director of

JOINING THE SOCIETY IN 1987 at the age of 10, **baritone Alan Gordon** has had an interesting rise through the chorus ranks to become a top quartetter.

Growing up with both parents active in barbershopping in San Jose, Alan and his five older siblings enjoyed the constant whirl of quartet rehearsals, board meetings, music team meetings, learning tape sessions, barbershop parties... whatever it was, Alan was nearby listening. After having harmonized with his sisters, Jenny and Sarah, since they were little, Alan attended his first chorus rehearsal after his first confession (his ride was going to rehearsal, so he went along!). After three visits, he sang "Wild Irish Rose" and was in the tenor section, standing on a box.

With the early maturity that barbershopping brings our youngest members, Alan quickly emerged as a leader; while barely into his teens, he was serving as a chorus assistant section leader and singing in his first quartet, **Gas Lampe Serenade**, at age 12. Alan credits



LEAD CHRIS VAUGHN with wife Jenifer and Braden, Greyson and Avery.

HE WAS A SHY KID, with the hood of his sweatshirt pulled over his head, and he wanted to sing a tag with Nightlife. Sure, why not, they said, and readied themselves for an inaudible hanger out of a newbie. *Wrong-o*: the old vets were blown away by the huge sound and long hangers coming out of this punk kid.

Lead Chris Vaughn sure wasn't shy when it came to emulating the sounds of his barbershop heroes. Chris' mother recalls coming home from work to hear barbershop pouring out of the house at extreme decibels that made her fear he'd develop hearing problems. (Chris' wife reports this is still the case; she knows Chris is home from work when she hears chords ringing through the vents of the house when he pulls into the garage.)

Born and raised in Riverside, California, Chris started barbershopping in 1991, at the age of 13, joining the Riverside Citrus Belters Chorus.) His father, Dale, recalls him jumping in and singing tags with the quartets that rehearsed at their house from the very beginning; Chris cites other early influences as Rich Hasty and the legendary Earl Moon.

Dale and Chris moved on to sing with the Masters of Harmony, a drive of nearly two hours that they fondly recall as being "a neat time to talk about the new level of commitment and exciting venture they were embarking on together." A front row stalwart since 1994, Chris received his first of two chorus gold medals in 1996.

Chris' younger sister, Melinda, remembers always being the last to leave any show and afterglow. She swears there was never a time she wasn't waiting in the car as Chris begged to stay for "just one more tag." (Again, Chris' wife reports this is still the case.) Times like these earned Chris the prestigious Journeyman and Overtime awards from the Masters of Harmony in 1999.

With continued encouragement and mentorship, Chris was ready to move into the quartet world. Garry Texeira pointed Alan Gordon toward Chris, and **Mother's Favorite** was born with Bruce Workman on tenor and Chris' dad Dale on bass. Chris remembers that year of singing with his dad as "an experience he will never forget;" Dale calls it "Amazing. An opportunity of a lifetime." And then, shortly, after the Far Western District Convention of 1996, Chris, Alan, Garry, and Scott Wilson formed the first incarnation of **Gotcha!**

Even as he was deeply immersed in barbershop chorus leadership, it was also during this time that Chris sang with National Championship show choirs at Riverside Polytechnic High School and Riverside

the San Diego **Sun Harbor Chorus**, and Alan immediately joined him as a leader on the staff.

As gold beckoned, Alan began making the five-hour roundtrip trek up to Santa Fe Springs with Bill Myers to join the **Masters of Harmony**, as they marched toward victory in Salt Lake City (1996). While discussing quartet options, old friend Garry Texeira mentioned Chris Vaughn, "this kid who was still raw, but showed great potential." With Garry busy at the time with **Hometown Favorites**, Alan, Chris and Chris' father, Dale formed **Mother's Favorite** with Bruce Workman. But in 1996, **Gotcha!** was born with bas Scott Wilson, and jumped to the Buckeye Championship in 1997, and the FWD

Championship in 1998.

During this time, Alan was serving on the interim directing staff for the Masters during "directorless" periods, and served as Jeff Oxley's assistant director on the way to Anaheim (1999.) It was also in Anaheim that Alan won his last gold with them, and shared the stage with his future stepson, Graham, who was winning his first gold at age 11.

Alan and Cyndi met as she was taking Graham to rehearsal every week, and the two were wed in December of 2001. Cyndi, herself a "barbershop brat," is a true fan and supporter who kikes to sings tags in the corner. With the marriage, Alan became a stepfather to four wonderful children: Hayley (23), Kyle (19), Graham (17), and Ethan (14)

Little Margaret Louise, "Molly", joined the crew in November of 2002. Hayley added granddaughter Taylor to the family in January of 2004, and Alan and Cyndi get the thrill of spoiling a grandchild while raising their own daughter!

Alan was pulled away from the Masters in 2000 after being selected to direct the Verdugo Hills Chorus of Sweet Adelines International. After 5 years and two International competitions, Alan will be stepping down at the end of the year to focus on increasing business responsibilities, but owes a lot of his personal growth (starting at age 22) to the ladies who gave him an opportunity to lead them.

Community College, being featured on a recording of the latter. While singing in college, Chris met Jenifer Granato and her son Braden, the beginning of a love affair that has blossomed into a big family in four years of marriage. Along with Braden (8), daughter Avery (3) and son Greyson (5 months) have joined the ranks. Jenifer remembers seeing her first barbershop show after Chris begged a group from school to come and see Gotcha! perform on a Masters of Harmony. Knowing Chris to be on the shy side, she was shocked to see his very outgoing performance of "Don't Break the Heart That Loves You", with choreography pulling him out of his shell during a solo in the second half of the song. He continued to surprise the group of friends with an amazing performance of a 50's medley where the chorus

featured Chris in a solo of "In the Still of the Night".

Jenifer herself is an accomplished Sweet Adeline. Having joined with the Harborlites Chorus, and now a very active member of the Skyline Chorus along with Chris' mom, who joined Sweet Adelines in the late 90's, Jenifer is on a very exciting race to the top with this 170-woman chorus. Jenifer is a choreographer and coach, as well as a fine bass singer.

Through the 1999 Masters of Harmony championship, Chris earned himself the position of lead section leader. Unfortunately, not long after his appointment, he was pulled away to Denver, Colorado, to be closer to his parents and to find a more relaxed place to settle the family. Upon his arrival in Denver, Chris joined his Dad with the

Denver Mile-Hi **Sound of the Rockies** chorus where he immediately continued his barbershop rise as lead section leader, assistant director, and featured soloist. He has recently reached the top of the chorus musical leadership ladder in taking the director's baton for the Longmont, CO, chapter. His first task as director will be heading into the district contest with only 5 weeks together!

Chris feels blessed to have a loving and supportive family that enjoys sharing in the exciting journey of this extraordinary hobby. As the journey continues, they are honored to be a part of such a wonderful organization. They look forward to many more years to come.

A NATIVE CALIFORNIAN, tenor **Garry Texeira** grew up the youngest of seven in a very musical family. Although his siblings all played musical instruments, none ever pursued singing, although his twin, Larry, did sing with Garry in one Pasadena chapter show.

Like the rest of Gotcha!, Garry's talent emerged early. When auditioning for high school choir, Garry had no idea he could even sing. He didn't know all the words to *any* songs—and was extremely nervous—so he sang "My Country, 'Tis of Thee" on "la, la, la." Even in those crude beginnings, the director, saw some talent and decided to invite him to join the choir. Good insight: Garry would become the most valuable singer in the West Covina High School Chamber Singers, one of the nation's top-ranked show choirs.

Weeks after that audition, a neighbor and his dad (Patrick & Clint Miller) asked permission of Garry's parents to take Garry to a Pasadena chapter rehearsal, and from that very first night, Garry was hooked. Many were the cassettes of his hero quartets that were worn out as he strived to learn all four parts: **Bluegrass Student Union, Interstate Rivals, Second Edition, The New Tradition, Sidewinders, and The Suntones.**

In 1985, a number of members of the Pasadena chapter decided to bring Garry along with them on the journey of a lifetime as they chartered a small chorus with this same desire for musical excellence. Today, Garry is the only active charter member of the **Masters of Harmony** and is looking forward to working towards earning his sixth gold medal to keep the legacy alive!

Garry has sung in many fine quartets through the years, with some of the finest singers and performers in the Society. Among the most influential: **Applause**, with future **Nightlife** gold medal bass Brett Littlefield, who was best man in his wedding; and **Hometown Favorites** with bass Willie Kleen, baritone C.J. Sams, and the late Carl Walters (lead). This was the consummate barbershop quartet in every way... from the costumes and song choices to the rapport with audiences and the love within their quartet family. Garry's core vocal technique was formed here, and he ascribes much of the passion that brought him to a gold medal to his experience in this quartet.

In a twist of fate, the very same weekend in 1996 saw the last

contest appearances for both Hometown Favorites and Mother's Favorite. The foursome that would soon become Gotcha! sang together in the Bakersfield hotel lobby until the sun came up, and they have been the "last ones standing" at afterglows ever since! (Just ask anyone in the Far Western District!)

In 1992, at the Midwinter Convention in Long Beach, California, Garry's quartet at that time—Power Source—had the unique opportunity to sing for an audience of one—Dawn Castiglione—who had been a Sweet Adeline for a mere two weeks. Dawn was immediately taken with Garry and the rest of the story wrote itself as they spent the next few years growing together until they were married in the fall of 1994. Dawn shares Garry's passion for our "hobby," having sung in many quartets and enjoying her many years with the Harborlites chorus. Dawn also enjoys her time as a visual coach, including honing in on the presentation of Gotcha! on their road to the gold.

Garry is a mortgage loan officer and is pursuing a commercial voiceover career. He enjoys spending time with his nieces and nephews and is active in coaching choruses and quartets. He is grateful for the wonderful gift of music which God has given him and is excited about helping others achieve their goals as they realize their dreams in this wonderful organization.



**TENOR GARRY
TEXEIRA with
wife Dawn.**



On the front lines in harmony

What do our military personnel do when they have a little time to themselves? Seems more and more of them are singing barbershop, enriching their lives—and the lives of others.

In Harmony's Way, are four Naval officers currently deployed aboard USS John F. Kennedy operating in the Middle East as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The group formed on a dare. Cmdr. Mike Ginter, bass, had been a member of the Big Orange Chorus in Jacksonville, the Commodore Chorus in Norfolk, and the Virginians in Richmond in years past. His commanding officer knew of his hobby and, during a social gathering welcoming officers on board, asked Ginter to sing.

"I found only two other singers, but I taught them a tag. Then, our trio went to the microphone and sang 'When It's Sleepy Time Down South' to thunderous applause."

Other quartet members are: Cmdr. Tony Smith, lead; Capt. Kevin Hutcheson, tenor; Ensign Will Mouat, baritone. Only Ginter and Hutcheson

had any experience with barbershop, but all enjoy singing together. "My roots are mostly in solo work or choirs, so the tight harmony style of barbershop is both a challenging and a very rewarding experience," said Mouat.

Hutcheson has sung barbershop since college, but could never coordinate his Navy schedule with the time required for his hobby. "I was always missing rehearsals and performances. Very frustrating, I have always wanted to get back into a disciplined group that is really working tight harmonies. I've longed to be part of a solid group."

Smith is the only quartet member without performance experience of any sort. "Singing in church was my only previous experience. Obviously, I'm the least experienced and most untrained of our group and will likely be replaced now that the other members have seen my resume," he joked.

How does the quartet's shipmates react to the quartet's performances? "Our crew is made up of 5200 sailors with an average of 19. When we performed at a talent show one night, the response from the younger sailors was very positive. As a former vice-president for chapter development, I was inspired by how much 'the next generation' enjoyed the sound of close harmony. This really is a timeless art."

Timeless and, of course, uniquely American, which is why Lt. Col. Eric Ebb and his mixed barber-shop group, Unpopped Colonels, wanted to share it with to a class of students at the prestigious Music High School in downtown Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Ebb, a baritone, is a member of the Indiana Army National Guard and former Barbershopper with chapters in Fayetteville, N.C., and Kenosha, Wis. He and other members of the Unpopped Colonels are members of Task Force Eagle which is under the command of the 38th Infantry Division headquartered in Indianapolis.

Since the Dayton Peace Accords in 1995, the United States has provided soldiers to the war-torn country in an effort to help restore it to a peaceful democracy. Now, nine years later, the international Stabilization Force mission is drawing to a close and U.S. soldiers are preparing to leave the country.

Ebb had hoped to make a presentation at the Music High School before troops left, and recently he was able to do just that. The school had been the most prestigious music high school in Yugoslavia before the war. Many of its students go on to Juilliard and other music schools in Europe.

Can music help bring peace to a country? Ebb believes so. In fact, the Unpopped Colonels made a point of closing their presentation with the Society's motto song, "Keep The Whole World Singing" and gave a copy of the music to the choir director. It is their hope that music will do its part to help restore peace to Bosnia-Herzegovina.



The Unpopped Colonels is made up of Col. John Bailey, Lt. Col. Teran Armstrong, Lt. Col. Rob Walters, Lt. Col. Eric Ebb, and Majors Ronald Howes and Florene Johnson. Ebb and Johnson, a former Sweet Adeline, both have experience in barbershop singing while Armstrong is a former music teacher and now assistant superintendent.

"Music is timeless and transcends all ethnic and political boundaries," Ebb said. "The chance to sing for these young people brought so much joy to our hearts. Kids are the same everywhere you go, whether in Bosnia or in America. They love music. To be able to introduce them to one of the truly American art forms is one gift that we are proud to leave with these people."

Ebb serves as the Deputy Task Force Chaplain for Task Force Eagle - SFOR 15 and is stationed at Eagle Base in Tuzla. He'd love to hear from other Barbershoppers: eric.ebb@us.army.mil



The United States Naval Academy Barbershop Quartet sang "Maryland, My Maryland" to a national audience before the Preakness Race at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore. Quartet members are 2nd Classman Warren Fogler, Grant Bryan, Andrew Preston, and Andrews's brother, 4th Classman Asley Preston. The quartet routinely sings during the Men's Glee Club performances, a 30-year tradition under Academy Music Director Dr. John Talley, and the quartet is currently coached by Monte Maxwell, Academy Organist and Assistant Director of Music.

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O.C. Cash loved barbershop singing and dreamed of spreading its harmony throughout the world. He set that dream in motion in 1938.

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You are cordially invited to join The Founder's Club in memory of O.C. Cash. By becoming a member, you will join the hundreds who have also made a significant commitment to the future of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

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Remember: December 31 is your last opportunity to become a Charter Member of the President's Council. Please join us now!

MEET HARMONY FOUNDATION AT THE MIDWINTER CONVENTION

Recognition and education are on tap in Jacksonville, as Harmony Foundation offers you ways to become more involved in future of the Society. Learn where we're going, and how you can be part of building our future.

Founder's Club Celebration Breakfast

Saturday, January 29, 8:00-9:30am

An exclusive event for Founder's Club members. Get the latest on Society program plans from Don Harris, CEO of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and Clarke Caldwell, President and CEO of Harmony Foundation. Explore the integral role of the Foundation in the success of the Society. Celebrate Founder's Club new members and learn about the growth of this program. PLUS — a featured performance by **Vocal Spectrum**, 2004 college champions.

Founder's Club Wealth Preservation Seminar

Saturday, January 29, 10-11:30 am

Speaker: J.P. LaMontagne, CTFA Harmony Foundation Trustee; Director, Gifts and Estate Planning, Sharp Healthcare Foundation

Harmony Foundation is pleased to offer this seminar to Founder's Club members as our thanks to you for your generosity, your fervor, and your lifetime commitment to its continued success! Learn about:

- How to exchange highly appreciated assets into a new-found stream of variable or fixed income, tax-free
- How to minimize or even eliminate exposure to Federal Estate taxes and State Inheritance taxes
- How to transfer wealth to your children and grandchildren on a tax-advantaged basis
- How to maximize your charitable contribution deductions, allowing you to pull down IRA funds at significantly reduced tax rates
- How to benefit the Barbershop Harmony Society while benefiting yourself in the process

Those attending the Founder's Club Wealth Preservation Seminar receive a \$10.00 gift certificate to Harmony Marketplace and are entitled to a free consultation with J.P. LaMontagne, CTFA. Please arrange your complimentary appointment directly with J.P. following the presentation.

Grant seeking: Basic Elements

Friday, January 28, 2:00-5:00 pm

Do you want new money for your chapter? Learn how at this overview of public and private grants available to fund barbershop programs. Included will be philanthropic trends in US giving, different types of funders, grants vs. sponsorship, basic elements of every grant proposal, "do's and don'ts" of grant writing, budgeting, and the kinds of barbershop programs most likely to succeed with funders.

Grant seeking: Online Resources

Saturday, January 29, 10:00- 12:00 noon

An introduction to grants research on the internet, including funder directories, foundation and corporate web sites, search techniques and general information about non-profit fund raising.

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If your company isn't listed, that doesn't mean they don't have a matching gift program. Most larger corporations have such programs.

If your organization has a matching gift program, they will provide a form to fill out and send with your contribution. We will complete the form verifying that we received the gift and the amount and mail it to your company. Then they will send your matching gift check. How easy is that?

So make your gift and check to see if you can get it multiplied. Make your money go at least twice as far.

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After fifteen plus years of continuous service to the Marietta, GA Chapter and the Big Chicken Chorus, director Clay Hine has decided to step down from that post. Every member of the Big Chicken Chorus extends a heartfelt "Thank-You" to Clay who has been a fantastic leader, musician, arranger, singer and musical director.

The Marietta, GA Chapter is now commencing a director search. We currently have an active chorus of over seventy men who are eager to continue their quest for musical excellence. Qualified candidates can find an application on our website

www.bigchickenchorus.org

along with additional instructions. All applications submitted will be kept in strict confidence within the Director Search Task force and the Chapter Board of Directors.

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- See a full calendar of events throughout the barbershop world at www.spebsqsa.org/calendar

November

- Leadership Forum: Racine, WI, 11/4-7 www.spebsqsa.org/forum
- West Coast A Cappella Summit: San Rafael, CA 11/6-7, www.singers.com/summit.html
- Harmony Inc. convention: Rochester, NY, 11/10-13, www.harmonyinc.org
- Chapter Operations Team Seminars: DIX, FWD, RMD, CAPCOTS, CSD, EVG, ILL, SWD, SLD. www.spebsqsa.org/cots
- Register for Midwinter Convention www.spebsqsa.org/midwinter
- Register for Singing Valentines www.singingvalentines.com

December

- Chapter Operations Team Seminars: JAD, 12/4-5
- Register for Midwinter Convention www.spebsqsa.org/midwinter
- Register for Singing Valentines www.singingvalentines.com

January

- Chapter Operations Team Seminars: CAR, LOL, MAD, NED, ONT, PIO, SUN
- Midwinter Convention Jacksonville, FL, 1/24-30

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Chapter officers: login for these and other functions

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- Tips for quartet singers: **on the QT** www.spebsqsa.org/ontheQT
- Reaching out to young singers and music educators:

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Rob Hopkins

315-853-3824

rghopkins@earthlink.net

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Drayton Justus

770-562-9629

just4us@mindspring.com

TREASURER

Bob Guiggey

978-887-5304

rguiggey@worldnet.att.net

CEO/BOARD SECRETARY

Don A. Harris

262-653-8440

dharris@spebsqsa.org

Rob Arnold

416-225-3564

rob.arnold@cibc.com

Paul Arnone

781-324-7874

arnonep@att.net

Bob Brutsman

763-546-7795

bob.brutsman@genmills.com

Bob Coant

315-598-7697

rcoant@twcny.rr.com

Gary Denton

317-867-4172

gary.denton@dentonfamily.org

John Devine

281-463-1081

devines4@aol.com

Noah Funderburg

972-881-8281

pronoah@comcast.net

Thom Hine

770-419-7405

thine83039@aol.com

Joe Jenkins

614-878-5821

joe.jenkins@matrixsys.com

Mike Lancot

425-349-1749

mjlancot@msn.com

Roger Lewis

269-965-5714

RJLewisCMC@aol.com

John Marshall

319-338-3565

john@pro-technologies.net

THE **HARMONIZER**

General correspondence and advertising:

harmonizer@spebsqsa.org

Letters to the editor:

hzzletters@spebsqsa.org

Advertising rates:

www.spebsqsa.org/ratecard

Editorial team:

Brian Lynch, editor

Julie Siepler, assistant editor

Special thanks to Martin Grandahl for the Heart of Gold and Polecat of Brass.

Get answers from your headquarters staff

BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

7930 Sheridan Road • Kenosha, WI 53143
800-876-7464 (SING) • 262-653-8440
fax 262-654-5552 • info@spebsqsa.org
Normal office hours:
8 am-5 pm Central or anytime at
www.spebsqsa.org

Executive Offices

*Office of the Chief Executive Officer,
Society Board*

Don A. Harris

Chief Executive Officer
Ext. 8544 • dharris@spebsqsa.org

Lynn Zobel

Office Manager
Ext. 8464 • lzobel@spebsqsa.org

Robin Bahr

Administrative Support
Ext. 8563 • rbahr@spebsqsa.org

Cheryl Jankowski

Administrative Support
Ext. 8457 • cjankowski@spebsqsa.org

Lynn Kiser

Receptionist
Ext. 8540 • lkiser@spebsqsa.org

Dorene Santarelli

Receptionist
Ext. 8540 • dsantarelli@spebsqsa.org

Music Education and Services

*Quartet registry. Music education. Har-
mony College. Contest & Judging*

Dr. Greg Lyne

Director of Music
Ext. 8549 • glyne@spebsqsa.org

Jim DeBusman

Music Specialist/Quartet Development/
Collegiate Contest Coordinator
Ext. 8566 • jdebusman@spebsqsa.org

Bill Rashleigh

Music Specialist/Chorus Development
Ext. 8560 • brashleigh@spebsqsa.org

Rick Spencer

Music Specialist/Young Men
In Harmony
Ext. 8541 • rspencer@spebsqsa.org

Linda Neuenfeld

Quartet Registry/Contest & Judging/
Harmony College
Ext. 8591 • lneuenfeld@spebsqsa.org

Old Songs Library

Legal/Unpublished Arrangements

Colleen Theobald

Licensing/recordings/Music Library
Ext. 8476 • library@spebsqsa.org

Joe Liles

Editor of Music Publications
Ext. 8553 • jliles@spebsqsa.org

Conventions and Meetings

International conventions and meetings.
conventions@spebsqsa.org

Liz Meurer

Meetings Manager
Ext. 8465 • lmeurer@spebsqsa.org

Kathleen Gilliver

Administrative Assistant
Ext. 8462 • kgilliver@spebsqsa.org

Harmony Marketplace

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shops, inquiries regarding merchandise,
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Nancy Thorn

Director of Merchandising
Ext. 8487 • nthorn@spebsqsa.org

Audrey Paul

Order Processing
Ext. 8455 • apaul@spebsqsa.org

Diane Pecha

Shipper/Mailer/Receiver
Ext. 8473 • dpecha@spebsqsa.org

Donna Pierce

Shipper/Mailer/Receiver
Ext. 8473 • dpierce@spebsqsa.org

Marketing & Public Relations

*External media relations, press kits, PR
education, market research, publica-
tions, The Harmonizer*

Todd Wilson

Marketing Director
Ext. 8562 • twilson@spebsqsa.org

Brian Lynch

Publications Manager
Ext. 8554 • blynch@spebsqsa.org

Julie Siepler

Media Relations Manager
Ext. 8552 • jsiepler@spebsqsa.org

Membership Development

*Inquire about forming a new chapter.
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John T. Schneider, Jr.

Director of Membership
Ext. 8444 • jschneider@spebsqsa.org

Membership Services

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Tracey Rickell

Membership Specialist
Ext. 8475 • membership@spebsqsa.org

Finance and Administration

Finance, data processing

Frank Santarelli

Director of Finance, Administration,
Operations & Maintenance
Ext. 8450 • fsantarelli@spebsqsa.org

Nicole Clelland

Accountant
Ext. 8456 • nclelland@spebsqsa.org

Tom Martin

Network Administrator
Ext. 8467 • tmartin@spebsqsa.org



Send donations to:

Harmony Foundation, Inc.

7930 Sheridan Road • Kenosha, WI 53143

800-876-7464 ext.8447 or 312-701-1001

Fax: 312-701-1005 •

hf@harmonyfoundation.org

Clarke Caldwell

President and Chief Executive Officer
ccaldwell@harmonyfoundation.org
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SWIPES 'N' SWAPS

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC WANTED -- The Resource Triangle Park, NC (RTP) Chapter- is looking for a director who can: Communicate with, lead a talented team of coaches and assistant directors; inspire a very willing & capable chorus to singing excellence; impart the singing skills needed to compete at the highest levels; plan & execute, along with the chapter leadership, the programs needed to reach chapter objectives; reinforce our opinion that singing well is great FUN! The General Assembly is a 50-member chorus with a remarkable history of competitive and entertainment excellence. Dubbed the "little chorus that could", in Roger Payne's article on "The Most Influential Groups of All Time" (Jan/Feb 2004 Harmonizer issue), the RTP Chapter is recognized on the competitive stage and is respected for its outstanding shows and extensive youth and community-focused programs. The Triangle encompasses the cities of Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill and is one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the country. A Southern climate offering all four seasons, extensive outdoor parks & recreation facilities, top ranked universities, the innovative Research Triangle Park and a major airport make it a perennial top selection in surveys of our nation's most desirable places to work and live. Golf, fishing, hiking, and biking are within minutes of your front door and mountain skiing and sea shore beaches are within a few hours ride. The right candidate will receive a monthly compensation, expenses and help finding other employment, if necessary. Our goal is to return our chorus to the international competitive stage. If you would like to be a key part of our renewal program, please contact Warren Fuson at wfusion@nc.rr.com or call (919) 523-4500 for more information.



www.spebsqsa.org/saltlake

July 3-10, 2005

2005 International Convention – Salt Lake

date		membership number		chapter name (if applicable)	
Name				nickname	
Guest name				nickname	
address		city		state/province	ZIP/postal code
work phone		home phone		email	
circle payment method:		VISA	MasterCard	check	money order
card account #		expiration date (MM/YY)			
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Use credit card or mail check payable to Barbershop Harmony Society to **7930 Sheridan Road, Kenosha, WI 53143**. When you receive confirmation, please keep it as your receipt. Registration fee includes a convention badge, a reserved seat at all contest sessions and a souvenir program. If you register for more than one person, please furnish complete information for each person on a separate sheet and attach to this order form. **All registrations received prior to June 1, 2005 will be mailed.** Those received after that date may be picked up at the convention registration area beginning Monday, July 4, 2005. Mailings will be made during the month of May 2005. Registrations may be transferred to another person, but they are NOT refundable. No phone orders, please.

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

Quantity	Type	Rate	Total
	Adult	\$115	\$
	Jr. (under 12)	\$58	\$
add \$3 P&H for each 8 registrations ordered			\$
TOTAL (U.S. Funds)			\$
Price after Dec. 31, 2004: \$130. At convention: \$140			



THE TAG

Joe Liles, Tagmaster

David makes "Friends" teaching this tag

When it comes to teaching tags, no one is better than David Wright. If you are lucky, perhaps you've had the privilege of being in his presence in a tag class at Harmony College or in a lobby or hallway at a convention.

You've heard many of his arrangements sung by Society championship choruses and quartets including **Vocal Majority, Masters of Harmony, Toronto Northern Lights, The Gas House Gang, Joker's Wild, Nightlife, Revival, Michigan Jake, Four Voices**, and his own chorus, the current champs, **Ambassadors of Harmony**.

arranger
David Wright



David is also superior when it comes to arranging powerful ballads or soaring uptunes for male and female singers alike. Some of his most inspired arrangements were for **Ambiance**, his wife Sandi's quartet, who won the Sweet Adelines International quartet championship in 1986-- their first time out. The quartet's recording, "I Hear A Rhapsody," is filled with David's charts and is truly spectacular, including a stunning rendition of Gershwin's "Rhap-

sody in Blue." (That one's not for contests!)

David has mastered the difference between voicing arrangements for females as opposed to males. While females sing closely voiced chords very well, chords that are spread over larger intervals work better for men. Occasionally an arrangement will fit both groups well after adjusting the key higher for women or lower for men. One such example is the tag for this issue. Changing it to the key of F for women would work just fine.

Back in 1989 David arranged the song "Friends" for Ambiance and it was later that it was transposed for men. Meadowgreen Music Co. owns the song, and thus the arrangement, and they have given the Society permission to print the tag in this issue of *The Harmonizer*. **Copies cannot be made from this without permission of Meadowgreen Music Co.**

The next time you see David Wright, thank him for his masterful arranging and teaching skills. *You will love this tag.*

FRIENDS

Words & Music by MICHAEL W. SMITH
& DEBORAH D. SMITH

TAG

Arrangement by DAVID WRIGHT

long, it's not too long

1 2 3

Tenor Lead

that a life-time's not too long

Bari Bass

long, not too

4 5 6 7 8

friends, to live as friends,

long to live as friends,

friends, to live as friends,

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under the direction of Jim Clancy and Dr. Greg Lyne

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*This special concert is being presented for all registered attendees of the 2005 International Convention

