

PLUS: Marty Mendro on the Hot Seat • Switch voice parts • College barbershop choruses

May/June 2006

# THE HARMONIZER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

## Peer to Peer

Paul Saca is learning far more than Gene Cokeroff's performance tricks

**INSIDE:** young Barbershoppers share life lessons from their older friends





# 2006 Indy Convention



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**On the Cover**  
Sweating to the oldies  
in Miami

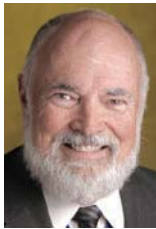
Photo by Javier Lopez-Rosende/  
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## Working toward meaningful change: If barbershop ain't broke, don't fix it!

I will betcha 10 bucks to a well-tuned tag that the above headline got your attention! With this writing, I'm probably wading into a pool full of alligators, but here goes.

Change is difficult at best, and being traditionalists and preservationists by nature, it is often very hard to convince ourselves that *any* change affecting our beloved Society will be for the better and has a meaningful purpose. Change for the sake of change is a no-no in almost everybody's book. Moreover, it is easy to support the adage, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." We're experiencing a lot of change these days. Most will agree that everything under the sun changes over time, and I think our real concerns are generated by the *rate* of change as well as the perceived need for it. If we're convinced that it's broke and needs fixin', a rapid change will be welcomed. If we think it ain't broke, the slowest possible rate of change will be high priority.



***To what extent  
do we allow  
other kinds of  
music to  
influence  
ours? Most of  
us feel  
strongly that  
the rate of  
change should  
be as slow as  
possible.***

In my personal opinion, the changes with which we've been wrestling, cussing, and discussing, fall into two distinctly different categories. The first could be called "trappings and tactics"—how we organize, "dress" and present ourselves, both to the general public and to potential members. This includes things like organizational structure and policy, the logo and (aka/dba) name the Barbershop Harmony Society, headquarters relocation, plans (mission and vision) for the future, etc. Marketing studies and both board and committee review in recent years have clearly indicated that many of these things were broke, needed fixin', and that the changes should come quickly. Some will not agree with the resulting decisions, but you can rest assured that they have been made with a purpose. Your board of directors and staff continue to struggle with them, and as I stated in the last issue of *The Harmonizer*, the best interests of our membership is the primary consideration.

The second category is the music itself—the barbershop style and art form—that which we present in our contests and public performances. It is this category that is undoubtedly of greatest consequence and concern to us. *The barbershop style ain't broke, friends, and any change efforts that smack of "fixin' it" are out of line.* Our concern here is not one of effecting change, but controlling it. What we are dealing with is the extent to which we allow other art forms (kinds of music) to influence ours. Most of us (and that includes me) feel strongly that this particular rate of change should be as slow as possible.

Our founders spoke of harmonizing the songs of that day, and I, for one, see no problem with applying our unique style to *appropriate* melodies of this day as well as the old songs. I have no argument with those who innovate and insert their individual artistry, either through arrangement or vocal technique, to enhance or intensify—as long as what they label barbershop retains the basic tenets of our art form. (There will even be some minor disagreement on those, but few and far between.) I also have no argument with those who wish to include other types of music in their repertoire, but I *do* have great concern when (1) barbershop shows feature a predominance of non-barbershop music, or (2) when there is an ever increasing "pushing of the style envelope" in contests which prompts the question as to whether we are allowing—even encouraging—an increased rate of change.

Over the years, the singing quality and sophistication of our champions has improved tremendously, but this is still a hobby for the non-professional singer (primarily those with no



formal vocal training) and must be kept as such—and the line between that sophistication and actual change in the style is sometimes blurred. For those of you who may not know, the Board of Directors approved an updated policy at its 2006 spring planning meeting which specifically requires (1) the Society Contest and Judging Committee's processes and procedures to be entirely consistent with the approved definition of the barbershop style and (2) that any change in the style definition, or judging policies and procedures which may be at variance with the approved definition, require prior consultation between the Society Contest and Judging Committee and Society Board of Directors. For me, that is a comforting indication that we are determined to preserve those elements that are most in need of preservation.

Bear with us, folks; we're making progress. I pledge to you that our Board's decisions effecting change will have a purpose, and one that will serve the membership. I also pledge that my vote will always be on the side of preserving the style and minimizing its rate of change. Your comments and opinions, as always, are welcome! ■

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### Power Play is still on tap for AIC show in Indy

2003 international quartet champion **Power Play** was omitted from advertisements for the Association of International Champions show in Indianapolis, which appeared in the January and March 2006 editions of *The Harmonizer*. The error was discovered after publication.

"Yes, we're still singing!" laughed Mike Slamka, lead of Power Play.

"We're doing shows, we're doing schools, and we will definitely be on the show."

The AIC apologizes for the inadvertent omission. The quartet joins **Realtime, Gotcha!, Four Voices, FRED, Acoustix, Happiness Emporium, The Suntones, and Chicago News.**

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# The little things promote barbershop best

**T**he spring convention season has ended, prelims are over, the summer convention is set, and I enjoyed a few weeks of relative calm in the office. *Relative* calm. Just the normal crises, like budget worries, convention attendance, membership issues, show and contest schedules for this year's International in Indianapolis and next year's Midwinter in Albuquerque, Harmony University curricula and faculty issues, and reviewing bids from cities for our International Conventions in 2012, 2013, and 2015. That may sound like a long time from now, but now's the time to get the best hotel rates and venues for our "big show." But my break is over, and I'm heading to New Hampshire to meet with gung-ho Barbershoppers in and around the Northeastern District. As I write this in the sky over Detroit, I'm looking forward to my first visit to the Granite State. Thank you for the opportunity, and thank you for your continued support of barbershop harmony.

## A close harmony slogan

I just thought of a catchy phrase: "Barbershop Harmony—it's closer than you think!" (Get it? Close har-



mony, close in fellowship and close geographically? No? Well, that's why I don't make up slogans for a living.) But it is a nice segue to this question: How well does *your* chapter get the word out to *your* community that you are there? I'm sure most of you would like more people at your shows, more men at your chapter meetings and chorus rehearsals, more visitors

and a greater community presence. Barbershop, as I have often said, is a unique, wholesome, philanthropic, and wonderful art form and an expression of good. It is worth sharing, and it is more fun when shared. When you "hook" a friend or relation with a great tag, there's nothing more thrilling for them or for you. Why do we unintentionally do such a great job of hiding?

I know, there are a lot of great people working very hard to get us noticed. I have at the Society level a marketing and public relations committee, headed by Clark Abrahamson, that strives to coordinate our message with district VPs, who in turn work with chapters to help, but we're still one of the best-kept secrets in the U.S. and Canada. These people all do great things in their precious spare time and I applaud them and their efforts. Why don't we help them? Yes, you and me. I know they would be thrilled beyond belief if we could help spread the word in a thousand little ways. Here's the story that started me on this subject.

In 1975, my only semester of law school convinced me I didn't want to be a lawyer after all, and I signed up for the ranks of naval aviation. I packed my meager

belongings into my '69 Javelin and headed from San Francisco to my nearly new bride in Pittsburgh. As I prepared to cruise on through Cheyenne, Wyoming, I happened to see, at the city limits, a big display of community signs like the Elks, Chamber of Commerce, and Rotary. There, right in front of my eyes, was the Society logo and information about the night they rehearsed, which happened to be the day I was passing through. I had been alone for about two months, and (sorry, **Peninsulaires**) the only singing I had done was along with the summer replacement TV show *Manhattan Transfer*. Although I was eager to get home, I altered my rocket-home plan, found a motel and tracked down the chapter for a night of singing and an afterglow that was great fun. They couldn't have been more hospitable, and it was just the tonic I needed on that long, lonely trip. Think that made an impression on me? I'm still talking about it 31 years later!

Now, maybe the San Francisco chapter had advertised themselves and I didn't see it. That's not the point. The point is that had the *Cheyenne* chapter not had that sign posted, I would not have stopped to look for them, and I would have missed a great night, some great singing, and a memory that reinforced my love for barbershop. Have you got a sign posted by your city limits? How about a bumper sticker? (We now have two different kinds in the Harmony Marketplace.) Yard sign? Phone number listed? Yellow Pages ad? Anything that would let people know you are there? What do you distribute when you have a performance? A show? Called any lapsed members lately?

The surest road to failure is having no plan at all. A chapter in Canada asked me for old copies of *The Harmonizer*. They distribute them to doctor and dentist offices, with attached stickers that advertise their chapter and let people know that they're in the neighborhood. I don't yet know whether it has helped them gain members, but at least it was a plan. What does your chapter want? Whatever it is, if you want it some others will want it also. So share it with them, and let's grow. Barbershop harmony—it's closer than you think. Let's help people find us.

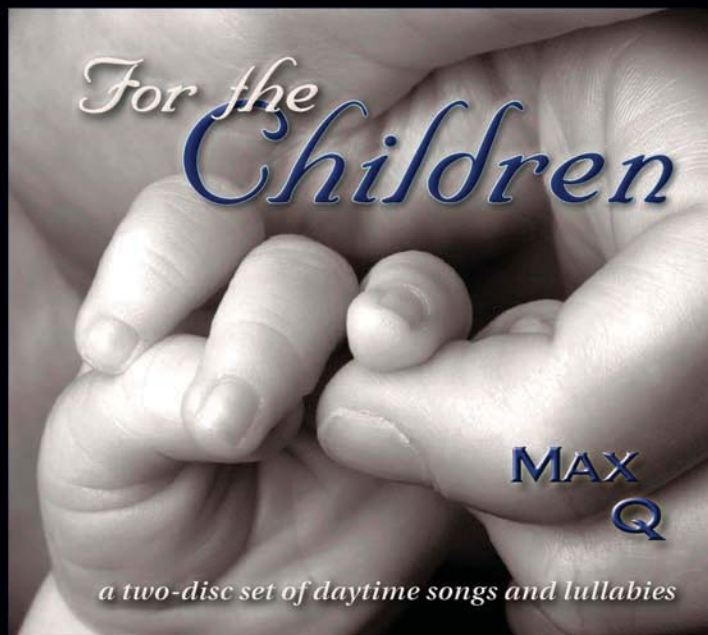
## Let's sing a tag

Speaking of tags, let's sing a couple when we meet up in Indianapolis, or anywhere else for that matter. I'll have the tag that won the contest, "This Table Set For Two," and would love to ring it with you. And two other guys, of course. See you in Indy...



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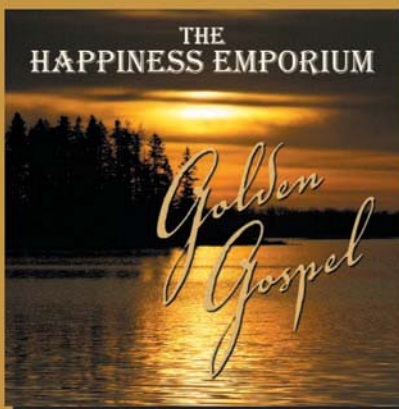
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# National win leads to national television

... mysterious and kooky, they're really kinda famous ... they're Hi-Fidelity

Winning America's biggest freestyle a cappella contest seemed like the capstone of a great season for **Hi-Fidelity**; however, the win has only boosted the stock of this Los Angeles-based quartet. They have added two additional national TV appearances to their resumes since winning the May 6 contest. In the victory, they used an Addams Family-inspired performance to bust chords and bust guts and became the 2006 Harmony Sweepstakes national champion. Despite being the only Sweepstakes newcomer among the top four, Hi-Fidelity won over both the judges and the hardcore a cappella audience to also be voted audience favorite. They bested many of the nation's best R&B and vocal jazz groups, plus **'Round Midnight**, the contest's other Society quartet, which won the New York regional. (Needless to say, the two quartets tagged into the wee hours after the contest.)

Shortly after the win, NBC's *Last Call with Carson Daly* show came calling. Thanks to an enthusiastic recommendation from Harmony Sweepstakes organizer John Neal, Hi-Fidelity was invited to boost the laugh quotient for the late-night comedian's opening monologue. In the sketch, Daly explained that some of his past jokes hadn't gone over very well, so this night's sketch would be fortified by "Barbershop Monologue Joke Explainers." He then proceeded to tell lame celebrity put-down jokes, after



**Craig Ewing (tenor), Gregg Bernhard (bari), Carson Daly, Martin Fredstrom (bass), Tom Moore (lead)**

it progressed, until even the house band was standing up and cheering. The show's producers called it the funniest bit in the show's six-year history, and within days of the broadcast they had invited the quartet back for a second comedy sketch—this time with



advance guest billing.

It was far from the first time that producers have been won over by Hi-Fidelity's look and performance skills. The year 2004 saw them in national TV spots and Rose Bowl festivities as singing plumbers for the 50th anniversary of the Roto Rooter jingle; they also appeared in a commercial for the Xbox video game, *Tao Feng: Fist of the Lotus*. The camera loves these guys and they know how to get big laughs, which is pretty funny for four guys who mostly sing straight-up barbershop.

"We're not **FRED** or **Freestyle**," says Hi-Fidelity tenor Craig Ewing. For example, the quartet's set in Salt Lake City last year, good for 33rd place, was played straight. "We're trying to be entertaining, but we don't consider ourselves a comedy quartet."

Convention-goers in Indianapolis will have a hard time believing that when the quartet reprises its routine in a two-song version of their 25-minute Addams Family show package. They hope the comedy will help propel them to the semifinals, adding another Society honor to 2005's Far Western District championship and 2002's Buckeye Invitational championship.

Hi-Fidelity is the third Society quartet in nine years to win the Harmony Sweepstakes. The other two also hail from the Los Angeles area and likewise won with a liberal dose of comedy: **The Perfect Gentlemen** (2002 champion) and **Metropolis** (1998 champion). Incidentally, Los Angeles is the only regional contest hosted by Barbershoppers. The **South Bay** chapter, with the effort spearheaded by Pete Neushul, has for years helped expose hardcore L.A. a cappella fans to barbershop at the event.

[www.hifidelityquartet.com](http://www.hifidelityquartet.com)



## A cappella honors

### Judges are high on Rounders

The Best Barbershop Album of 2005 was *I Wanna Be Around* by



**Rounders**, according to the Contemporary A Cappella Recording Awards (CARAs), sponsored by The Contemporary A Cappella Society (CASA). *Pa-*

*per or Plastic* by **State Line Gro-cery** was runner up. The title track of Rounders' album was named Best Barbershop Song, with runner up "Alabamy Bound" by **The Northern Lights**. [www.casa.org](http://www.casa.org)

### Barbershop involvement high in the Harmony Sweepstakes

- **Ignition** competed in the Denver Regional, with two members winning "best original song."
- **Heart to Heart**, a mixed BHS/Sweet Adeline quartet, competed in the Chicago Regional. Presentation judge George Gipp was on the five-judge panel.
- **New Release**, 2005 MBNA America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet Contest silver medalist, finished second in the Mid-Atlantic Regional. Claire Gardiner, a Sweet Adeline, was a judge.
- **Double Deuce**, a former barbershop quartet that switched to contemporary a cappella, and **Transit** and **Four Real** (two Sweet Adeline quartets) competed in the Pacific Northwest Regional. Sweet Adeline Melanie Wroe was a judge.
- **Underage**, 2005 Sweet Adeline Rising Star Quartet Champion, competed in the San Francisco Regional.
- **Reveille**, 2005 international quartet semifinalist, participated in the New York Regional.
- Society judge Phil DeBar was one of five judges for the Harmony Sweepstakes finals.
- Several Society judges have juried the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella (ICCA) over the past three years, including Steve Jamison for several international finals.

## Get your barbershop fix from iTunes

Now you can legally purchase barbershop performances for your iPod via iTunes ([www.itunes.com](http://www.itunes.com)). A partnership between the Barbershop Harmony Society and Naked Voice Records means that no fewer than three years of contest recordings should be posted by July.

If you have the free iTunes software (available at [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)) you can purchase your favorite performances to listen on your computer or your iPod. (iTunes downloads do not play on competing portable players.) Type "barbershop contest" in the iTunes "Search Music Store" window to bring up a searchable and previewable catalog of current BHS tracks.

In the coming months, NVR plans to add to the catalog all contest music dating back as far as the technology will allow. This body of music will join the digital catalog of NVR already available through a variety of the most popular legal music download services such as iTunes, Napster, Rhapsody, and more. Watch for more details as these additional services develop.



## Show us the way to even better conventions

If you've been to a few great international conventions, we need your input to make them even better. If you've never been, we'd like to know what it'll take to entice you to come and find out what you've been missing! If you didn't already get a chance to fill out a survey in Indianapolis, here's your chance to make sure that your voice is heard.



Simply go to [www.barbershop.org/surveys](http://www.barbershop.org/surveys) and fill out one of the multiple choice surveys. Please pay special attention to the open-ended questions where you can give more detailed feedback. Please note there are two surveys: one for everybody, and one exclusively for those who attended the 2006 International Convention in Indianapolis.

Make your ideas and criticisms known!

## Support the National Anthem Project

U.S. Barbershoppers: here's a chance to join with school children and others in celebrating the September 14 anniversary of the U.S. national anthem, and support the efforts of our fellow travelers in the MENC, The National Association for Music Education. The National Anthem Project involves thousands of schools and school music programs, a national PR push by MENC, and plenty of opportunities to mingle with the media and other community groups. Last year, more than 1,700 schools and organizations participated in a September 14 celebration. TV stations sent cameras and reporters to schools for live coverage of the kids singing, and more than 100 newspapers covered these school music programs. Join or help plan an event to showcase the important role music teachers play in passing the American heritage from one generation to the next. For more information, visit [www.thenationalanthemproject.org](http://www.thenationalanthemproject.org) or contact Stephanie Jones at [StephanieJ@menc.org](mailto:StephanieJ@menc.org).

### CONVENTIONS

**2006**

INDIANAPOLIS

July 2-9

[barbershop.org/indy](http://barbershop.org/indy)

**2007**

DENVER

July 1-8

**2008**

NASHVILLE

June 29- July 6

**2009**

ANAHEIM

June 28- July 5

**2010**

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**2011**

KANSAS CITY

July 3-10

**MIDWINTER**

[www.barbershop.org/midwinter](http://www.barbershop.org/midwinter)

**2007**

ALBUQUERQUE

Jan. 21-28



## Society welcomes new staff

Two new staff members are “graduates” of the Society’s collegiate quartet program.

James Estes is responsible for student activities development. He was choral director at Fond du Lac High School and conducts the Fond du Lac Children’s Choir. An eight-year member of the Society, he directs the **Pride of the Valley Chorus** in Appleton, Wis. and is assistant director for the **Midwest Vocal Express** in Greendale, Wis. In addition, he serves on the Society’s Student Activities Committee and is a candidate Singing judge. He holds a bachelor’s degree in music education from Lawrence University, and is a member of MENC: The National Association for Music Education and the American Choral Directors Association (ACDA).



**James Estes**

Mike O’Neill, an 11-year Society member, is responsible for chorus director development. He served as director of choral activities at Central High School in Keller, Texas and as music director at St. Andrew Catholic Church in Fort Worth. He recently sang baritone on the international stage with **Vantage Point**, and earned a gold medal in the 1999 MBNA America Collegiate Quartet Contest as bass of **Station 59**. Mike served on the Society’s Young Men In Harmony Committee and on the COTS faculty. He holds a bachelor’s degree in music education from the University of Florida and a master’s degree in choral conducting from the University of North Texas,



**Mike O’Neill**

and is a member of the Texas Music Educators Association and the ACDA.

## Harmony Foundation welcomes new finance director Edgar Hoffman

Edgar Hoffman is the new director of finance with Harmony Foundation International, Inc. He is responsible for all financial and administrative functions of Harmony Foundation, including accounting, financial reporting, budgeting, investments, fund administration, office administration, purchasing, accounts payable and income analysis.

Edgar’s resume includes manager of corporate planning, corporate planning and development director, controller/CFO, director



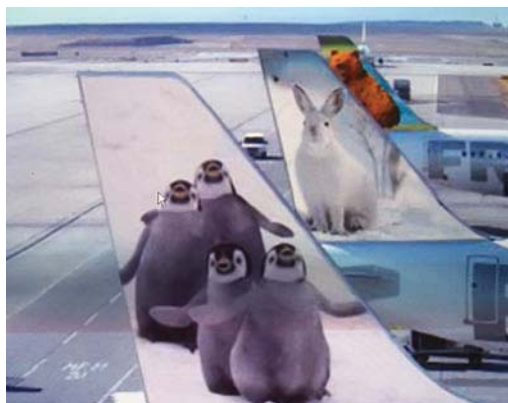
of administration and international trade in the profit sector for a \$2 billion global manufacturing company and two of its subsidiaries. He has a bachelor’s degree in economics from Lehigh University and earned a MBA in Finance at the University of Pittsburgh. Edgar and his wife Joyce have two sons. He can be contacted at 312-701-1001, [ehoffman@harmonyfoundation.org](mailto:ehoffman@harmonyfoundation.org), or at Harmony Foundation, 225 W. Washington, Suite 2330, Chicago, IL 60606.



## Despite Acoustix slam dunk, Mavericks wither under Heat

We couldn’t get a real photo by press time, so here is an, um, “artistic” depiction of the Acoustix configuration that opened Dallas’s do-or-die game six on June 20. Down 3-2 in their first NBA finals, Dallas Mavericks marketers said that practically every big artist in Texas and beyond was lobbying to perform the ABC-televised National Anthem. All were turned down in favor of the franchise’s favorite home-town Acoustix, who never fail to bring down the house. Tenor Todd Wilson and lead Rick Middaugh couldn’t fly in for the gig, so Greg Clancy (at tenor) and Jeff Oxley (at lead) joined Acoustix regulars Jason January (baritone) and Joel T. Rutherford (bass)—call them “AcoustiMax” if you will. As expected, the quartet got the fans pumped up from the start, and the Mavericks cruised to a dominating first quarter. But it wasn’t enough to overcome the heroics of Dwyane Wade, as the Miami Heat won the game and the title. Despite a great outing by German superstar Dirk Nowitski, Dallas lost another close game and was left with a bunch of “what ifs” to ponder in the off-season: What if Jerry Stackhouse had played game five? What if they had asked Acoustix to sing the *German* national anthem before the second half, or at least a peppy David Hasselhoff tune? ...





## Ad executives are keeping barbershop harmony in the public consciousness

If we still wore straw hats, we'd give them a collective tip to the latest round of advertising executives who choose to use barbershop harmony as a marketing gimmick. The profession keeps close tabs on subtleties of popular culture, and creative teams seem to like barbershop for its upbeat, nostalgic feel and association with wholesomeness. All these ads are respectful to the art form, although one may be edgy for some tastes.

- Pizza Hut incorporates barbershop harmony with other musical styles and sound effects to promote its Cheesy Bites pizzas at [www.pizzahut.com/cheesybites](http://www.pizzahut.com/cheesybites). The clever interface allows users to mix up to five diverse sounds and musical styles as accompaniment to Miss Piggy's sultry "These Bites Are Made For Poppin'" parody. The Web quartet was voiced by New York-based **Reveille** (2005 international semifinalist), which has historically gotten a large share of the televised quartet singing gigs that originate on the East Coast.
- A quartet of barbershopping penguins on the tail of a Frontier Airlines jet (not voiced by a Society singers as far as we know) filled a 30-second spot with "You'll be earning free miles when you join ... no blackout days." See the penguins at [www.frontierairlines.com](http://www.frontierairlines.com), click on "fun stuff" at the top of the page, then click on the "commercials" tab. Elsewhere in the "fun stuff" section, the penguins profess their dream to "own their own barbershop."
- **Fusion** quartet from Toronto ([www.fusionquartet.com](http://www.fusionquartet.com)) was tapped to voice a Canadian web campaign for the Mini Cooper ([www.mini.ca](http://www.mini.ca)). The quartet of souped-up compact cars combined Barberpole Cat arrangements with unexpectedly edgy (but not obscene) lyrics for several animated songs. They disparage cheetahs, pine about donuts (Tim Horton's, we presume) and reinforce the notion that there is a lot of attitude beneath this automotive quartet's benign exterior.

## Pre-order *The Harmonizer* for PR and recruiting

Many chapters like to leave copies of *The Harmonizer* in barbershops and doctors' offices along with chapter PR materials, or they distribute them to potential members or the media. Chapters and Society members may now pre-order 20 or more upcoming copies of the magazine at the very low cost of \$0.75 per copy, plus shipping. The copies may only be used for PR and recruiting purposes—they may not be resold or used in place of a non-member subscription.

For bulk pre-orders of 20 or more, contact Harmony Marketplace at 800-876-7464 or [marketplace@barbershop.org](mailto:marketplace@barbershop.org) at least 20 days before the cover date of the desired issue. Small orders and past issues are still \$3 per copy. [www.HarmonyMarketplace.com](http://www.HarmonyMarketplace.com) or 800-876-7464 x8410. Next issue will be the Indy wrap-up and will feature the 2006 quartet champion on the cover. ■





# Refresh your hobby on a new voice part

**D**o you want to recapture the thrill of discovery you had when you first discovered the hobby? Do you often feel vocally fatigued after a few hours of singing? You may be stuck in the rut of thinking you can only sing one voice part. Most barbershop arrangements actually allow average Barbershoppers to successfully explore another voice part.

## Why sing a different part?

The part you started on years ago may no longer be your voice's healthiest part, assuming it ever was. A switch may therefore help you sustain your voice for many additional years. You also may get to provide the missing part for that quartet that has been looking for their fourth singer for several months.

Even if you choose to keep your traditional part for performances, challenge yourself to expand your vocal range by trying out other parts. You will become a better singer and musician as you begin to understand each part's role. Your chorus may even benefit from, say, more leads to deliver that beautiful melody and be heard over the baritone section that sings too loudly. (Which happens a lot ... sorry baritones!)

## Getting started

Consider the following principles:

- Bases often have a nice falsetto and may develop a beautiful tenor.
- Leads and baritones sing in a very similar range, making this part the most natural switch, at least vocally.
- Tenors, depending on the development of their head voices, are often the most capable of singing any other part.
- The more freely you sing, the more flexibility you will have in singing other parts. You get the best results when you maintain your natural voice in all ranges rather than forcing your voice to sound like another part.
- The more you develop your voice at one end of your range, the better the result on the opposite end of your range.



**Mike O'Neill**  
Society  
Music  
Specialist/  
Chorus  
Director  
Development

**Create opportunities to switch.** Tag singing is the easiest and usually least intimidating way to get started, followed closely by singing the Barberpole Cats. Learn on your traditional part, then learn another part. If that part feels uncomfortable to you, try another. Take advantage of Harmony Marketplace resources such as learning CD's, songbooks, and the "How to be a Great \_\_\_\_\_" series.

Talk in advance with your section leader about

singing with a different section the next time the chorus learns a new song; this may be well received if a particular section could use another voice. In your quartet, explore switching parts with one member the next time you learn a new song—or try having everyone switch on a song for variety. If you expect resistance, the idea may be better received if first suggested by a trusted coach or quartet friend. You may also wish to form a second quartet on another voice part; your chapter Singing Valentine program may be the perfect opportunity to organize it.

## Principles of switching

I spoke with a famous voice switcher, Don Barnick, who sang tenor with 1979 champ **Grandma's Boys**, baritone with bronze medalists **Sidekicks** and **Rip-tide**, and bass with 1992 champ **Keepsake**. He gives these tips:

- If you are not a natural tenor, sing with your falsetto and head voice. Because the role of the tenor singer in barbershop is to be "complementary" to the melodic line, it may be simple for you to try this part for which you are required to be softer than all other voices.
- Singing baritone makes you become more sensitive to the "changing vocal environment." Sometimes you are above the lead melody, sometimes below, and that will directly affect the volume relationships and tone color.
- Singing bass in our style needs to be "ever present" in terms of volume without overshadowing the melody line. If you are not a *true* bass, trust the concept of not "forcing" the sound or trying to "sound like a bass."

I also spoke with Tony DeRosa, the great baritone with 1992 champ **Keepsake** and 2000 champ **Platinum**. He has had to make continual adjustments after switching parts to become the double silver medal lead of **Max Q**. "The job of the baritone is to make everyone else look good, while the lead's job is to be the best looking!" Tony said. "As a lead, you need to be much more conscious of the solo aspect of your voice, which in turn can be a little more taxing than singing baritone, since baritones have occasions where they can 'hide' in the ensemble sound."

## Resources

- Harmony University or district HEP schools
- How to be a Great Tenor, Lead, Baritone, or Bass classes or articles at [www.barbershop.org](http://www.barbershop.org)
- Effective Choral Warm-Ups (stock no. 4960)
- Barberpole Cat Program, Song Book & Learning CDs at [www.HarmonyMarketplace.com](http://www.HarmonyMarketplace.com) ■



# Tips from the top recruiter thru June

A newer member himself, Derek Street's enthusiasm is bringing in an average of one new member per month



I average more than 60 hours per week in various music preparations, music rehearsals and performances (school, church and barbershop). Music is one of my biggest joys. I am the choral director at Clover Junior High School, the assistant choral director at Clover High School and the choral director at Scherer Memorial Presbyterian Church in Lake Wylie, SC. In addition, I also direct and sing in a barbershop group at Clover High School.

Since January 2006, I have directed the **Carolina Chordsmen** of Rock Hill, S.C. My favorite time of the week is when I sing or direct barbershop music. Every choir I direct has been exposed to barbershop music, and each choir has loved singing barbershop. No question, it is my favorite form of music!

How do we, as Barbershoppers, get new members and share this experience with them?

My number one answer is to show energy, excitement,



**Jeff teaches barbershop harmony to all his choirs, and all of them love it!**

and joy in what we do. If we can show everyone how great barbershop is, then they will want to become a part of it. Get excited about rehearsal nights! Make it a point to invite someone to the excitement. If you are excited, guests will be excited and want to return, and then possibly join.

Secondly, "tap into" schools (the Carolina Chordsmen partner with the local school systems), churches, clubs, etc. There is so much musical talent in the world. Go and find them! Barbershop singing is physical exercise to many people. Be aggressive in calling local music directors and invite as many people as you can. Once you invite people and show excitement, the barbershop music will do the rest. It is hard to explain how it feels when you are a part of "ringing chords," but once the guests are a part of it, they will be "hooked." When you recruiting future Barbershoppers, use the energy, excitement, enthusiasm and joy from each member and director(s) of your chapter chorus. ■

**Top 15 recruiters January thru June 2006**

Name	District	2006 recruits	Dues waived	Lifetime recruits
Derek Street	DIX	6	100%	6
Lewis T. Heathman, Jr.	CAR	4	80%	20
Michael Morris	JAD	4	80%	17
Richard D. Mathey	JAD	4	80%	12
Kerry K. Conrad	JAD	4	80%	6
Daniel J. Dekowski	MAD	4	80%	5
James Nugent	CSD	3	60%	34
John L. Minsker	FWD	3	60%	11
Tony A. Millspaugh	CAR	3	60%	7
Kevin L. Dunckel	PIO	3	60%	5
Michael A. D'Andrea	MAD	3	60%	5
Richard D. Faulkner	ONT	3	60%	5
Casey J. Flynt	SWD	3	60%	3
Eugene Kelleher	MAD	3	60%	3
Kenton Popovich	EVG	3	60%	3



# Life lessons

Where else will you find internationally competitive teams made up of friends who may be 25 or 50 years apart in age? Older Barbershoppers appreciate the vocal strength and enthusiasm that younger members bring to the hobby, but the younger members are finding plenty to admire in their older peers. Younger Barbershoppers believe that this intergenerational hobby is giving them a big leg up on life ...





Javier Lopez-Rosende/Snap Photography by JLR

## Guidance

Paul Saca mostly blended in at his school, which did not necessarily work in his favor. Though he was a good kid from a solid family, the social environment in his Miami neighborhood was filled with potential hazards for the largely directionless 15-year-old. The son of a musically gifted former professional football player, Paul was also involved in music. But like most of his friends, he had no plans for college and no ambitious goals for life. Enter Gene Cokerof, the man who would soon become Paul's idol, role model and one of his best friends.

Paul attended a series of workshops that Gene and the Miami chapter organized at his high school. **Station 59**, the 1999 MBNA America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet Champion, headlined the event. "Seeing those young guys changed my views on barbershop," Paul said. "I went nuts—it was amazing!"

In addition to getting hooked on barbershop harmony, Paul started to get hooked on Gene. As Paul learned more about barbershop, he came to idolize the legendary **Suntones** quartet and couldn't believe his luck that Suntones tenor Gene was becoming his musical mentor and a father figure.

"How many people have the privilege of studying under Frank Sinatra?" Paul asked, justifiably comparing the 1961 international quartet champion's place in barbershop to that of the world pop icon. "The wonderful thing about barbershop is that you can become friends with the person you idolized."

Paul had found a man after which he could pattern his own life. Like Gene, he found early success. By age 19, he had won international gold singing lead with 2003 collegiate champion **Heat**. And just like that, Paul moved from student into the role of student clinician, working hard to hook other kids on barbershop harmony.

"It's a brotherhood of people who respect each other and love each other," said Paul, now 22 years old. He and Gene still get together frequently for lunch, coaching sessions, and for special events in each others' lives. "I love everything that the Society represents."

Paul has since excelled in a jazz emphasis in the elite University of Miami music school. He says that barbershop harmonizing has given him a distinct edge in ear training and harmonies, as well as extensive experience performing at a high level before large audiences. He envisions a professional music career, and once again, Gene is helping him acquire the tools to succeed.

The Suntones were true crossover stars, with countless prestigious television and concert appearances and a national popularity that extended far beyond barbershop circles for decades. Gene, who later had a show business day job as well, is giving Paul a leg up as he finishes his degree and tries to position himself for a big break. Besides having relationships with big-name entertainers and other industry insiders, Gene is helping Paul learn how to be a successful, gracious man, in preparation for being that kind of entertainer.

"I don't think that I would have matured, at least socially, as much or as soon if I hadn't been involved in the barbershop world," Gene explained. "Especially being a performer, in front of people, learning to do things that are socially correct. That's what you get among Barbershoppers. It's a peer-to-peer relationship in which young guys, as well as old, know that it's their job to pass on their knowledge to the other guys."



**Lorin May**

Editor, *The Harmonizer*  
[harmonizer@barbershop.org](mailto:harmonizer@barbershop.org)

## Poise

Professional opera singers continually compete against one another for prestige and pay, so auditions and competitions tend to be thick with tension. At such events, Keith Harris's musical peers often wonder whether the rising baritone is oblivious to the pressure, as he calmly and warmly chats backstage with fellow competitors before his own name is called. After his performance is over, judges and peers often comment on how he effortlessly commands the stage and connects with the audience and judges as if he were walking into his own living room.

"From barbershop competitions, I learned that I'm being judged from the moment you see the first part of my body until I leave the stage," says Keith, bass of **Freefall**, the 1997 MBNA America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet champion. "Not very many solo singers know that." While this 2003 Metropolitan Opera Competition winner credits barbershop harmony for giving him a performance edge, it is only one of the advantages he has enjoyed due to his long barbershop career.

Keith began singing barbershop at age nine, and by age 16 was a Land O' Lakes district quartet champion, singing lead in **Family Ties** with his brother, Paul, and their father, Roger. (Paul also sang with Keith in **Freefall**.) The fact that they were young, talented and family made the kids an audience favorite from the beginning. But Keith believes it would have been hard for the "star" treatment to go to their heads, because supporters behaved more like family than like coaches or fans. "That really helped us appreciate what we had won," he said. "It really changes the way you treat people."

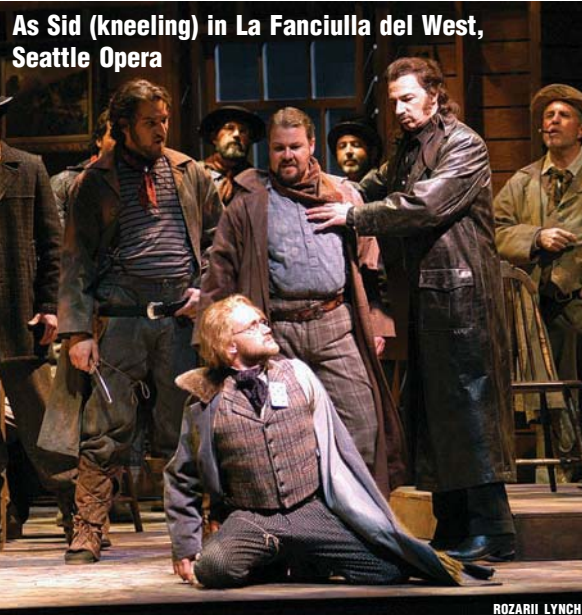
As a young kid watching his father and other Bar-



bershoppers at chapter meetings and other events, Keith saw and practiced gracious behavior and learned how to build a genuine rapport with people he had just met. "Barbershop people are so nice and so welcoming. Every time I went on stage, I felt like I had 2,000 friends right there in the audience," he explains. That attitude persists in his solo career, giving him significant advantages in developing an immediate, comfortable connection with each audience.

Arts organizations cannot support themselves on ticket sales alone, and Keith's native comfort in talking to new people has become a financial asset. "I tell them, 'Please call on me, we'll go out to dinner with patrons and donors and I'll give them the artist's perspective on why I do what I do,'" Keith says. "Those are skills I learned from barbershop."





As Sid (kneeling) in *La Fanciulla del West*, Seattle Opera

He also believes the family-like barbershop atmosphere of his youth continues to boost his performance level, as well as keep his spirits up during hard times. "What barbershop taught me is to sing because I love it," he says. He thanks barbershop coaches George Gipp, Jim DeBusman and Jay Giallombardo for teaching him only basic singing techniques until he got older. "They said I had the rest of my life to develop a great instrument, and they just let me learn to love singing."

Yet as he obtained that love of singing, he also acquired many musical advantages. In college, his non-barbershop peers recognized that he arrived with an unusually mature musical ear and great

singing and breathing form. Keith, now in his early 30s and living with his wife in New York City, says his current operatic peers have a similar respect for barbershop harmony—not only respect for the effects it has had on Keith, but for

the art form and the performers themselves.

"The Society has done such a great job of putting high quality music out there—people have a high respect for barbershop," he said. As highly trained musicians, they simply know good musicianship when they hear it. And while Keith continues to share the joys of barbershop harmony with others, he gushes about the positive culture that has helped make him the man he is today.

"Everyone [in the Society] is so supportive of each other that I developed an assumption of a goodness in humanity that I take with me in everyday life," he said. "And if you treat people that way, you get it back."

## Family values

Stephen Ditchfield would probably still be singing professionally with his family even if he hadn't discovered barbershop harmony as a teenager. But it wouldn't have been the same for this ordained minister and his family. Barbershop harmony has made his family closer, enabled them all to become better musicians, and helped the children gain greater confidence and maturity.

"I have my children around me all the time," Stephen beams. For him, that's the best part of sharing his hobby in **My Three Sons** quartet with, well, his three sons. "And they're not forced to do this!"

Sons David and Michael have grown up watching the family perform as **The Ditchfield Family Singers**, and by ages 5 and 6 "they were desperate to sing," Stephen recalls. He started singing barbershop with them at home and then, with older son Nathanael, as a novelty act in the family's performances. The two younger boys learned harmonies by ear and became hooked. They all eventually joined the Sarasota, Florida **Chorus of the Keys**, now directed by their father.

"Learning to relate to men of all ages from all walks of life has really given the boys a leg up, and given them a lot of confidence," Stephen says. "I've appreciated having somewhere that I could take my boys and know they would be exposed to good role models." His chorus, composed mostly of retirees, has been like having "100 grandfathers" for his sons.

It doesn't hurt that the boys became good singers at an early age. David and Michael were Sunshine District Novice Quartet Champions by ages 9 and 10, and six years later had earned a district championship and international berth, all singing with their Dad and



**1998 Sunshine District Novice Quartet Champions, *My Three Sons*, singing "Nellie" with a 9-year-old tenor and a 10-year-old lead!**

Certain things happen in an organization that's dedicated to preserving the good stuff from the old days—not just the good old songs, but the good old values.

Nathanael. Although the wins were exciting, the goal had always been fun and togetherness. The two teenage boys are now college music majors on vocal scholarships, fully contributing to the family's music ministry, and enabling the family to perform music they couldn't have tackled before. And that's where the family's barbershop training makes them such a hit.

"The precision turning of the phrases, the vowel matching, the precise chord tuning and attention to words—I don't see anybody but the real pros and the

Barbershoppers doing that," Stephen observes. Complex seven-part arrangements that would sink other groups don't faze a family that learned a long time ago how to tune every chord until it rings.

"The quartet experience makes it possible," says Stephen. Barbershop singing is more than a means to that end. It's an enjoyable family journey that continues for its own sake. "We maintain our closeness as a family in the many hours we spend together in harmony," he says.



**The Ditchfield Family Singers of Sarasota, Florida: Nathanael, his wife, Regina, David (17), Stephanie, dad Stephen & mother Bernice, and Michael (19)**

## Opportunity

Big ovations often ring differently in younger ears. But the chance to earn frequent praise is not necessarily the reason young Barbershoppers tend to shoot so far ahead of their age curve in confidence and social maturity. According to those who have trod the path, they acquire this maturity because they need it to succeed in the barbershop environment, and their mature friends make great role models.

"We recognized that we had to respect [adults] and earn their respect even through they gave it to us freely," said Cory Hunt (standing on the chair in the above right 1998 photo). Yet he learned there was no double standard when it came to what was expected from him in a quartet or chorus environment. He joined Reno's **Silver Dollar Chorus** at age seven and learned quickly that he must either pull his own weight like the men or the whole group would suffer for his shortfalls. He needed the same level of discipline, the same effort, and the same social skills to work within the ensemble.

"We were kids in the daytime and then we were



adults at chorus practice the next night,” Cory said of the experience. As he got older, he started to recognize a common thread among the younger Barbershoppers he knew. “We were way ahead of the curve, socially. I guess I grew up pretty quickly with the Silver Dollar Chorus guys. That prepared me and opened up a lot of doors.”

Speaking in front of big crowds is already old hat—he’s done that almost every weekend for years. Teamwork skills? They’re now second nature, after years of practicing them in quartets and choruses among seasoned men. (He started leading older men as chapter Barberpole Cat Chairman at age 9, greatly boosting his leadership confidence in the years to come.) Now 21 years old, he has already had 14 years to fine-tune his adult rapport skills for those all-important relationships essential to business success. In fact, Cory has already acquired three “barbershop jobs” as a result of his connections, including his current job as a researcher and writer for a contractor to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.



“I could’ve gotten into baseball more, but I would have never met all these people and had all these opportunities,” Cory said. “These are life-long friends.”

Shown here at age 12 mingling with his heroes of 1998 international champion **Revival**, his **Qyduhmix** quartet sang in the FarWestern District quartet finals that same weekend. Only eight years later, he would earn an international medal of his own, singing bass with **OC Times**.

## Perspective

No matter how high you soar as a Barbershopper, friends and everyday life will keep you grounded. A perfect example occurred about 14 years ago, when Joe Connelly was coaching the Greater Knoxville chapter. Friend and chapter member Art Adams showed everyone a recorded video presentation that was to congratulate the legendary lead on his recent accomplishments. Or so Joe thought ...

In a series of on-camera interviews, people in the Knoxville area were approached at random and asked, “Hey, what do you think about Joe Connelly winning his second international gold medal with **Keepsake**?” Strung together was a series of quizzical faces and responses to the effect of, “Joe Who?”

It turned into a hilarious on-screen roast, with many

responses that had obviously been coached off-camera. But the “Joe Who?” replies rang true. You don’t have to be the best Barbershopper in the world to know the rock star-like sensation of bowing to a roaring crowd on the weekend, then being brought back to earth by the familiar anonymity that returns on Monday morning.

Tony De Rosa, baritone to Joe’s lead in **Keepsake**, was 18 years old when he won that first of his two international golds in 1992. Before that, he had been a well-known “prodigy” after winning his first district quartet championship at age 12. Most kids would act pretty cocky after besting a field of experienced adults, but Tony did not even have that option available.

“My dad said, ‘You are going to behave and act like a mature person or you’re not going to be able to be in this environment,’” Tony recalls. “I learned about discipline, not just the craft—being respectful to my peers and people in general.”

Had Tony’s father not been there to keep his son’s ego in check, his childhood friends were unwittingly there to do the job. About 36 hours after hoisting that first district quartet trophy before thousands of cheering fans, Tony told his school friends what he

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**Joe Connelly (second from left) and Tony De Rosa (far right) joined Roger Ross and Don Barnick in 1992 international champion Keepsake. Joe and Tony were among the best lead/baritone duos in Society history, but Society history kept them grounded. They grew up in a culture where the best performers were also expected to be modest model citizens. This is why, with few exceptions, barbershop champions tend to not only mix with regular guys, but they are regular guys.**

had done over the weekend. "They were like, 'Cool ... okay, now let's go play kickball,'" Tony remembers. Such experiences were common and humbling, but as a result, "I did not lose my childhood to barbershop."

In the midst of all his early success, Tony's father and older quartet mates embodied for him the notion that winning and big ovations were great, but people were far more important. "Barbershop is exactly like life in that the experience is all about the journey," he said.

Those are more than nice-sounding words to Tony and, for that matter, thousands of other Barbershoppers. A passing comment Tony made at the end of his interview demonstrated how different the barbershop ethic can be from the norm. Tony mentioned that he needed to head off to a coaching session. It turned out that the quartet in question was a perennial medalist that, at least at the time of the interview, was gunning to beat Tony's **Max Q** for the 2006 international championship.

Picture Barry Bonds giving some off-season hitting lessons to the Dodgers and Yankees and you'll get an idea how absurd this could appear to an outsider. To Tony, his coaching arrangement hadn't even registered as worthy of mention. His dad coached fellow competitors all the time, his quartet mates do it, too. It is a common sight in almost any chapter or district—guys offering performance and singing tips to groups they are going to be competing against.

Tony shrugged off the suggestion that

he was coaching against his self-interest. "If their best beats my best, so be it, they deserve to win," he countered without a hint of irony or disingenuousness.

And then off the top of his head, this walking trophy case started to pop out a lot more quotes that you've probably never read in the pages of *Sports Illustrated* or *Fortune* magazine: "Even when you win the contest, you haven't arrived anywhere. It's just a good thing to reward you for a lot of hard work, but it's not like you've become a different person. It's all about the relationships you gain at conventions and in rehearsals, the experience of being on stage, hitting a great tag and the audience goes crazy, or even having a lukewarm audience reaction. The pathway is really about relationships, getting out there and affecting people."

They are magnanimous sounding words, but in the end they only sum up the niche culture in which Tony grew up. Against the backdrop of a cynical world, his attitudes could sound quaint and old-fashioned. In the barbershop world, they are simply the norm. Such notions become part of you when you grow up in an organization that's dedicated to preserving the good stuff from the old days—not just the good old songs, but the good old values. Not platitudes, but actual behavior. In a rare environment where young and old learn and grow together, peer to peer, special lessons continue to be passed on from generation to generation. ■





# Making it part of the program

Younger members have choruses singing barbershop at their universities

**A**pril 2005 on the campus of Capital University brought about something the community had not experienced for many decades. After a full semester of student-led rehearsals, planning, and a healthy dose of optimism, the newly established **Capital Chordsmen Men's Chorus** made its first attempt to introduce barbershop harmony through its premiere spring concert. Nestled in the heart of Columbus, Ohio, Capital University had long held the reputation of a strong undergraduate conservatory of music, complete with opportunities in jazz and compositional studies. Even with such musical diversity, barbershop and four-part male singing was still something of a great unknown to this small liberal arts community. Amidst a standing ovation and overwhelming support from family and friends, that spring concert marked the first step in what would soon become a collegiate learning experience in the barbershop hobby.

The dream of revitalizing the male singing community at Capital was once backed by a great amount of history and accomplishment. Since 1906, the Capital University Glee Club had been performing barbershop throughout Columbus and abroad. A Capital Varsity Quartet was a common appearance alongside the concerts of sacred and secular glee club literature. But by the 1980s the glee club had slowed down considerably and was feared gone for good. With the help of Barbershop Harmony Society members and Capital music education majors Jeffrey Delman and Kyle Zeuch (Greater Central Ohio Chapter), meetings in fall of 2005 helped gain faculty approval for an experiment in

a student produced men's ensemble named the Capital Chordsmen.

"It's hard to pick a favorite song," freshman Chordsmen member Brian Lander said during a break in rehearsal. "I had never sung barbershop before com-

**Members of the Capital Chordsmen before singing the National Anthem at a Columbus Crew soccer game. Composed of about 25 students from Capital University in Columbus, Ohio, the ensemble rehearses every Sunday evening. Most members are not music majors and some have never sung in an ensemble before. The ensemble sings a multitude of genres, including barbershop.**



**Jeffrey Delman  
and Kyle Zeuch**  
Capital  
Chordsmen  
directors

ing into the group, and it's proved to be a big musical eye opener for me." A double major in engineering and computer science, Lander uses the Chordsmen as an opportunity to get away from his studies every Sunday evening and have fun singing in the barbershop style. The group just finished up another successful year complete with singing the national anthem at an Major League Soccer Columbus Crew game, participating in a campus opera production, and staging a variety show that brought about record attendance on campus.

Introducing their new chorus to barbershop was easy for Delman and Zeuch. Both are current members of the **Alliance Chorus** under the direction of Dave Calland, and quickly found guidance among their society brothers. Carl Cash, tenor of **U Bet!**, and internationally ranked collegiate quartet **4-Way Stop** both helped inspire the Capital Chordsmen during the first few rehearsals. Clinicians from the Alliance music team

## Success tips for student Barbershoppers

**Scheduling**—Be Sure to plan out everything before jumping into something. Starting an organized chorus can be overwhelming and stressful. With planning, you will be able to focus more on the music and less on logistics

**Use your resources**—Between the Society and local barbershop chapters, there are Barbershoppers that will help you get something started. Use them as much as you can.

**Communicate**—This is essential with administrators and faculty. The more, the better.

**Contact**—Publicity is a big part of getting people to come to concerts. Even if funds are low, spending money on nice posters or a radio announcement will pay off. Also publicize through your local barbershop chapter.

**Energize the guys**—Give potential members some bait to chomp at. Bringing in talented guest quartets and singing fun music together will hook members.

**Sing**—Singing for any opportunity that arises will give your new ensemble exposure and experience, which leads to more members and better singing.

**Social events**—Plan events for chorus members to unwind and relax. Bonding with chorus members outside of rehearsal builds trust, camaraderie, and memories. Also, these are great times for tag singing!

also helped throughout the year, and the two young directors found a constant source of inspiration from their weekly experiences with Alliance. The two spared no expense in showing the Chordsmen every aspect of our art form. Tag singing prior to rehearsals, afterglow experiences, and some classic barbershop favorites were introduced into the ensemble's repertoire at an early start. The Chordsmen dabbled in stage choreography, and continued to use music educational resources from the Society to help promote

healthy male singing.

Guest quartets have filled Chordsmen concerts throughout the group's short history. "One of the coolest moments was watching the guys before our spring variety show react to our quartet," Delman recalls. "We were in the middle of rehearsing our set and all I could think about was how new this must sound to so many of the guys. It was a really cool step forward." The inclusion of barbershop into the collegiate experience is happening more places than just in Columbus, Ohio. Arjun Chandy of the **Vocal Majority** has started a small barbershop chorus at University of North Texas. Also, Cory Hunt, bass of **OC Times**, has introduced barbershop to the men's chorus at the University of Nevada, Reno.

The phenomenon of spreading barbershop harmony to young men in their college years is quite promising, especially because barbershop in these colleges will enjoy some permanence. At the end of the 2005-2006 school year, the Capital Chordsmen were recognized by the Dean of the conservatory at Capital University by making the ensemble an official credit-bearing ensemble that will be at Capital to stay. With the help of the Barbershop Harmony Society and a grateful interest by Capital Men's Glee Alumni, the Capital Chordsmen's future in four-part harmony, and its future in other colleges, seems well on its way in reaching the ears of more and more college-age men. ■

## Capital Chordsmen milestones

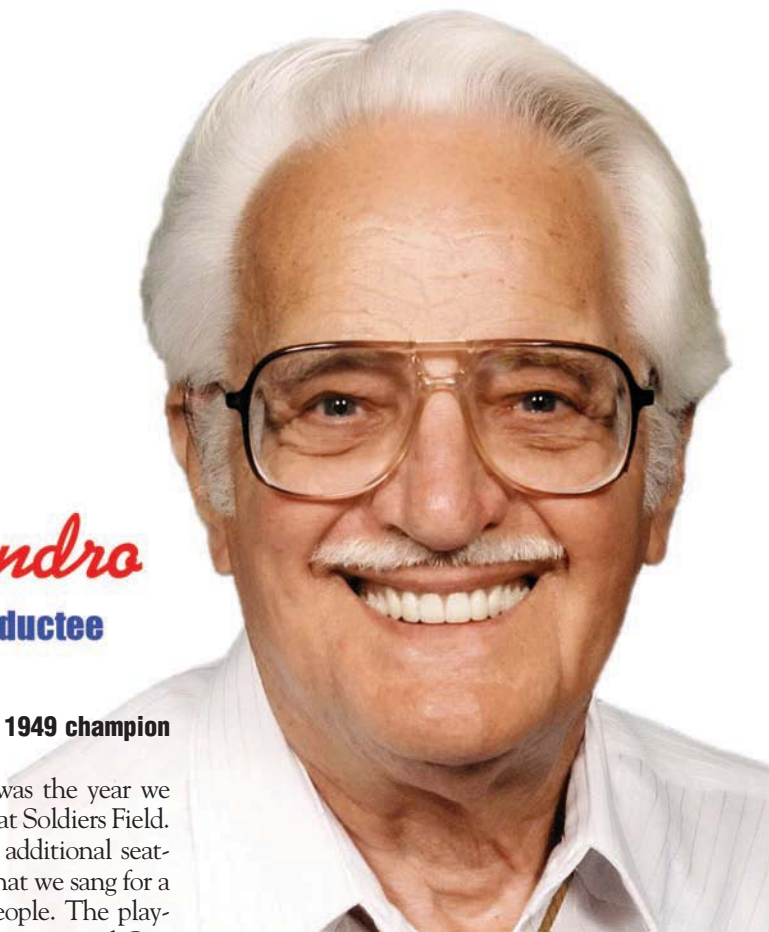
- **Fall 2004**—Student directors Jeffrey Delman and Kyle Zeuch meet with Capital University Conservatory of Music to discuss the possibility of becoming a campus ensemble.
- **January 2005**—25 guys show up to the first Capital Chordsmen rehearsal, where exceptional collegiate quartet **4-Way Stop** launches them into the wonderful world of four-part male harmony.
- **April 2005**—The Capital Chordsmen perform the first barbershop concert on campus in decades. The sold out crowd and standing ovations inspire the young members.
- **October 2005**—The Chordsmen sing the National Anthem before a sold out crowd at a Columbus Crew Major League soccer game.
- **November 2005**—The Chordsmen perform as an all male chorus in a Gilbert and Sullivan opera review hosted by the Conservatory of Music. The chorus members did everything from makeup to dancing.
- **February 2006**—The Capital Chordsmen put on a variety show on campus that included everything from barbershop to bagpipes. The record attendance and great success gain great attention from administrators and faculty.
- **March 2006**—The Capital Chordsmen continue to perform on other events around campus including board of trustees meetings and chapel services.



# The HOT seat

*with Marty Mendra*

**2006 Barbershop Hall of Fame inductee**



## **What is your greatest memory with the 1949 champion Mid States Four?**

I have two great memories. The first was the year we sang in the Chicagoland Music Festival at Soldiers Field. A stadium of 100,000 seats, plus some additional seating in the infield. My guesstimate was that we sang for a live audience of more than 120,000 people. The playbill included Lauritz Melchior, operatic tenor, and Guy Lombardo. The evening's program called for a match lighting ceremony. The stadium was darkened and on the count of three over 100,000 matches and cigarette lighters flared up. A sight I'll never forget. The second was when we were invited to sing at Carnegie Hall. We trod the boards along with the greats of music.

## **What is your funniest Mid States Four memory?**

One of our comedy bits ended up with Forry Haynes doing a pratfall. It was my job to stand behind him to catch him before he hit the stage floor. For some reason one night, I forgot to get there in time and he hit the floor with a WHACK. The audience thought it was part of the act—we knew better. From the floor, Forry looked up at me and said, "You missed your cue." We broke up.

## **As one of the oldest living members, what do you see as the main difference in our hobby from 50 years ago to today?**

We had an easier and more comfortable environment. Our overall goal was to relax and have fun—not try to make changes for change's sake.

## **If for a moment you could be 19 again, what would you do differently with your life?**

Wow! What a question! I don't really know. I joined the Society when I was 29 years old. I've had my ups and downs, but overall I've had a pleasant life, met lit-

erally thousands of wonderful people, and have done some very interesting things, participating in a beautiful hobby, and being part of its growth.

## **What advice do you have for our younger members?**

If they are really interested in the sounds of barbershopping, I would suggest that they learn the true art of the genuine barbershop style of singing, learn to listen for the sound of close harmony, and develop the ability to hear and sing a chord with harmonics and/or overtones. Pure heaven. Then go capture audiences by singing that way.

## **What do you think of our current contest and judging system? Fair? Do we pick the right winners this way?**

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma—July, 1948. **The Pittsburghers** won the gold medals and we took second place. Naturally, we were disappointed. We boarded the train to Chicago Sunday morning still feeling the effects of the judges' decision.

We had discussed the possibility of not competing in Buffalo the following year. I joined Frank Thorne and Maurice (Molly) Reagan, bigwigs in the Contest and Judging system in the lounge car. I mentioned that we were considering not competing in Buffalo

The Hot Seat is an occasional series featuring Barbershoppers who have a unique perspective on our hobby. Send suggested question or interviewees to [harmonizer@barbershop.org](mailto:harmonizer@barbershop.org).



**Jeff Selano**

Five-time international quartet medalist, barbershop recording engineer, international contest web host

***We can't afford to encourage doo-wop, non-barbershop arrangements, screaming 100 decibel volume endings, etc. in contests!***

and they asked why. I told them that we thought we should have won the contest because overall we did a better job with all six songs, but did not get the gold. (There was no cumulative scoring at that time.) They added up the scores and had to agree that we would have otherwise won. They then said that they would incorporate cumulative scoring. We also discussed the four categories then being used and I suggested that if they separated Harmony Accuracy from Balance & Blend and created a new category it would lend strength to the singing categories. They agreed and asked me to rewrite Balance & Blend as a separate category.

That created the fifth category (20% of the scoring per category) that held sway for a long time. In 1971 the contest and judging committee decided to change the Arrangement Category to reflect a 20 points plus through zero to 20 points minus, almost eliminating the Arrangement category from influencing the final scoring. From that point on, it was all downhill. The judging system continued to deteriorate. A few years ago, it was decided that the judges could "cross over" to other categories to justify their judgement on a quartet. That led to the possibility of multiple penalties for a single infraction. A planned project was to test the use of four microphones with the admitted statement

that if any one voice was weaker than the other three, the microphone could be held closer to compensate for the deficiency!

Wow! Sound engineers to the fore—use audio meters to correct improper balance, eliminate the judges and use computers to select a winner. At the present time, the judging

system is so diluted and confusing that the judges can't even explain their position in judgment calls and don't even know where they should put their scores! We now pick the champions by gosh and by guess—and not by the easily recognizable barbershop style sound. The present scoring system has opened a can of worms in arrangement style by allowing non-barbershop songs to be sung in contests, and not giving plus points for songs using the old-fashioned barbershop style. Contemporary style arrangements can be sung—and judged as barbershop! We are supposed to select a winning quartet on the premise that they understood pure barbershop style arrangements and sang them in a barbershop style presentation. If we were to revert to the previous five-category system, the judges would be required to stick to their own category and would easily detect errors in judgement on the part of the quartets (or choruses) and then score accordingly.

**Should we have choruses with age limits or minimums?**

Too tough to call. I think that in some cases the youngsters appear to struggle with the lyrics and action. However, I'm going to join the AIC chorus this year, but I think it will be my last. I am embarrassed by requiring a chair while my buddies are bouncing around like a bunch of kids! So, if older guys want to sing and can't hack the rigors of being on risers or on stage for long periods of time, they should stay in the wings, or out in the audience.

**What is your opinion on not having time limits on our contest songs?**

Big mistake. The time restrictions forced quartets to confine themselves to singing long enough for the judges to make a firm decision and not short enough that one chorus of a song would suffice, thus not giving the judges time to make a qualified call on their performance.

**Should we hold a separate contest for "non-barbershop" material and leave the contest stage pure?**

Absolutely *not*. The whole idea of the contest is to select a quartet (or chorus) that sings barbershop songs in true barbershop style. If they want to compete with modern or contemporary stuff, let them go someplace else. That goes for arrangers and coaches too!



**The Mid States Four were popular fixtures on USO tours and chapter shows and shared the stage with many of the major entertainers and acts of the day. Lead Marty Mendro and baritone Forry Haynes created nearly all of the quartet's song arrangements. Marty (second from left) is one of the oldest living members of the Association of International Champions (AIC) and, at age 92, continues to take an active role in Society and AIC affairs.**



**If they were around at the same time, who would win: Mid States Four or Four Voices?**

That's easy. If Four Voices sang in 1949 what they used in the contest now, they would be penalized for straying from the true path!

**Do we need more or fewer KIBbers in our society?**

More! [*KIB = Keep It Barbershop - Ed.*] We have to get rid of the concept that we need to dilute the values of yesteryear in favor of trying to appease the music appreciation 101 theorists in an effort to increase membership. We're on the right track in encouraging younger men to join the Society, but we can't afford to encourage doo-wop, non-barbershop arrangements, screaming 100 decibel volume endings, etc. in contests! Quartets like **The Gas House Gang**, **Acoustix**, **Marquis**, **Platinum**, and **Power Play** won the gold by singing arrangements in pure barbershop style. We've got to keep the main objective in sight each time we judge a contest—does the number being sung reflect that standard? Until we revert to our original judging standards, we're stuck with invalid presentations. To sum up, we indeed can use a steady stream of defenders (KIBbers) to the old style or our future is too clouded to contemplate! Keep in mind that I emphasize “in contests only.” If audiences who attend “barbershop” shows can bear up with what's being presented by some quartets, let them have at it. My contention to my fellow past champions has always been: if you are being introduced on shows as a Champion Barbershop Quartet, sing some barbershop—or don't wear your medals!

**Who is your favorite quartet?**

This is difficult to answer. I've been involved with barbershopping for more than 60 years, and have developed a collection of favorite quartets. Let's consider it on a basis of decades. In the '50s, my choice is the **Confederates** (1956 champs). For the '60s, I choose the **Suntones** (1961 champs). During the '70s, there were a few quartets that could qualify, but I'll stick with the **Most Happy Fellows** (1977 champs). For the '80s, I vote for the **Chiefs of Staff** (1988 champs). In the '90s, the Society started to stray from the pure barbershop style of singing so the choice became more difficult, but I still vote for **Keepsake** (1992 champs). They did stick to the old-fashioned



**The Mid States Four are considered one of the most entertaining and flat-out funny show quartets in Society history. They combined great singing with polished madcap comedy routines in a career that spanned from 1942 to 1988.**

style of barbershop singing all the way through the contest and won hands down. This decade is easy: **Power Play** (2003 champs). Again, true barbershop style—in fact, in my book they were one of the few quartets in the contest that year that adhered to the original medium.

**Who is your favorite chorus?**

Well now, that's a little bit different. I have to go with the **Westminster Chorus**.

**If you were king for a day, what three things would you never change about our hobby?**

1) The loyalty of our hard core of true believers. 2) Our inherent desire to retain our original concept, although sometimes we do go too far off the beaten

(and tried and true) path. 3) Our sincere desire to retain members while attempting to expand our base—although it's a struggle!

**If you were king for a day, what three things would you change about our hobby?**

The judging system, the name, and the logo!

**Who is your favorite Barbershopper?**

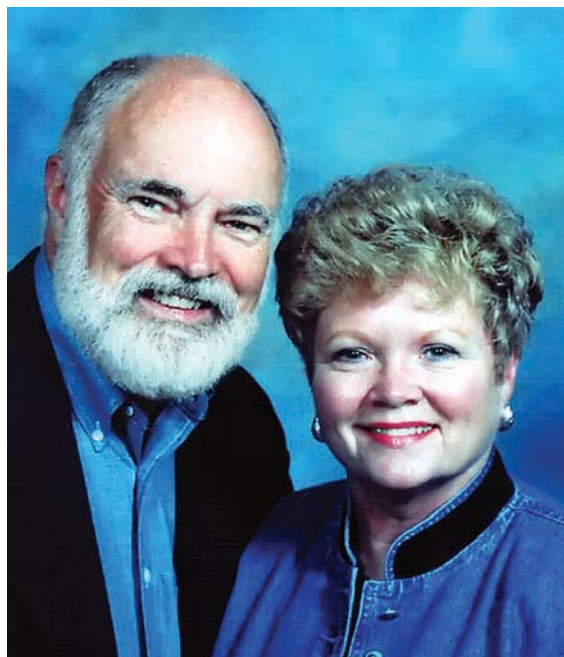
Warren “Buzz” Haeger. There is his tremendous talent as an arranger, his prodigious memory in calling up parts of songs sung by most well-known quartets, and his thoughtfulness in asking users of his arrangements to contribute the cost of writing them to the Harmony Foundation. I've known him for almost 60 years and never have heard him utter an unkind word about anybody or anything—except the ridiculous change in the Arrangements category! I'd like to add the name of Society Executive Director Ed Watson to my list of favorite Barbershoppers. He's on the right track in my book. Don't let him get away!

**What do we need to do to get more quality members?**

I think we're on the right track by encouraging music educators to participate in developing the barbershop sound in their music education classes, and by stressing our heritage as a part of that music education. We should continue to welcome college singers and youth but we need to convince them that we are strengthening our objectives by reverting to the older style of barbershopping and to emphasize the place we hold in America's musical history. ■

# More service equals more fun

Society president Drayton Justus believes more grassroots service will spur big accomplishments



It was my pleasure to meet Drayton Justus immediately after a corporate relocation to the Detroit area during (and I do mean *during*) the 1971 International Convention. A mutual friend of ours invited me to an influential community member's home reception for **Gentlemen's Agreement**, which had just won the quartet championship. Carla and I rapidly decided the moving boxes could wait and away we went. What an evening! So much singing, woodshedding, food and conversation, I couldn't wait to get back to those darn boxes. But that evening, Drayton and I struck up a great friendship that has weathered the ensuing 35 years (Drayton has changed considerably but, of course, I haven't).

Our Society has been blessed with many outstanding leaders, and in Drayton we have again elected a man of vision, caring, and charisma to lead our organization even further into our collective future. Few members have amassed such a lifetime of barber-shop history (see sidebar); for Drayton, each achievement acts like a thread woven into a life's fabric of dedication, leadership and achievement.

In preparation for this article, I asked Drayton how he could implement his vision of a lasting and prominent Society during his presidential term. His response was up to the challenge:

"By working with the Society Board to promote a lasting and compelling set of standards that will govern our being for years

to come. I subscribe to the following:

1. All programs must benefit the basic and grass roots elements of our Society—the districts, the chapter, and the members
2. All decisions must be based upon perpetuating and celebrating the barbershop harmony style
3. All programs and decisions must be based upon our published core values
4. Vigorously promote the idea that improvement is not only fun but essential in all that we do
5. Embrace and support change but, at the same time, work toward stability and simplicity."

A pretty darn sharp response!

## Slogan: Singing, Service, Fellowship & Fun

The slogan for Drayton's presidential tour of duty just about sums up all he stands for in our Society: **Singing, Service, Fellowship & Fun**. Matter of fact, his slogan overlays all that our members desire and deserve from our top-drawer Society leaders. While we each enjoy the Singing, Fellowship and Fun, far too few of us recognize the necessity of jumping into the "Service" aspect. He hopes that each Society member will ask himself these questions:

- How can I better



**Drayton is only the second Society president to have also been an international quartet champion. (The other was Frank Thorne of the 1942 champion Elastic Four.) Here he is shown with Al Rehkop (tenor), Bob Whitledge (bass) and Glenn Van Tassel (baritone) of Gentlemen's Agreement on the 25th anniversary of their 1971 win.**



**Thom Hine**  
The Big  
Chicken  
Chorus



- serve my chapter?
- How can I help achieve my chapter's membership goals?
- How can I get involved in the Chapter Coach Program?
- How can I help improve my district?
- How can I support Harmony Foundation, that it can better financially respond to Society programs?
- What can I do to attract young singers to our chapter? To our Society?

His simple answer to all is, "Get involved, make a difference!" You have only to go to your chapter president or district president to learn how. Get involved, just as Drayton did many years ago, so that he can plan on your help in preserving and growing this wonderful hobby of ours that it will prosper for the next generation of youngsters, and the next, and the next.

In keeping with the above, some of Drayton's top objectives for the Society are:

- Offer every frontline director the opportunity to attend a Chorus Director's Workshop Intensive with a repeat opportunity every two years. Every chapter should appoint an assistant director who is given the same opportunity
- Every district maintain and enhance their Standing Ovation Program and Coaches Guild
- Recognize reasonable time limitations of our Society music staff's travel, and the importance of school visits and chapter visitations
- Work with districts to alter convention scheduling in order to encourage noncompetitive choruses and quartets to attend and participate
- Revisit the issue of Society budget planning to reallocate and prevent increases in dues and fees for Society events; encourage districts to plan, reallocate and accomplish the same result
- Every chapter should strive for at least one registered quartet
- Leadership courses should be made available at COTS, district HEP schools and Harmony University
- Promote not only Chapter Coaches visits to chapters but at least one visit



**Drayton (in white) as director of the Toledo #1 chorus**



**Drayton took over Bob Franklin's lead role with The Suntones for eight years. Shown are Gene Cokeroff (tenor), Drayton Justus (lead), Bill Cain (bass), Harlan Wilson (baritone)**

I believe he's right on! The **Singing, Fellowship & Fun** will always be there as long as we each strive for results with "service." United in a common belief and direction, we can be a force of passion, determination and results.

Okay, I'm convinced. Lead on, Drayton. I just signed up! ■

a year from a district administration team member

- Make more and better leadership training available on-line
- Emphasize and provide more grant writing training to all districts

Can all this be accomplished in the foreseeable future? Again, note the "service" part of Drayton's slogan, and consider how it pertains to every member of our beloved Society. Drayton is convinced that the enormous tasks at hand require every member to energetically move into that "Service" lane. As he puts it, "If we can harness just half of our collective abilities and channel them in a few meaningful directions, there is nothing we can't accomplish." And

## Drayton Justus

- Has sung in quartets since high school; Society member for 46 years
- 1971 international champion lead with **Gentlemen's Agreement**, which performed a USO quartet tour of South Vietnam later that month
- Sang lead for the **Suntones** (1961 international champion) for eight years
- Four district quartet championships in four districts; each quartet sang on the international stage
- past chorus director, current chorus singer and quartet and chorus coach
- Multiple chapter and district posts, international board member, past member of the Society board management council and Society compensation subcommittee
- great show and contest emcee
- proud of many chapter Barber-shopper of the Year plaques
- Bachelors in music education from Duke University
- Masters in human resource management from Nova University
- Ed.D. in higher education administration from West Virginia University
- Retired human resources specialist for Owens-Illinois, Inc., The University of Toledo, Hollywood Federal Savings and Loan, Eastern Illinois University and West Virginia University
- active in civic affairs and church choirs
- married to a sweetheart Sweet Adeline, Sue Ann, a chorus director, regional quartet champ, coach and now serves SAI Region 23



# There's a new gang on the corner

Disneyland refreshes many old routines and gets some new Dapper Dans

It's part of what makes Main Street Main Street. A stroll down Walt's turn-of-the-century avenue in the heart of Disneyland just doesn't feel complete without hearing those wonderful melodies crooned in four-part harmony by gents in candy-striped suits and jaunty wide-brimmed "skimmers"—known the world over as simply the "Dapper Dans." Like the Dixieland bands in New Orleans and the rough and tumble cowboys in Frontierland, the Disneyland Dapper Dans barbershop quartet is the symbol of Main Street U.S.A. Along with the Disneyland Band, this quartet provides the musical "sound" of Walt Disney's small-town America—and like everything else at Disneyland, they are practically perfect in every way.

Just who are the Dapper Dans and where did they come from? Well, the truth is the "Dapper Dans" is a name that belongs to the Disney Company. It's been that way for just shy of 50 years. The quartet name remains the same even though the four guys who stand beneath the straw hats and sing a musical repertoire of crowd-pleasing favorites have often changed throughout the years. The current foursome pictured opposite, Frank, David, Steven and Brandon, were selected for the job only a few months back, when the Disneyland Entertainment team determined it was time to "get back to basics with the Dans" and launched an intensive program to revitalize some of the most famous of their beloved routines.

"These vaudevillian bits, the tap-dancing routines,

a lot of the original arrangements, including the numbers utilizing the Deegan Organ Chimes, began right here at Disneyland," explains Marilyn Magness, Senior Show Director at the Disneyland Resort Entertainment Division and the person assigned to head up the revitalization project. "They circled out to Walt Disney World and now we're bringing them home again. This has been like dusting off the Sistine Chapel. The original comedic spirit so identifiable with the Dapper Dans, along with their classic familiar musical repertoire—those things were always there. They just needed a little refreshing."

Happily, director Marilyn was not a newcomer to the world of barbershop. When asked to define the musical selections and interactive scripting that would become signature to the new Dapper Dans, she turned initially to her brother, Mark Magness, a life-long barbershop singer, a Society Performance judge, and baritone of popular North Dakota quartet **Fallcreek**. Mark offered his own creative suggestions and then guided Marilyn to the fellow he knew would be "perfect for the job." Roger Ross, a stellar member of the family of Walt Disney World's Dapper Dans, temporarily relocated to California for the three-week rehearsal period. According to Marilyn, Roger was inspirational in revitalizing the quartet. "Roger's knowledge of barbershop singing is astounding," says Marilyn. "He sings all four parts perfectly and is attuned to what the theme park guests love. We couldn't have done

**Marilyn Magness**  
Disneyland  
Senior Show  
Director



***“The Dapper  
Dans are part of  
this wonderful  
place called Main  
Street U.S.A.  
We’re the people  
who live there.”***

this without him.”

The 12 gentlemen pictured—three tenors, three baritones, three basses and three leads—now form the company of the Disneyland Dapper Dans. The guys were selected from more than 150 candidates who auditioned a few months ago. Responsible for thousands of shows throughout the year, these 12 fellows are cross-trained on additional vocal parts and learn multiple spots in the staged routines so they can sub for each other easily. They work as a tight, interchangeable team of multi-talented performers whose job it is to meet the challenges of entertaining multi-thousands of park guests each day, and, as Associate Director Robin Trowbridge states proudly, “make people fall in love with barbershop singing once and for all.”

“I used to come to Disneyland as a kid with my parents,” commented Frank Romeo, the bass singer in the principle quartet. “I’d follow the Dans around and sing along with them, then I’d go home and act out their routines. When I heard there was going to be an audition, it was like a dream come true. This is the most fun I’ve ever had.”

The other members of the full-time quartet, Steve Arlen, David Marchesano and Brandon Brigham, had never sung together before they were hired—although all of them came to the group with a wealth of vocal experience and a passion for part singing. Now, only two months since their hiring date, they sport a complete repertoire of fully staged musical numbers, and are constantly preparing new tunes for upcoming holidays and special events.

“It’s been a challenge” noted Brandon, the 26-year-old tenor who arrived with years of pop harmony experience but little barbershop background. “We’re trying to balance the music with the showmanship that is required out there.” Baritone Steve Arlen adds, “It’s obviously first about getting the music right and achieving that classic barbershop sound—but ultimately, it’s the guest experience that counts. The job of the Dapper Dans is really to create magical memories for our guests, and to bring Main Street to life as Walt envisioned it. Along with the sound of horse hooves, the smell of fresh popcorn, the street sweepers, the sound of trolley bells and the big bright Disneyland Band—the Dapper Dans are part of this wonderful place called Main Street U.S.A. We’re the people who live there.”

“Every day is different,” said David Marchesano, the lead of the full-time Disneyland quartet. “We have a couple of prepared shows. But we rarely sing standing still. Every show is different.” Why? “Because the guests are different. It’s just part of being a Dapper Dan—you’ve got to sing, tap dance, do hat routines and vaudeville patter while you’re constantly interacting with

the guests to make them feel special.”

But that’s not all! Associate Director Robin Trowbridge explains: “The guys sing Barberpole Cats with visiting Barbershoppers. They encourage kids to sing with them and get volunteers involved as honorary members of their quartet. They sing while riding through the park on the four-seater

bike and on the Main Street trolley. They do shows with the ragtime piano player at Coke Corner and stroll down Main Street, entertaining the thousands of people who are lining the curb waiting for the parade. They pose for hundreds of pictures and sign autographs throughout the day.” Robin laughs. “They also try to squeeze a lunch in there somewhere.”

So what is the best part about being a Dapper Dan? The fact that this is a professional job must certainly be part of it. “It’s a great job,” admits Frank. “We get paid for doing what we love to do. What Barbershopper wouldn’t love that?”

But, according to the guys it’s still not the best part. Steven sums it up. “It’s the guests. It’s all those families who suddenly stop rushing down the street and huddle around to hear an old song and see us dance and listen to some corny jokes. It’s seeing all the kids and grown-ups enjoying themselves and just relaxing and having fun listening to barbershop music. That’s when you really know Walt had a wonderful idea here. That’s when you wish your day would never end.”

• • •

No matter what each of us believes about the history and future of barbershop singing, we can all rejoice in the fact that somewhere in the world there will always be a quartet in striped jackets, tapping out a merry waltz clog, tipping their straw hats, and belting out the old songs with one goal in mind—to simply make people happy. Congratulations to the Disneyland Dapper Dans. We’re proud of you! Welcome to Main Street U.S.A. everyone—where the flag is flying, the band is playing, and there is always a reason to sing. ■



**PART OF THE DISNEYLAND EXPERIENCE for decades, the Dapper Dans have been refreshed in a 50th anniversary celebration where everything old is new again.**

# Everything's new in Albuquerque ... all we need is you!



RON BEHRMANN

This year's Midwinter Convention has all the past favorites, plus some new twists that are guaranteed to become classics. We're shaking up the schedule for this convention with the Senior Quartet competitors on stage on Friday afternoon and the Association of International Seniors Quartet Champions Show scheduled for Friday night.

The Seniors Quartet Competition promises to be very competitive once again. The contest will feature quartets composed of singers at least 55 years old with a cumulative total of at least 240 years. Experience combined with energy gives these senior quartets an appealing edge and makes for great listening. Past winners like **Antique Gold**, **Downstate Express**, **The Barons**, **Chicago Shuffle** and **Harmony** have shown how the skilled blending of voices in four-part harmony can create a Gold Medal winner.

The Big Show on Saturday night will feature the top five quartets from Indianapolis, the new collegiate champs, the new 2007 Senior Quartet champions, and the Festival Chorus winner. In between all this are workshops, seminars, speakers and classes to help you perfect your barbershop harmony vocals and performances.

The newest Barbershop Harmony Society event—the District Festival Chorus. A free wheeling event with fun as the object. Each district has been in-

vited to send a chorus to represent them at the convention, and that's where the rules end. Male, female, or mixed. Large or small. Surprise us! The judging panel will include non-barbershop music educators, and the audience gets to vote! The prize is bragging rights, the object is fun, and the winner will be all of us.

## All together in Albuquerque

Albuquerque is a wonderful place to blend our voices. As one of the most culturally diverse cities in the United States, it has blending down to an art. The city is influenced by cultures from around the world.

This has created an eclectic array of restaurants, art galleries, museums, festivals and attractions. Hispanic influences are readily apparent in place names. Learn more about Hispanic heritage at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. Native American culture also has its roots in Albuquerque. Many of the 19 Native American Pueblos, all within an hour's drive of the city, welcome visitors and much can be discovered about pueblo life at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center.

In fact, Albuquerque has a museum or cultural center for almost every interest. Unique to the city are museums focusing on subjects such as turquoise, rattlesnakes, the atomic bomb and atomic energy, the Unser family of rac-

## 2007 Midwinter Convention

January 21 to 28, Hyatt Regency Hotel, KIVA Auditorium

- A new time for the popular Senior Quartet Contest on Friday afternoon
- A new time for the AISQC Show on Friday night
- A brand new event: The District Festival Chorus Contest on Saturday



ing fame, and a whimsical collection of miniature trinkets. One of the newest offerings, with a collection you are unlikely to see anywhere else in the world, is the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum. It houses exhibits focused on a wide variety of hot-air ballooning experiences and showcases the Ballooning Hall of Fame.

Not only is the scenery spectacular in Albuquerque, but you have a variety of unusual ways to experience it. The Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway, the world's longest, gives you a bird's eye view of the towering Sandia Mountains. If you want to stay a little closer to the ground and experience the feel of true 1950s nostalgia, you can cruise down Albuquerque's well-preserved, 18-mile, historic stretch of Route 66. Or, you can soar aloft in a colorful hot-air balloon from the launch field in Balloon Fiesta Park. An aerial view also takes on a special angle from an open cockpit biplane, with flights offered by Golden Wings.

If you want to get some exercise and see Albuquerque up close, try one of the many walking tours, some self-guided and others with a docent or tour leader. Albuquerque's Plaza to Plaza walking tour follows a marked trail connecting the plazas of Downtown and Old Town, representing more than 250 years of the city's history. Tiguex Park, on the west side of Old Town, offers a place to rest after a stroll through the Albuquerque Museum Sculpture Garden. On almost any stroll around the city, you will encounter some of

Albuquerque's collection of almost 400 works of public art. The city's public art program is one of the oldest in the country.

Dining in Albuquerque is also all about blending. The melding of ingredients, spices, and cooking methods results in some of the most flavorful dishes anywhere. While Albuquerque's ethnic restaurants range from Native American to Italian to Mexican to Mediterranean to Asian to American, traditional New Mexican food is not to be missed. When you eat in a New Mexican restaurant, you will likely be asked "Red, Green or Christmas?" The server is asking you if you would like red or green chile, or a combination, on your dish. Locals tend to put chile on any dish—hot or cold—at breakfast, lunch or dinner.

The headquarters hotel for the Midwinter Convention is the Hyatt Regency in the heart of downtown and adjacent to the convention center where the KIVA Auditorium is located. The Hyatt is the only four-diamond hotel among Albuquerque's hotels. The recently renovated second floor will provide state-of-the art meeting rooms for all classes. ■



## 2007 Midwinter Convention ■ Albuquerque

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## STAY TUNED

Success! Readers report what works

# Singers on stage: 91—cigarette breaks: 0

**T**he Society's second-oldest chapter had a new smell for its 60th annual show this spring. And, it could be argued, better taste.

For the first time in its 68-year history, the Kansas City Chapter put a performing chorus on stage of all nonsmokers. On this day, it was 91 guys, ranging in age from 10 to 83. The last two hold-outs, brothers Dennis and Chris Kinghorn, had taken the pledge on New Year's Eve.

We have no idea if other chapters our size can make the same smokeless claim. Moreover, our entire 165-member chapter certainly is not composed of nonsmokers, nor is our **Heart of America Chorus** of about 100. Neither do we expect it to be. Our competition chorus currently has one dedicated smoker, a relatively new member. I'll be talking with him about the topic soon, and I expect he'll feel some peer pressure, but there is no organized "you oughta quit" effort by the musical or administrative leaders.

Despite what we know today about smoking—the Centers for Disease Control says that of the 400,000 Americans who die each year from smoking, 276,000 are men—I believe that for singers, it's just the logic of finding the effects of giving up smoking means increased lung capacity. I quit when I joined the **Rural Route 4** in 1977, and could tell a difference—and I only smoked two packs a week. Heavy smokers who've quit say they find more quality in their voice, as the weight lifts from their vocal folds.

But I suggest the biggest benefit is the chorus environment: think about being on the risers less than a foot from someone who just returned from the break and is spewing new nicotine breath in all directions. And most smokers don't realize the smell permeates their clothing.

Heart of America reformed smoker Ron McIntire finds the benefits almost endless: "Gone now is the shortness of breath, the burned holes in suits, shirts, divans, chairs and car seats. Gone are the stinky closets and a stale morning house. Gone is the morning cough and gone is the need to spend \$800 a year for cigarettes (Missouri prices)."

Yes, I know how hard it is to quit; my dad, one of the Society's great Barbershoppers, quit many times until smoking killed him, long before his time. And cigarettes killed my youngest brother. So when I wonder aloud how any intelligent soul—especially a singer—can still smoke in this day when we know so much about the results, people say, "You're really serious about this." Yes, I am. And I'm proud to say that the Heart of America is, too.

—Jim Bagby, Heart of America Chorus director



Standing in front of the Heart of America Chorus are Dennis Kinghorn (left), who made giving up smoking his New Year's resolution for 2006, and Dan Henry Bowser, who quit just over a year ago after smoking for 60 years. He started in the Navy and gripes to his senior quartet, Tone-Henge, "I'm still not ready to quit!"

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## Their stage makeup was all for naught



It's a tale of hardship like your grandfather used to tell, one that the members of **RING!** quartet can hang over the heads of younger Barbershoppers to make them feel grateful for what they have: "Why, back in ought five, our quartet didn't have stagelights or microphones. Even though we were the headliners, we had to perform open air in a dark auditorium while the chapter shined flashlights from the seats! And we were so poor, we had to whittle our own pitch pipes ..."

Okay, the part about the pitch pipes isn't true, but the rest of it is. When **RING!** headlined the **Kennebec Valley Chordsmen** annual show in Waterville, Maine last fall, all the lights in the building went out, leaving the school dark even with emergency lighting. However, the show did go on. Acting quickly, stage manager Ann Quirion, assisted by many Kennebec Valley Chapter members, rounded up portable lighting. Shortly thereafter, the second half of the show started with chapter members holding flashlights while sitting in the front row! The rest of the show continued that way, and the audience seemed none so happy to hear unamplified overtones. **RING!** quartet is Bill Wright (tenor), Phil Carter (lead), Dick Naas (bari) and Mike Maino (bass).



## Yet another reason quartets should always wear tuxes 24/7, just in case

The **Smooth Transition** quartet went into the Fairfield, Ohio Applebees to enjoy a few cold ones and savor their standing ovation performance with the Ohio Met Symphony Orchestra earlier that evening. In walked a stunning brunette wearing a tiara and accompanied by a small entourage. Word circulated quickly that this was Miss Hamilton, Nicole Masters, who earlier that evening won the opportunity to represent the nearby city in the Ohio Beauty Pageant. As any good Barbershoppers would, they recognized the pressing need to flatter a pretty young woman with song in a setting that posed no danger of "imposing our music on unsympathetic ears." After they quickly parodied words to the "Happy Birthday" song, the waitresses told everyone to listen as they walked over to her table to sing, "Congratulations to you ... Miss Hamilton." They then tacked on a modified version of one of the quartet's specialty verses: "If a contest you held / and asked us to choose / the most beautiful girl here / you couldn't possibly lose." Their second huge ovation of the evening followed.

**CO-BRANDED PROMOTION.** Here's what persistence got Joe Houser and the Minneapolis Commodores—a two-page spread near the front of the Spring 2006 AmeriPride catalog. The chorus has been buying casual and performance clothing from this Minneapolis-based manufacturer for decades. Joe, who had worked for AmeriPride for two years during the 1970s, maintained contact with the company and for years had petitioned them to include the Commodores in the catalog. He and the chorus finally got their wish with this spread, which was shot at a live performance. The spread includes the Society name and phone number.



# First-ever quartet gig is doubly alarming

We dare you to show us a first-ever quartet gig where more things went wrong ... or at least, when more things *out of your control* went wrong. When 2005 Johnny Appleseed District Seniors Quartet Champs **Riverblend** accepted their first-ever singing gig at the Rising Sun Yacht Club's annual Christmas Party, it was also John Byerly's first-ever bona fide quartet gig. They had no idea they were stepping into a situation that would require resilience, adaptability, and a good sense of humor.

Challenge #1: Upon arriving to a welcoming crowd of noisy boaters, they learned that their place in the program had been moved up by 15 minutes. OK ... resilience, adaptability, and a good sense of humor. They could sing with a minimal warm-up, except ...

Challenge #2: The sound system was designed for pop singers—hypercardioid directional microphones with a range of about two inches—useless to a barbershop quartet. Okay ... resilience, adaptability, and a good sense of humor. They would sing unamplified. Except...

Challenge #3: As they took the stage, they realized they were ten feet from a thin wall that separated them from a loud rock and roll band in the adjacent ballroom. Okay ... resilience, adaptability, and a good sense of humor. They abandoned their volume plan, and belted out an eight-song performance to an appreciative audience. Except...

Challenge #4: In the middle of "Shenandoah" fire alarms wailed and lights flashed. Okay ... resilience,



**Riverblend is John Byerly (baritone), Chuck Watson (lead), Dutch Speidel (bass), Don Gray (tenor), all of Cincinnati's Southern Gateway Chorus.**

[www.harmonize.com/riverblend](http://www.harmonize.com/riverblend)

adaptability, and a good sense of humor. The building was evacuated and the party resumed in about 20 minutes. The quartet picked up where they had left off, and so did the neighboring band. They completed the performance to a standing ovation, and now it was time to get paid with dinner. Except...

Challenge #5: They had filled their plates and sat down to eat when a second fire alarm wailed, and the building was evacuated again. Okay ... resilience, adaptability—oh, you know the drill. Twenty minutes later the guys returned to their table, finished their ice-cold dinners, and said their good-byes. Veteran tenor Don Gray assured John, "Not all gigs go like this!"

—Don Gray

## Hazards of contest judging #56: the now-proven possibility of amputation

You'll probably never look at a folding chair the same way again after you read Doug Miller's story. If the Society gave out Purple Hearts, Doug would win



**Doug Miller**

one for his unfortunate injury suffered in the line of duty. The silver lining was a typical demonstration of the caring and diverse skills present at any barbershop gathering. In March, Doug was a Presentation judge at the Dixie District chorus contest and quartet preliminaries, where he joined other judges backstage for a lunch break between chorus sessions. He scooted his metal folding chair forward to the table and sat down, only to

feel an excruciating pain in the pinkie finger of his right hand. It had been caught between the seat and the seat support and, not at an angle where he could stand back up, Doug fell to the floor with his finger still caught in the chair.

The other judges feared he had fainted or worse, but as Doug extricated himself from the chair, he saw that the tip of his finger had been severed beginning at the top of his fingernail. He ran to the judges room to submerge it in a glass of ice while Barbershopper and physician Tom Prince was summoned to stem the bleeding. Jayson Ryner and John Oxendine found the fingertip and put it into a glass of ice which accompanied Doug to the hospital. A hand surgeon reattached the fingertip but

was not very optimistic that it would take. By evening, Doug was back in the judging pit for the quartet finals, but don't tell Doug that his quick return was heroic. As far as he's concerned, the person who made a sacrifice was John Oxendine, an emergency medical technician who stayed with Doug in the hospital all afternoon even though his **Collector's Edition** quartet was competing that evening.

The reattachment did not take, and Doug later had his finger amputated to the first knuckle. "It hasn't hurt my singing, coaching, judging or fishing," Doug says, putting the injury in perspective. "I do have trouble playing an octave on the piano and reaching "p" and other keys around it on my computer keyboard, but life will go on."



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CHORUS DIRECTOR WANTED. Orlando, Fla. Chapter is in a search for a chorus director for the **Orange Blossom Chorus**. If you should know or hear of someone that may be interested, please refer them to Chapter President Guy Germain at 407-365-7062 or [MyDol1973@aol.com](mailto:MyDol1973@aol.com)

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## WANTED

### Chorus Director

The Barbershop Harmony Society, Arlington Chapter, is seeking a new director for our chorus. The **Goodtimes Chorus** is an all-male chorus and has a high visibility in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex. We are entertainment driven and serve the community often, participating in planned events such as: Martin Luther King Day, Fourth of July, Veterans Day and Christmas. We also perform singing Valentines, produce and perform an Annual Spring Show, and participate twice yearly in contests. We meet every Tuesday night in downtown Arlington. This is a part-time position with compensation. All interested parties should contact John Sellers: [johnsingsbass@aol.com](mailto:johnsingsbass@aol.com), or 817-572-3407.

# V 60<sup>th</sup> Annual LAS VEGAS Convention & Competition



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To register, call 800.992.7464 or visit [www.sweetadelineintl.org](http://www.sweetadelineintl.org).



## THE TAG

Joe Liles, Tagmaster!!



# The winning tag from a field of beauties

**A**fter almost any barbershop competition these days, one hears, "Wow! What a contest!" Well, that's what we're hearing after the recent "battle of the tags." There were 62 tags entered in the Society's 2006 tag contest. The judges delightedly sang through every one of them with no knowledge of who wrote what. A lot of the entries were so gratifying that they were sung several times. Each tag was assigned a number by a single (really, she's married) individual and only she had the code.

And the winner is ... Nathan Gutschke! Nathan directs the **Singing Plainsmen Chorus** of Lubbock, Texas.

Nathan, wife Dawn and son Jonathan live in Shallowater, Texas (near Lubbock) where Nathan is a fire fighter and a former band director for schools in the Lubbock area. Nathan said this about the tag:



"This tag was born of the lyric initially. My only goal in creating the lyric was to introduce the performers (and listeners) only to the end of the story, generating interest in what the rest of the story was. With only five years of experience with barbershop harmony under my belt, I tried to be as true as possible (with the knowledge I have) to the style and construction of barbershop harmony, while creating a melody that only enhanced the lyric further. So what is the rest of the song about? Sorry, hasn't been written yet!"

Well ... as they say in Texas ... Nathan, ya done good!

The next issue of *The Harmonizer* will have the second and third place winners. Honorable mentions will follow in subsequent issues. So many tags, so little time! ■

## THIS TABLE SET FOR TWO

Words and Music by NATHAN GUTSCHKE

Arrangement by NATHAN GUTSCHKE

**Tag**

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

As I gaze out the win - dow at the

moon - glow shin - ing through; how lone - ly is this

ta - ble, set for two. with - out you.

with - out you.

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# BUCKEYE INVITATIONAL

## AUGUST 17-20. 2006 - COLUMBUS, OHIO

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- Saturday Stars of the Night
- Saturday Afterglow

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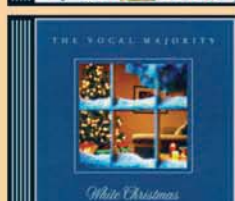
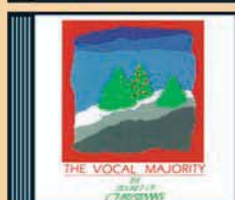
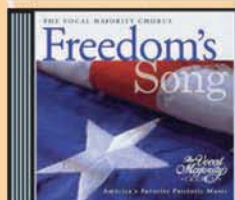
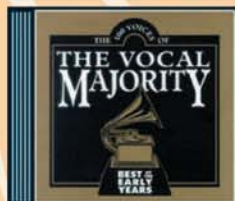
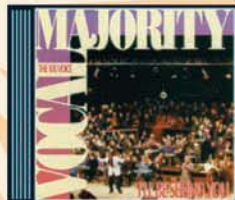
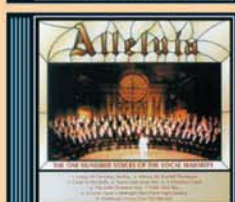
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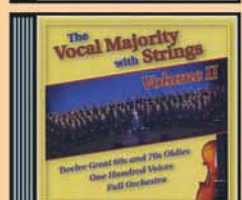
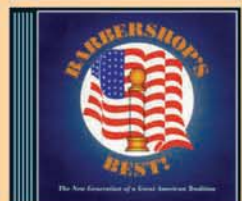
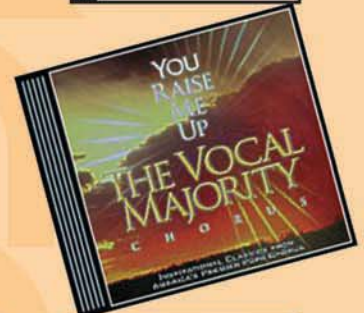
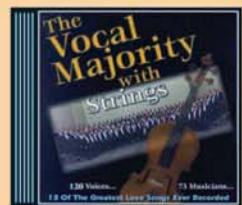
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