

INSIDE: How to "Make 'em Laugh" • 2009 District champion portraits • Success with Groupanizer

January/February 2010

THE HARMONIZER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

Big Thinking



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Learn how Cape Breton, Nova Scotia's attitude adjustment changed everything



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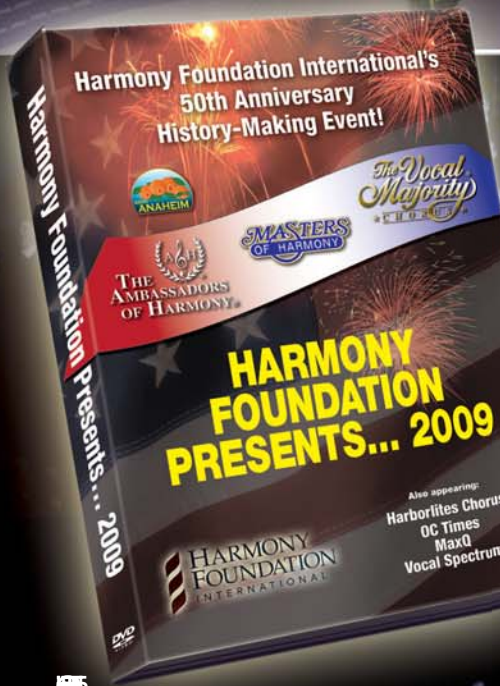
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was none other than Anaheim's own Harborlites Chorus (SAI Champions).

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THE HARMONIZER

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The Cape Breton, N.S. Chapter, circa 1972, when the chapter chartered at its historic peak of about 60 members. They dropped to 12 members by late 2008, but Cape Breton Island is rediscovering barbershop harmony, thanks to a new spirit of optimism that tripled the size of the chapter in about a year.



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This online tool suite makes management and communication quicker and more powerful—and Society chapters get it for 20% less.
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Cape Breton Chordsmen
(minus several snowbirds)
Photo by David MacVicar

Good news!

This is a “good news” column, and there’s a lot of good news to tell. I am just back from the Midwinter Convention in Tampa. You’ll hear much more about how wonderful this convention was from others later. For now, I just want to tell you that it was an inspiring, life-changing event.

This record-breaking convention highlighted everything that’s great about this hobby. The storied past, the exciting future, and the vibrant present of barbershop melded together in one exuberant celebration of who we are and what we do. The senior quartets just keep getting better. Young people “get” this music—witness the 325 kids singing and performing their hearts out on the stage on Saturday. And, best of all, there were hundreds of informal groups singing all over downtown all weekend. Old folks, middle-aged folks, and young people were singing barbershop together. Everywhere. Folks, it’s working. We’re winning this war. Our future is bright. And that’s good news.



We have two great target markets we can reach right away: Baby Boomers and kids.

Over the next few years, 37 million male Baby Boomers will retire. They’ll have the time and the money to join our Society, and they’ll have the skills and experience to be leaders of our chapters, our districts and our Society. That’s good news.

Kids *love* our music! We introduced more than 20,000 young people to the joys of barbershopping in 2009, and part of the fruits of that labor was abundantly apparent on the stage in Tampa that Saturday. What if we were to introduce this wonderful music and its ability to change lives to twice that number next year? Ten times that number in five years? Can you imagine what that would mean for the future of our hobby?

We have the answers

The really good news is that we know how to do everything that’s necessary to capture these fertile markets. We know how to strengthen our existing chapters, how to start new ones, how to reach more men with our music, and how to infect more young people with the barbershop virus. Can you imagine the good news that would be for the future of our hobby?

We’re doing it now. We need to do more. Much more. As our membership has declined, so have

our revenues. Reduced revenues have forced us to reduce staff and cut programs. We simply don’t have the money we need to Keep the Whole World Singing.

Yet.

By now, you know how you can help, how you can guarantee that your grandchildren’s grandchildren will have the chance to have their lives enriched by this hobby as ours have been. You know that you can help by supporting Harmony Foundation and, for our Canadian friends, Sing Canada Harmony.

“I’m talking to you!”

I heard a story a few years back about a time when Greg Lyne, then director of the **Masters of Harmony**, invited Jim Clancy, director of **The Vocal Majority**, to work with the Masters on their contest set. The story goes that, after the Masters sang the set through once, Greg looked to Jim, and Jim said in his inimitable Texas way, “Well, that was really good!” Said Greg (this is my story now and I’m telling it *my* way!), “Okay, what can we do to make it better?” To which Jim replied, “Let’s start with this: When the guy down front says something to the chorus—corrects something or suggests a better way of doing something—he’s not talking to the guy behind you on the risers. Or the guy on your left or right. Or the guy on the row in front of you. He’s talking to *you*!”



How does this story relate to all what we’ve been talking about? When someone suggests that you donate to Harmony Foundation or Sing Canada Harmony to guarantee the future of barbershop on this planet, he’s talking to you. Not to your friend, that other guy, or the guy you know who has a lot more money than you do and ought to be contributing. He’s talking to you.

There are programs to fit everyone’s capacity. Go to www.barbershop.org and click on the appropriate Harmony Foundation or Sing Canada Harmony logo at the bottom of the page. And guess what?

I’m talking to you!

Bill

bbiffle@barbershop.org



A few random thoughts on everything

Due credit. First things first: It was not me who coined this year's motto, "Chapters Helping Chapters," but Bill Vermue, the new president of the Ontario District. I was unable to confirm the motto's originator before my last column was due, but now that I'm sure, let's give proper credit where it is due. It is a great slogan, a great idea, and a principle we should always follow.

Nashville's vast resources ... Speaking of presidents, past Society president Rob Hopkins is "Dr. Hopkins" outside the barbershop world, a music professor who recently spent a week of his sabbatical with us in Nashville. He's writing an historical article on barbershop harmony for an academic publication, and he knew Harmony Hall has at least one of every copy of *The Harmonizer* ever published, and a few *Re-Chordings* as well. (*Re-Chordings* ran from November, 1941 until it became *The Harmonizer* in 1943.) We also have at Harmony Hall at least 250,000 songs in the Old Songs Library, and thousands of recordings of conventions, classes, competitions, and more. It amazes me that more members do not take advantage of the vast storehouse of knowledge available to them here in Nashville. We don't bite, and we don't charge members who want to come and look this over.



There was a sense of devotion to something greater than themselves among the Society's pioneers.

... coming online. That said, we're working to bring Nashville's resources closer to you. We're in the very early stages of figuring out how to scan and place all our past *Harmonizers* online. It's a big project, but we already have some volunteers lined up to help. You may also note that the most recent *Harmonizers* are now online. We post a shorter "teaser" version on the front page, but only Society members and Associates can read the full version located in the "Members Only" area at www.barbershop.org. We are not contemplating ending the print edition. If you prefer to read online, leave your printed copy with a friend, with a guest to your chapter meetings, or in a doctor's office or

barbershop, stapled to your chapter's business card.

Great times in Tampa! We just wrapped up our highest-attended Midwinter convention ever, while sharing the city with nearly a half-million Gasparilla Pirate Festival partiers. We heard wonderful renditions of such classics as "Hello, My Baby," "Where the Southern Roses Grow," "Last Night Was the End of the World," "Bright Was the Night," "It's Only a Paper Moon," "Back in Dad and Mother's Day," "Wait 'Til the Sun Shines, Nellie," and "Coney Island Baby/We All Fall Medley"—all from enthusiastic *Youth Chorus Festival* competitors. They probably embraced a more traditional repertoire than the Seniors! Still concerned

about continued preservation of barbershop harmony?

Remember the reservists. By now, you'll have finished your 2010 Singing Valentines. I recently received an e-mail from Gene Hannan of the **Norfolk, Va. Chapter**, where the **Commodore Chorus** does a brisk business (at a discount, of course) delivering Singing Valentines to the loved ones of deployed service members from the many nearby military installations. (See the page 10 article in the Sept./Oct 2009 *Harmonizer*.) What a great service! Gene suggests chapters also consider the families of military reservists deployed from installations located throughout the continent. Let the nearest military Morale, Welfare and Recreation committee know you're willing to cheer up the lonely families (for cost, of course) and watch what happens. It's a very natural fit, and you'll feel even better if you do. The radio/TV/newspaper coverage that it generates won't hurt, either.

Big numbers for Philly. Registrations for Philly are way up over last year, and I expect the trend to continue. We have instituted member pricing, family pricing, and overall lower pricing for the registrations this year. "Forget your troubles, come on get happy!" I defy you to worry about money, politics, or anything that's on your mind while you're ringing the life out of a barbershop tag. We'll have a far more laid-back schedule in Philly, and everything will be in one spot—not just our *convening*, but an entire family vacation all in walking distance in the U.S. cradle of democracy.

Wisdom from the past. I have asked the magazine's editorial board to begin reprinting past gems from early *Harmonizers*—the feelings, outlooks, attitudes, and general sense of humor of our early leaders. I have been slowly assimilating articles and columns from the 1940s, looking through the eyes of Owen C. Cash, Carroll Adams, Phil Embury, Frank H. Thorne, and many more. You can't help but get a sense of devotion to something greater than themselves coming from men who had just suffered a major economic depression and were fighting WWII at the same time. That is one of my selfish reasons for reprinting these pearls from the past. The attitude of these Society pioneers was "What can I do to help her grow?" and "How much sacrifice is required?" There will be much to learn from the Society's earliest stalwarts.

To all Barbershop Harmony Society members, how am I doing?

ewatson@barbershop.org

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Peery

Inspiration from GNU, convention recap

Hilltop, Minn. Chapter inspires

For 40 years, I've been waiting for an insightful and concise presentations of how our chapters can "turn this society around." There it is, the **Great Northern Union** article in the Nov./Dec. issue. If all our chapters, from proficient to truly amateur, could think this through and ensure that people "in front" in the chapter and on the board had this fortitude to think, plan, and implement, our membership problem would be solved. Whether contest or nursing home-oriented, a chapter can sing well, entertain, thrill, and attract members—but it takes planning. Mucho kudos to GNU and for the great presentation.

LANCE HEILMANN
El Dorado, Kan.

I cannot begin to express my personal gratitude for your article about our chorus. Every nuance of your expose is an accurate depiction of our way of thinking. I hope this article will provide other chapters with some new thoughts to improve/change their way of doing "business."

ROGER STANFIELD
Savage, Minn.

Your feature on GNU is a model of economy and clarity, and of a pretty complicated story. At first (being a GNUer) I was slightly put off by the emphasis on the how-to; of course, I wanted to see a lot of purple prose about how great we are. But that was not your intention, and rightfully so. Our story is an excellent example of what it really takes to change the game—what you have to do to be able to progress.

I hope that your excellent piece will help other chapters grow their skills, and thereby, the overall vitality of our "hobby." I also hope it will help eliminate our "best kept secret" problem. There was almost *no* buzz about us at Anaheim, and the hall was half empty when we performed. Maybe people will take us a little more seriously now. You can be sure of one thing: We are very serious about the fun we have on stage! Onward and upward ...

JARED HOKE
Marine on St. Croix, Minn.

Floyd McDaniel goes extra mile

Quoting the page 6 item regarding "American Harmony" promotional efforts in Detroit: "Proof that with a little sweat and tears and going the extra mile, some extra marketing can make a huge impact." The "extra mile, sweat and tears" were executed by *one* man: Floyd McDaniel of Macomb

County, Mich. secured the venue, marketing and interviews, booked the quartets *and* hosted the Toronto quartet Nitro in his own home. That's going the extra mile! The chapters followed his lead. Please give credit where credit is due.

Also note: The quartets at a "Family Sunday" event sponsored by Target performed for approximately 5,000 *art lovers*, not shoppers, as reported.

CARL DAHLKE, BASS, AUTOTOWNERS (1966 CHAMP)
NORMAN THOMPSON, BASS, VAGABONDS (1976 SILVER)
DENNIS GORE, LEAD, VAGABONDS (1976 SILVER)

Not yet in the celestial choir

Terry Dunkle, listed in last issue's Chapter Eternal, recently contacted us with a quote from Mark Twain: "The report of my death is an exaggeration." For Terry's sake, we're happy to have been mistaken!

Praise and corrections for convention recap

I'm sure I'm not the first to tell you this, but in the Anaheim Conventino recap (Sept/Oct issue) **Atlanta Vocal Project** sang "If Ever I Would Leave You" ... from Camelot, not South Pacific. Different show, different composers. Ah, well, you always get speared for your mistakes. The Sept./Oct. issue of the magazine is A No. 1. (Except for that one little ... thing.)

CHUCK PETTIS (ON BEHALF OF APPROX. 1,458 OTHER READERS WHO BROUGHT THIS ERROR TO OUR ATTENTION)
Roswell, Ga.

The convention recap of the Anaheim convention was absolutely outstanding—and I was one of the lucky ones to witness the wild and wonderful con-



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LETTERS

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tests. After **The Vocal Majority's** flawless performance, I knew no chorus could top that one ... again. Then, when the **Ambassadors of Harmony** hit their final chord, I muttered to myself, "the impossible happened." The photo spread and commentary brought back great memories.

TOM TOFFEY
Winfield, Ill.

Thank you so much for including me in your Sept./Oct. edition. If I'd known you were going to print my entire speech, I would have talked longer.

CARL HANCUFF
Edmond, Okla.

I was delighted to find a picture of my son, Thomas (with the long hair and dazzling smile), on page 18 of the Sept./Oct. *Harmonizer*. The caption says, "A Tuesday Class," but the packed room pictured was the Monday night meeting of the **Orange Quartet Chapter** at the Hilton. Not one competing quartet sang, but more than 100 singers practiced either as random or "named" quartets. A parade of 39 quartets in two hours is how our chapter operates every week. *Everyone* gets to sing in a quartet, and we have a ball!

DAVE LOWERRE
Fullerton, Calif.

With the post-Anaheim retirement of Jay Giallombardo, our published contact info should have been: Paul Harris, info@vocequartet.com, 608-438-3299. We welcome Dave Kindinger (**Jokers Wild**) as our new bass!

PAUL HARRIS
Lead, VOCE Quartet

Preserve the 7th Chord

As a 20-year, second-generation barbershopper in my late 30s, I don't consider myself a "KIBber," but I believe that changing or eliminating the 7th's rule would hurt our competitions. Remember, most choruses compete no more than 20 minutes a year, and the best quartets no more than 60. Compare this to the amount

of time we spend doing shows, sing-outs, etc. I'm all for having '70s, '80s and '90s songs incorporated into barbershop, just not necessarily in con-

tests. Sing whatever songs your group wants to and sing them with great pride and strength, but keep our contest sessions to what we are ... *barbershop!*

ROB SNOULTEN
Aurora, Ont.



From the mission and vision statements in *The Harmonizer*, it appears both the 7th

and barbershop are irrelevant to the direction the Society is heading. Just so long as we're singing something and growing to be the biggest male singing organization, we'll be a success. So much for the P, E and B in SPEBSQSA.

GIL BURROUGHS
Edenton, N.C.

The recommended modification discussed in the July/August Harmonizer was approved. The modified Music Category description will be in use beginning the Spring 2010 contest cycle.

Preserving the old songs

A notion in past letters is that we've got to sing songs of recent vintage to attract members and youth and thus salvage our diminishing numbers. Well, I have always felt we had some responsibility in the realm of history. Barbershop was born under the influence of gentlemen who were not just interested in singing, but in "preserving old songs," songs that are timeless in their lyrics, melodies and messages. "The Old Songs" is our opener each week. It describes a mission of preserving those songs that show posterity just what sentiments and topics were sung about, what styles of music existed in times past. We need to keep barbershop attached to the strings of history and give these songs the praise they deserve. Let's sing some new songs, some varied arrangements, but keep in our mission the responsibility to teach some history with our music. ■

RON BOOTHE
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho



Resisting-A-Rest, 52eighty win in Tampa

Some would say an international gold was a long time coming for some of the acclaimed senior barbershoppers of **Resisting-A-Rest**. They managed to snag the gold at the Mid-winter convention this year competing against 26 other senior quartets from the U.S., Canada, Australia and England.

The four started singing together in 2006. But add up the accomplishments of the individual members of the quartet and together you get 17 Pioneer District championships (including their 2009 championship, see page 17), 28 international quartet appearances (including two silver medals) and more than 100 years of barbershop singing.

Their set of "The Sunshine of Your Smile" and "Heart of My Heart Medley" set the

tone for a strong contingency of competitors. Lead Tom Connor stole the hearts of the audience with his strong, soaring posts, sung with apparent ease and

grace. Scoring an average of 73.0 in their prelims, the new champs improved to an average of 74.2



MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY

(890) in a contest that saw 18 of the 27 quartets score 800 or higher, and only 60 points separating the top 12 foursomes.

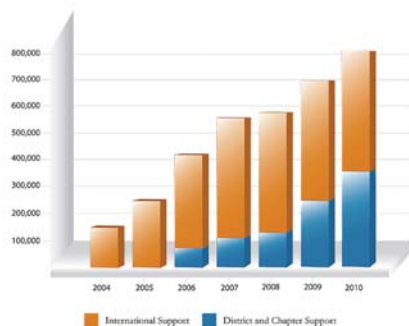
Joining Tom in the quartet are Bruce LaMarte (T), Steve Warnaar (Br), and Phil Haines (Bs).

Youth Chorus Contest winners. A win came much more quickly for these guys! Forming in late 2008, with most members also belonging to **Sound of the Rockies**, Denver's **52eighty** took home the Youth Chorus trophy after competing against 10 other choruses and approximately 300 students participating from the United States and Canada. They place second last year in their first contest. Directors are Chris Vaughn, lead of 2004 international champ **Gotcha!** and Matt Swann, bari of 2003 collegiate quartet champion **HEAT**. www.52eightychorus.com.



LORIN MAY

At Midwinter in Tampa, Society President Bill Biffle and CEO Ed Watson showed off checks presented by Harmony Foundation CEO Clarke Caldwell, representing funds given to the Society in 2009 thanks to Harmony Foundation's generous donors. The \$450,000 for 2009 is part of the \$2.5 million total projected to be given to the Society between 2004-2010. Funds have covered the Society's youth program in its entirety and boosted the musical level in hundreds of Society chapters via Director's College scholarships. The \$178,000 for 2009 is part of a projected \$790,000 to be given to Society chapters and dis-



LORIN MAY

tricts between 2006-2010, thanks to the Foundation's Donor's Choice program. Donors can earmark up to 30% of their donation to be given to a chosen district or chapter.



Ontario's Hamilton Harbourtown Sound welcomed the Olympic Torch to their hometown on Dec. 19 for an audience of 6,000. See their performance at www.harbourtownsound.ca.

Welcome new Society board member



Rick Ashby of Lititz, Penn. started a three-year term in 2010, the only new board member after the 2009 board voted to reduce from 12 members to 10 beginning this year. The second-generation barbershopper, director, coach, past chapter president and Mid-Atlantic District board member is a long-time member of the **Brothers in Harmony** of Lancaster, Penn. Rick earned a law degree from Ohio State University and recently retired as a senior bank executive. He has served in leadership capacities in The Fulton Opera House, Boy Scouts, United Way, Chamber of Commerce, Hospital, Community College and numerous community organizations. Rick and his wife of 42 years, Claire, have three children and one granddaughter.

Now's the time to go online for Harmony U

Harmony University prices go up March 15, so hurry! Go to www.barbershop.org/harmonyu for scholarship information, class selection forms, courses, eXtreme quartetting and much more! Or e-mail harmonyU@barbershop.org.



Scholarship deadlines approaching.

Dozens of full tuition and board scholarship available. Read the rules and guidelines for each at <http://tinyurl.com/HU scholar>.

- **Director's College.** For front-line directors, assistant directors or aspiring directors.
- **Bring your baritone free.** Four for the price of three for the quartet track. Limited openings.
- **Earl Moon.** For first-time barbershopper attendees who might not otherwise be able to attend.
- **Larry Ajer.** For a successful, active, competing quartet wanting to reach the next level.
- **Lou Perry.** Goes to the creator of the best original arrangement. Young arranging talent especially welcome to apply.

Society briefs

Show fees due. If your Chapter performed any show in 2009 that was not exempt under the copyright law (see section 7.1 of the Chapter Secretary Manual; page 30), the Chapter must pay the minimum ASCAP fee of \$215, made payable to: Attention Accounting Department; Barbershop Harmony Society; 110 7th Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37203. If your chapter has had gross ticket sales of more than \$44,000 for 2009, contact library@barbershop.org for more information.

Spring conventions

CAR	Ft. Wayne, IN	April 9-11
CSD	Sioux City, IA	April 23-25
DIX	Greeneville, SC	March 12-14
EVG	Abbotsford, BC	April 9-11
FWD	Reno, NV	March 19-21
ILL	Peoria, IL	April 16-18
JAD	Cleveland, OH	April 9-11
LOL	Mankato, MN	April 30-May 2
MAD	Harrisburg, PA	March 12-14
NED	Danbury, CT	March 19-21
ONT	Collingwood, ON	April 16-18
PIO	Kalamazoo, MI	April 23-25
RMD	Rapid City, SD	April 23-25
SLD	Palmyra, NY	April 9-11
SUN	Jacksonville, FL	April 9-11
SWD	Midwest City, OK	March 26-28

Baseball great barbershopper passes away.

Sports Illustrated noted that Yankees great Tommy Henrich, who died in December at age 96, was a member of SPEBSQSA—and that barbershop was consistent with his reputation as a consummate gentleman and teammate during his career (1937-1950). Read the obituary for the five-time All-Star and six-time World Series Champion at <http://tinyurl.com/bbshopsi>.

BQPA Festival approaching fast. Be in Tempe, Ariz. April 7-10 for the Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association (BQPA) Quartet Festival. Wall-to-wall quartetting, an impromptu quartet contest, golf, singing and laughs in an afterglow atmosphere. A parade of organized quartets performs Saturday night. For more information on hotel reservations and registration, go to at www.BQPA.com.



CONVENTIONS 2010

PHILADELPHIA
June 27-July 4

2011

KANSAS CITY
July 3-10

2012

PORTLAND, ORE.
July 1-8

2013

TORONTO
June 30-July 7

2014

TBD

2015

PITTSBURGH
June 28-July 5

2016

NASHVILLE
July 3-10

2017

MINNEAPOLIS
July 2-8

MIDWINTER
www.barbershop.org/midwinter

2011

LAS VEGAS
Jan. 25-30

2012

TUCSON
Jan. 17-22

HARMONY
UNIVERSITY 2010
St. Joseph, Mo.
August 1-8, 2010

Content by YouBarbershop: Sample some of the latest Society gossip

Major CD releases coming. Bring your checkbook to Philly, as our 2008 champs **OC Times** are excited about their second all-new collection of 14-15 tracks, due for a July release. See more at www.octimesquartet.com. Other quartets currently putting time in the studio and aiming for a release by Philly include **Max Q**, **Old School**, **Ringmasters** and **Crossroads**.

If you are a Facebook friend of "People who have a Tim Waurick Tracks addiction," you will be happy to know that the **Vocal Spectrum** tenor and maker of incredible high quality learning tracks will be releasing a *solo* CD in time for Philly. "The album will be, at its core, a multi-track album from me," Tim said. "Some of the songs will contain more than four parts, but there will be some barbershop on there." YouBarbershop will be first in line to purchase tickets whenever Waurick decides to take his show live on the road.

rect the **Spirit of Phoenix** chorus. This will be Steinkamp's second stint as director of the chorus formally known as **The Phoenicians**. Steinkamp directed the chorus to several International medals back in the early '90s and hopes to revive the chorus and bring them back to its once prominent place among the elite chapters in our Society.

A new tradition begins with the **Northbrook, Ill. Chapter** as they introduce Bryan Harden as the new director. With more than 25 years experience in the music industry, Harden replaces founding father Jay Giallombardo, who retired this

Favorite things: YouBarbershop gets the low-down from four champs

Gold Medalist	Favorite barbershop artist on your iPod?	Best barbershop tag?	Most attractive Sweet Adeline?	Worst food to digest before singing?	What makes for a sexier tag: Tender or powerful?	Reincarnation? Which barbershopper would you like to come back as?
Tom Metzger Bass of <i>Realtime</i>	Tim Waurick (i.e. Tim's Tracks)	"Silvery Moonlight"	I don't understand the question.	Powerade: <i>Aspartame wrecks my voice like inhaling sandpaper.</i>	Tender: <i>A caress is much sexier than a punch in the nose.</i>	Bob Hartley: <i>He is considered a genius in Canada.</i>
Patrick Claypool Baritone of <i>O.C. Times</i>	The Boston Common	"This Is The Moment" by <i>Acoustix</i>	 Tim Waurick	Triple-stack cheeseburger from Wendy's.	Powerfully tender: <i>Women love that I'll explain later... (weak)</i>	Jeff Baker: <i>Nobody writes music better than Jeff.</i>
Mike Slamka Lead of <i>Crossroads and Power Play</i>	Bluegrass Student Union	"Cobblestone Road" by <i>The Vagabonds</i>	The one that The Ritz did. Man, that was hot!	Sushi! <i>Barely made it to the restroom after our set.</i>	It depends on who is singing it.	Bob Franklin: <i>The greatest lead of all time.</i>
Rob Menaker Tenor of <i>Nightlife</i>	Gas House Gang	"How Deep Is The Ocean?" by <i>Keepsake</i>	Vocal Spectrum: <i>They sing like girls.</i>	Claim Jumper's Porterhouse Steak (21oz)	Tender: <i>That's the way Metzger likes</i>	Buzz Haeger: <i>I want to fly my quartet around while wearing plaid pants.</i>

Society quartet shake-ups are inevitable! Since the departure of bass Joel T. Rutherford, **Glory Days** has shown no indication of future plans. The same can't be said of 2009 4th place medalists **State Line Grocery**, who decided to close up permanently! 2009 sixth place finalists **Masterpiece** are also going through a personnel change with the loss of lead Mark Hale. Other quartet news includes a new foursome from the west coast that pairs up two members of **Metropolis** (James Sabina and Kelly Sheppard) with the twin brothers from **JetSet** (Mike Marron and Tim Marron). Quartet name or district representation have not yet been determined. **Realtime** announced that tenor Tim Broersma would become the second member to leave the 2005 international champion. Society rules say it takes three original champs to keep a champ's name. However, if newer lead Doug Broersma and original bari and bass Mark and Tom Metzger press forward with a new tenor, they could keep their great sound and repertoire and they could re-enter the contest circuit under a new name!

New directors of top choruses. The phoenix rises from the ashes as Gary Steinkamp returns to di-

rect the **Spirit of Phoenix** chorus. This will be Steinkamp's second stint as director of the chorus formally known as **The Phoenicians**. Steinkamp directed the chorus to several International medals back in the early '90s and hopes to revive the chorus and bring them back to its once prominent place among the elite chapters in our Society.

Best chorus contest song ever! Back in December, YouBarbershop held a four round competition that pitted some of the best songs ever performed on the contest stage. The top award went to the 2001 silver-medal performance of "Brother, Can You Spare A Dime" by Toronto's **Northern Lights Chorus**. The runner-up went to the 2007 gold-winning "Strike Up The Band Medley" by **Westminster Chorus**. Other notable performances include "Waiting For The Robert E. Lee" (**Vocal Majority**, 1988), "Seventy-Six Trombones" (**Ambassadors of Harmony**, 2009) and "Love Me & The World Is Mine" (**Masters of Harmony**, 1996). ■

YouBarbershop.com is an online magazine offering up-to-the-minute news and topics being discussed by barbershoppers around the word. It's the creation of Mike McGee, former baritone of Metropolis quartet and 25-year Society member. He lives in Tallahassee, Fla. and is music director of the Capital Chordsmen.

Groupanizer solves headaches, chapters get 20% off

Many barbershoppers recognize the power of an outward-facing website or Facebook page, but many chapter leaders are asking headquarters how technology can address a pressing inward challenge: How to run their chapters. They need less complexity, not more processes or technical hoops to jump through. Many chapters say *Groupanizer* makes their chapter management and communication much easier. We endorse it, too! We've arranged a 20% *Groupanizer* discount for all Society chapters as an incentive to adopt it.

Over the past six months, we've used this web-based suite of tools in our own **Music City Chorus** here in Nashville. Our leaders agree with other chapters that *Groupanizer* just makes everything easier—it puts everyone literally on the same page. The chapter spends less time tripping over “left brain” details, so they can think bigger, sing more and focus more on growth.



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no herding cats, no dropped balls**

Groupanizer isn't a piece of software that sits on one guy's computer—it's a suite of tools for music groups hosted on a secure website. Anybody with a web browser and password can view or modify as much or

as little information as you want. *Groupanizer* basically does everything a robust “Members Only” site would do (only the technology is hidden—no webmaster needed), with many added tools to make your communication and coordination seamless. That means fewer meetings and better decisions. For example:

- When the music committee is planning a sing-out, *Groupanizer* shows them that only two of five tenors know the proposed opening and closing numbers—and that one of those tenors will be out of town. They adjust the repertoire and rehearsal agenda.
- A bass who never before learned songs on time transforms into one of the more reliable learners. Turns out he's just disorganized and too embarrassed to admit he's misplaced his music ... again. With *Groupanizer*, his personal home page displays reminders of when to be off-paper, and provides loss-proof copies of the music and learning tracks.
- Shortly into a board meeting, the president realizes all present have already read and commented on the budget and show script, already know the status of tasks from the last meeting, already saw who isn't stage-ready for contest. Because *Groupanizer* made it easy for the whole team to update info and see everything at a glance, they glanced. With

past and present accounted for, the rest of the meeting is spent reacting to surprising feedback from their last member poll and online discussion (both on *Groupanizer*) and on future plans.

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Try it, you'll love it

You can discover many other *Groupanizer* features and benefits during a free trial. Dozens of barbershop groups and other music groups say *Groupanizer* makes everyone more informed and productive. A chapter subscription is inexpensive and worth every penny.

Getting the best out of your chapter can be complicated! Getting everyone on the same page and focused on a common goal takes great leadership, a compelling vision, and a lot of communication. Everyone needs to know where the group is going and how they fit into that goal. We believe *Groupanizer* will make it easier! ■

—Rick Spencer,

Society Director of Operations

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How your group can ‘Make ‘em Laugh!’

Making an audience laugh is one of a performer's most gratifying rewards, but with high reward comes high risk. Just exactly how do you “make ‘em laugh” without falling flat on your face? Read on, or enroll in my Harmony University 2010 course for more details!

Incongruity—the basis for laughs

In *The Pink Panther Strikes Again*, the bumbling Inspector Clouseau spots a dog at a hotel desk and asks

loist with their own frantic soprano stylings.

Choose a comedy style

There are many ways to be funny. Get a feel for the style that would best suit the natural talents of the quartet. For example:

Cartoon. Cindy Hansen points to **Metropolis** as a master of this performance style: A conventional song with an unconventional and exaggerated visual presentation, as with their fear of women in “They Go Wild Over Me.”

“Tragedy over time.”

That’s Carol Burnett’s definition of comedy, and 1999 international champ **FRED** excelled at this style by botching songs, either visually (confusing pictures in “I Can’t Give You Anything But Love”), vocally (making a mess of the call and response of “Sweet Adeline”), or rhythmically (ruining the rhythm in “I’ve Got Rhythm”). More recently, Storm Front has used this style with their lead getting pushed out of the picture in “Don’t Fence Me In.”

Parodies. Some comedy hangs on altering familiar lyrics for comedic effect. **FRED** mastered topical parodies that skewered fellow competitors and judges; however, my favorite parody (for obvious reasons) is **Hot Air Buffoons’** “South Rampart Street Buffet.”

Tips for writing parodies

- Pick songs familiar to your audience
- Follow the original lyrics and rhyming scheme as closely as possible
- Choose easily singable words
- Ensure the parody tells a story, with a plot and destination
- Visually support the parody lyrics



the clerk, “Does your dog bite?” He replies, “No,” and Clouseau reaches down to pet the dog, only to be mauled.

Clouseau: “I thought you said your dog did not bite!”

Clerk: “That is not my dog.”

That dialogue illustrates a fundamental basis of comedy: Incongruity. Humor is usually built on the premise of leading an audience to expect one outcome only to deliver another one. There are several ways this can be done:

• Exaggerate what was expected.

Hotshots took this approach with their ingenious 2008 riser set, lampooning the stereotypical chorus choreography to perfection.

• Reverse what was expected.

Max Q’s 2007 gold medal-winning “Here’s to the Losers” celebrated those who didn’t win, in a self-deprecating style that was the antithesis of what was expected from such accomplished singers.

• Replace what was expected. Storm Front demonstrated this technique in their 2009 semifinals set with their hysterical performance of “Lida Rose,” filling in for a missing female so-



“Lida Rose” by Storm Front is “tragedy over time”

Does your quartet have the ability to do exaggerated physical gestures and expressions? Maybe the cartoon style would work. Does the quartet love words? Parodies might be the way to go. Does the quartet have an unusual physical makeup—really tall or short, big or skinny? I can personally tell you this can be exploited to great advantage, especially with self-effacing humor. Play to your strengths. And of course, if the quartet can do all these things and sing well (like **FRED**, **Storm Front** or **Metropolis**), you have the makings of a medal!

Tips for performing comedy

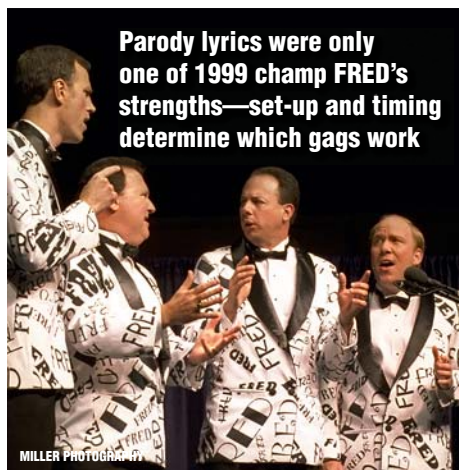
Once you get a feel for your particular style, here are some



Shane Scott
Harmony University faculty,
tenor of Lunch Break quartet
fullvoicetenor@gmail.com



Metropolis, a master of creating a “cartoon”



Parody lyrics were only one of 1999 champ FRED's strengths—set-up and timing determine which gags work

tips for getting the most out of your performance.

Know your individual roles and personas. In all successful comedy teams (think Laurel & Hardy, Abbott & Costello or The Three Stooges), each player had a clearly defined role. Each member of your group must understand his: Straight man, funny man, pratfall guy, innocent bystander, etc. Not every man needs to be equally funny, but remember, the straight man in comedy teams often gets paid more because he's the one who makes the "funny guy" funny. Determine your persona and understand your role in setting up a joke, reacting properly to incongruities, or leading the audience to expect something or look somewhere just before you pull the rug out from under them.

My favorite comedy performances

I am a fan of all quartets, especially all comedy quartets, but here are three of my favorites:

- **Chordiac Arrest** (1988 international bronze medalists from Illinois), "The Barbershop Squat." The perfect combination of lyrics and visuals, hilariously sending up the odd moves we barbershoppers seem to instinctively do while singing.
- **Cornerstone** (1995 Buckeye Invitational champs), "I'm Alone Because I Love You." These fine singers performed a classic ballad while pulling off the classic hat routine. It is a model of timing.
- **The Aliens** (Evergreen District legends), "Boston Common Set." The single funniest barbershop performance of all time, combining great singing (well, Boston Common's great singing), with the most entertaining slapstick comedy ever done on a contest stage.

Know your audience.

Be concerned about both taste and relevance to your audience. "Inside" barbershop humor that works well on a contest stage would confuse most show audiences. Similarly, matinee show audiences tend to be older, so references to current pop culture may be ineffective. Be sensitive to which gags the audience will or will not "get."

Sing well!

Poor singing distracts from the comedy, so work hard on the fundamentals of good singing. Especially work on synchronization and proper

word sound connection, as the clear delivery of lines is crucial.

Focus on the set-up.

Successful delivery of a punch line hangs on a successful set-up. It is critical to carefully set up the audience to clearly expect one thing before you deliver the incongruity. This must be done visually (what you do), verbally (what you say), and vocally (how you say it).

Pace the comedy.

Give the audience time to absorb an incongruity once it is revealed. And if your comedy is lyric-driven, it is vital to allow the audience time to process punch lines. If you pack too much in the piece, the audience will become frustrated because it is missing some of the verbal gags. Good comedic timing involves two elements: The timing of the set-up relative to the punch line (whether verbal or visual), and the timing between punch lines.

Tell a story.

The overall presentation must tell a story that has a destination, rather than just string together a series of disconnected funny moments. In other words, the song in its entirety must have the feel of one long set-up leading to one grand punch line.

Most of all, have fun!

There is no magic to comedy. It is enormously risky, and the possibility of failure (what if they don't laugh?) combined with the challenge to stay fresh (what do we do next?) makes it doubly tough. But it is also a blast! If you remember to have fun, your audience will pick up on your joy and want to have fun with you. ■



See Storm Front this spring at a show near you!

Bloomington, IL - 02/20-02/21

Denver, CO - 03/06

Minneapolis, MN - 03/20

Toronto, ONT - 03/27

Mason City, IA - 04/10

Rapid City, SD - 04/23-04/24

McCook, NE - 05/01

Jackson, MS - 05/15

Harrogate, North Yorkshire, UK - 05/28-05/29

Richmond, VA - 06/12

Denver, CO - 06/25

Bass Auditions - 07/02

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More entertaining and outstanding groups will be added over the next months... keep your eyes open for additional info.

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Register at www.barbershop.org/philly or call 800-595-4849 any time!

Major Events

Tuesday, June 29

10 a.m.-4 p.m. Harmony University Classes
6-10 p.m. Bank of America Collegiate Barbershop Quartet Contest
After CBQC *Larry Ajer Tuesday Night Party

Wednesday, June 30

10 a.m.-8 p.m. Quartet Quarterfinals (Intermissions/breaks TBD)
9 p.m. Dixieland Band

Thursday, July 1

9-10:30 a.m. Good News! Gospel Sing
9-9:50 a.m. Master Class – Ambassadors of Harmony
11 a.m.-3 p.m. Quartet Semifinals
4:30-6:30 p.m. *World Harmony Jamboree Dinner Show
7:30-10 p.m. *AIC Show
11 p.m. Mixed Harmony Showcase

Friday, July 2

10 a.m.-2 p.m. Chorus Contest Session #1
4-8:30 p.m. Chorus Contest Session #2

Saturday, July 3

9 a.m.-noon **Sing with the Champs
11-11:50 a.m. Master Class – Crossroads
12:30-1 p.m. MegaSing
1:30-3:30 p.m. *Harmony Foundation Presents Q-tet Finals Awards & Pre-show
6-7:15 p.m. Quartet Finals
7:30-9:30 p.m. Chorditorium
10 p.m.-1 a.m.

Sunday, July 4

9-10 a.m. Church Service

* = Separately ticketed event

** = Audience participation free, singers make a donation to Harmony Foundation



Play every week for the chance to win \$50 at Harmony Marketplace—and a shot at free front-row seats in Philly!

We've already surpassed Anaheim's registrations, with more every day. Win prizes while we see how many more friends can join us!

1. Send your guess for the week's registration total to phillygame@barbershop.org before each Monday 8 a.m. (Central), every week until June 21. Each Monday at noon, we'll post the new registration total at barbershop.org/philly and the names of the 10 closest guessers. You must have JavaScript enabled to view it. (Only one guess per week allowed.)

Include name and Member/Associate ID# with your guess.)

2. Guess the exact number for the week and receive a \$50 gift certificate to Harmony Marketplace. The 10 closest guessers each week go into a drawing for two front-row tickets in Philly! (You must be registered for Philly before the June 21, noon drawing to win. Up to two registrations under winner's name will be refunded, with two seats moved to the front row.)



Come take a bite out of Philly!

Register at www.barbershop.org/philly or call 800-595-4849 any time!



You asked for it, you got it!

Your convention survey feedback has helped us create a looser, more laid-back schedule, with more time to enjoy the sites of Philadelphia and more time to *convene* at barbershop harmony's international showcase. We've incorporated *your* ideas into your convention!

The quartet finals are too long—there's too much stage time for non-competitors!

While we're keeping the awards and special performances as part of Saturday's festivities, we're calling them what they are and telling you when they are. If you miss the "Quartet Finals Awards and Pre-Show," you'll miss some great performances by folks who have earned their time in the spotlight. But now you know when the quartet finalists will hit the stage—and the finals will end around 9:30 p.m., leaving plenty of time to party!

We hate buses!

A necessity in some cities, but this year you'll enjoy very short walks to the Philadelphia Convention Center! We switched from our original Philly venue (the Wachovia Center, nearly 30 minutes by bus each way) to save you time and to lower convention costs from the previous year.

The schedule is packed! More down time!

Take a good look at the schedule changes on the previous page—especially the end time for most evening events. There's more breathing room,

more time to convene, socialize and sing "just one more tag ..."

Conventions are expensive for families.

You're right! That's why we've introduced a "Family Four Pack" pricing option. Current savings are nearly \$130, and if your family is larger than four people you can save even more!

We loved the World Harmony Jamboree as a Dinner Show! Don't change back!

Loud and clear! Enjoy great performances from around the world *with dinner*, between Thursday's Quartet Semi-Finals and the AIC Show.

It's hard to find a convenient spot near the performance venue where we can socialize while contests are taking place.

Just a few hundred feet from the contest area will be a very large lounge where you can catch up with friends without having to whisper, get a bite to eat, *and* keep an eye on the contest playing live on a big screen. You can even get a little shopping done at the Harmony Marketplace.

Lower prices than last year,
great new *family packages*

Member/Associate/Affiliate: \$165
(up to two registrations allowed per member # at the discounted price)

Non-Member: \$179

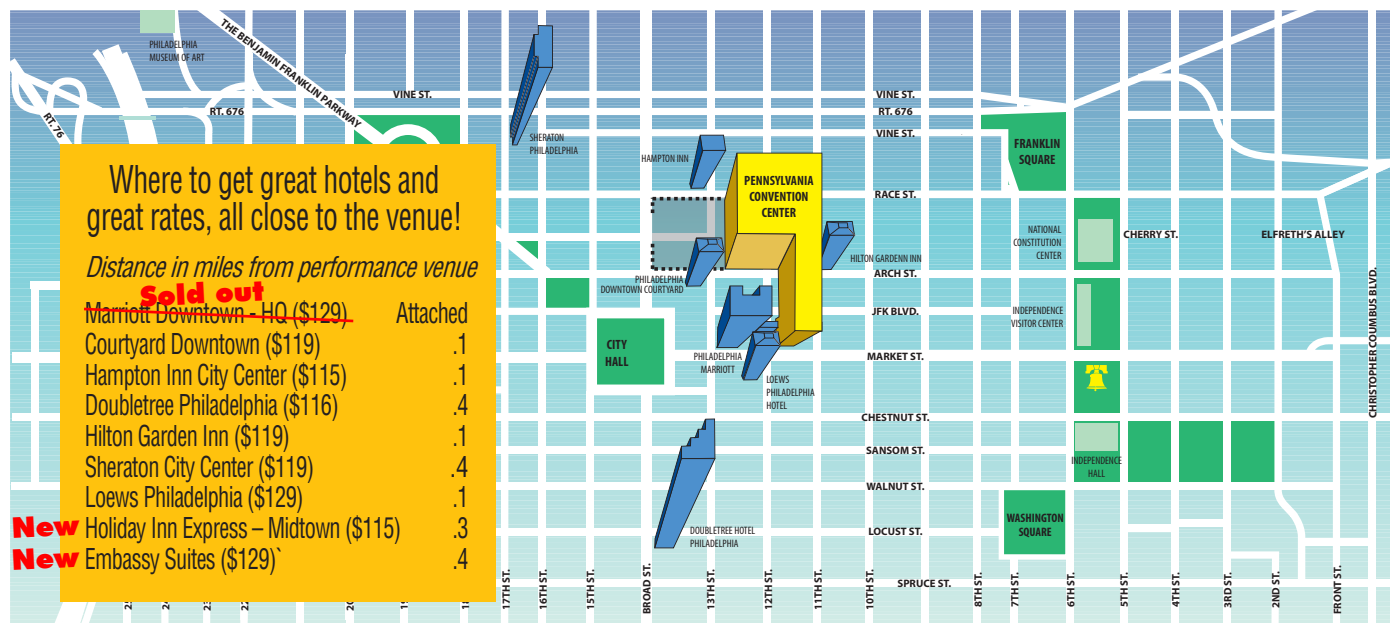
Youth (25 & Under): \$89

Family Four Pack: \$379 (save \$129!)
(two adults, two youth from same household)

Additional youth: \$25

Next time, get the best seats, best prices, first pick of hotels. Early registrations always cost less—if you'd registered before Feb. 1, you could have saved up to \$26 per registration. Purchase tickets for Kansas City 2011 while in Philly (or before Oct. 31, 2010) to get first pick of seats and first pick of hotels!

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Max Q, 2007 Champion



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Realtime, 2005 Champion



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The Edge (FWD)

Clockwise from L: Tom Moore (T), J. Friedman (Bs), Sam Papageorge (Ba), Jason Remley (L)

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www.theedgequartet.com



Off The Record (ILL)

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www.nedistrict.org/onq



4-Way Stop (JAD)

Joe Downey (Ba), Ryan McDivitt (Bs), Robbie Churgovich (L), Mike Wright (T)

Contact Ryan: (330) 725-0449; 4waystopquartet@gmail.com;
www.4waystopquartet.com



'Round Midnight (MAD)

T.J. Carollo (Ba), Jeff Glemboski (Bs), Wayne Grimmer (L), Larry Bomback (T)

Contact Larry: (646) 657-8492; info@roundmidnightquartet.com
www.roundmidnightquartet.com



Expedition (LOL)

Clockwise from L: Jeremy Ganswindt (T), Jacob Umhoefer (Bs), Bryan Ziegler (Ba), Jason Fahl (L)

Contact Jacob: (262) 719-0163; bbrshopper@yahoo.com



The Sting (ONT)

Rob VanBuskirk (Ba), Dave Campbell (L), Michael Melton (Bs), Glen Bowker (T)
Contact Dave: (519) 527-0521; d_lcampbell@ezlink.ca



Resisting-A-Rest (PIO)

Bruce LaMarte (T), T C Connor (L), Phil Haines (Bs), Steven Warnaar (Br)
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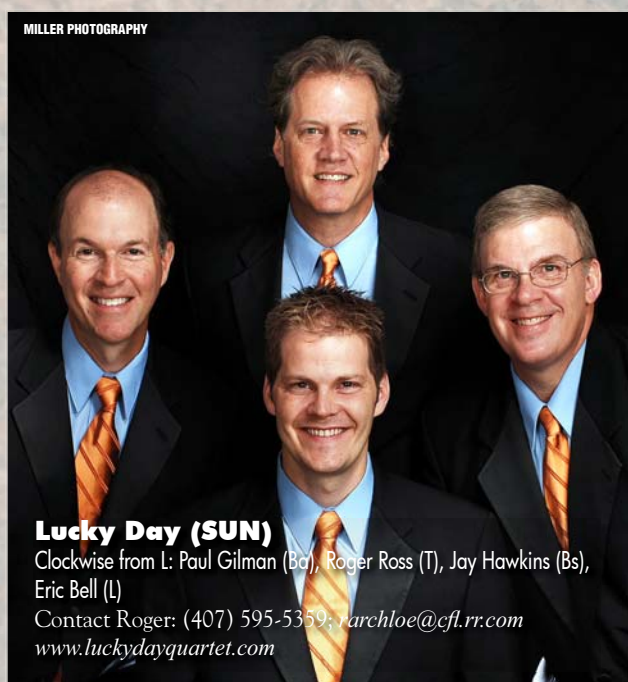
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Dave Ellis (T), Dan Testa (L), Chris Richards (Bs), Michael Troyer (Ba)
Contact Chris: (720) 250-8065; chris@boilingpointquartet.com
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Empire State Quartet (SLD)

Back: Mac Sabol (L), Mike Holmes (T), Richard Lewellen (Ba);
Front: Paul Ellingson (Bs)
Contact Mike: (716) 868-7866; mike@empirestatequartet.com
www.empirestatequartet.com



Lucky Day (SUN)

Clockwise from L: Paul Gilman (Ba), Roger Ross (T), Jay Hawkins (Bs),
Eric Bell (L)
Contact Roger: (407) 595-5359; rarchloe@cfl.rr.com
www.luckydayquartet.com



Genesis (SWD)

Seth Lafler (T), Ross Larrison, (Bs), Todd Reavis (L), Bryan Pulver (Ba)
Contact Ross: (512) 563-0402; rossman1999@yahoo.com
<http://tinyurl.com/SWDgenesis>

Power principles, part

Men *will* discover that your chapter has something great to offer—but only after you start acting like *you* believe it.

Is an optimistic outlook all it takes for a chapter to succeed? Not by a long shot! But after tripling in size in one year—after decades without growth—the Cape Breton Chordsmen can tell you that an improved attitude makes all the difference in the world.

Success is how high you bounce when you hit bottom.

—George S. Patton

As recently as Fall 2008, Nova Scotia's **Cape Breton Chordsmen** were relieved if all four parts showed up for a nursing home gig. Down to 12 members, they were seriously considering folding. Just over a year later, their most pressing problem is riser space—they've got 40 men coming to meetings and are making plans to be up to 60 by the end of 2010.

"It's so much bigger!" gushes Hal Higgins, director of the Chordsmen for the past 27 years. "Virtually *every single night* for months now I see faces I don't recognize. It's amazing. I almost feel shy—a result of so many years of seeing the same faces each night, I suppose."

What happened? Why so fast?

A key ingredient uncovered in hindsight

Nothing limits achievement like small thinking. Nothing equals possibilities like unleashed thinking.

—William Arthur

Chapter members interviewed regarding the change agreed on key men and key milestones during this renaissance. They also agreed on certain elements that were *not* responsible. There was no change in musical or chapter leadership; while their music product keeps getting better, it's not amazing by Society standards (they've rarely scored as much as a 60 in competition); and while their recruiting program has been vital, it hasn't created momentum so much as channeled it.

What they couldn't agree on was the answer to this question: "What is the key difference between then and now that explains the new optimism and growth?" On a hunch, I asked Higgins if I simply had the question backwards: *Could it be that the key catalyst was the new*

spirit of optimism itself? That once members believed they had something desirable—that they could turn their ship around—they redoubled efforts on the myriad details that together created an environment ripe for growth?

Higgins paused for a long time as he processed the idea. "I think we limit ourselves in our own thinking—believing that it's difficult to attract people," he finally replied. The idea seemed to be growing on him. "Once the pride started to build, it seemed like everyone out there was recruiting. I think we finally decided that we deserved it—we decided to go out and get them."

A strong start followed by decades of "small"

He that will not apply new remedies must expect new evils; for time is the greatest innovator.

—Francis Bacon

The Cape Breton Chapter's membership peaked at 60 members—in 1972, the year they chartered. Now based in Sydney (pop. 26,000, the largest city in a municipality of just over 100,000), the chapter is part of a highly musical community that is home town to Hugh Ingraham, past Society Executive Director (1977-87) and Hall-of-Famer, who had joined the Society staff years before the chapter formed. But the chapter didn't maintain the

Who wants to join a bunch of dour and solemn singers? Your atmosphere should be a main selling point.





Ranging from ages 15 to 72 (average age 55), The Chordsmen count 36 men on the Society roster, with more more men visiting every week.

early interest level. By the late 1970s, the Chordsmen were down to about 20 members and remained roughly that size for the next two decades.

Chapter members thought they had finally turned a corner when they won a divisional trophy in 1999, but membership trends actually continued downward. Some of the stronger singers, frustrated at too much time spent on contest songs or by the slow learning of other chapter members, began dropping out. By fall 2008, having struggled for years to attract new members, it was hard for the remaining 12 to imagine anyone joining them now.

Leadership seminar leads to a hockey game, where a fight optimism breaks out

Success seems to be largely a matter of hanging on after others have let go.
— William Feather

Membership chairman Fred Miles didn't want any part of that helpless attitude. He had gotten hooked on barber-shop harmony just two years earlier, and the next closest chapter was four hours away. He wasn't about to let the outlet for his new passion fade away without a fight. He and chapter secretary Tom Andrews attended the 2008 Northeastern District fall CAPCOTS leadership training weekend, looking for inspiration.

Fred was impressed by everything but the low attendance—he couldn't believe chapters were missing out on such essential information. He particularly enjoyed a presentation by members of the **Keene, N.H. Chapter**, who had recently developed a program that had led to explosive growth. They taught

that new members were the best recruiters, and that growth was a matter of singing where people could discover you and then knowing how to take care of potential members.

Fred returned to Sydney on fire, and soon began evangelizing two major changes:

1. More sing-outs, but not in rest homes. "Make sure your audience is the kind that has men who might want to join the chapter," he insists.
2. Upgrade the chapter's repertoire with songs people know and love. "The music we were singing was ancient"—they'd been singing the same songs far too long, he said, and there were few songs that men in their recruiting pool recognized.

Fred used his connections with the Cape Breton Screaming Eagles hockey team to snag a couple of national anthem gigs for dates with a visiting U.S. team. (It helped that the Chordsmen already knew "The Star-Spangled Banner" in addition to "O Canada.") The thrilling standings ovations on two occasions for a crowd of 4,000 did more than make them feel good—it helped them get noticed and fueled Fred's contention that they had to stop thinking so small.

Belief turns to action: Setting out extra chairs

Success isn't a result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire.
— Arnold H. Glasow

Shortly after the second hockey game, an enthusiastic new member joined. He brought some friends who were having a great time and likewise seemed interested in



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Real-world recruiting principles

Believe your chapter has something others want.

You really do behave differently if you believe this to your core ... or if you don't. Stop being self-conscious of your chapter's perceived deficits. "If you're a very small group and not feeling proud, you don't have the motivation to say, 'See what we're doing, let's come have some fun!'" Hal Higgins said. He believes many barbershoppers lose sight of the impact barbershop has on people—the chords, our animated style of delivery really do stand out. If that draws you, it will draw others.

Sing in public often. Include songs your audience recognizes. "Once we became half-known," Fred Miles said, "People are seeking us out." Paraphrasing Val Hicks, Higgins suggests barbershoppers "rise above being thought of as being the poor local step-sister of the local music community." Let your performances be your calling card.

Stay positive. Recruiting is about sharing joy—discussions about recruiting should be, too. Guilt trips inspire no one. Pleading "try harder" offers no direction and irks men who do try hard. The Chordsmen "Play it Fourward" recruiting slogan is discussed at every meeting and appears on most member communications. Chapter leaders keep recruiting pitches inspiring and upbeat, with a focus on equipping members for success, such as supplying them with chapter business cards or sharing success stories.

Polite persistence pays. "No" often just means "no"—but "I can't make it" may mean "the door is open—stay in touch." Higgins followed up with Rex Dunn 15 to 20 times over nearly two years before

Dunn got hooked at his first rehearsal. Dunn is grateful that Higgins recognized he really was just busy. "There was never any comment if I couldn't make it," Dunn said. "He'd just try again next time and leave the door open with a gentle reminder."

Just talk about what you do. When Chapter President John Peach was hired to fix the chimney of English professor Todd Pettigrew, somehow the discussion turned to barbershop. Peach learned he was speaking to the son of former Society staff member Lyle Pettigrew. The professor thought he was too busy to sing, but Peach persisted, and Todd got hooked his first meeting. (Todd gets credit for contacting headquarters with an early article draft that outlined the Chordsmen's recent accomplishments.) Countless other barbershoppers can trace their first encounter to an off-hand mention of barbershop harmony by a Society member.

Share the big picture and the details. The family atmosphere is rooted in communication. Via chapter meetings, e-mail lists and other means, a new member is quickly immersed in a culture where men freely share photos, family accomplishments, links to favorite performances, birthdays and other information. Chapter secretary Tom Andrews believes it is critical that a newer member comprehend his place in history and in the larger barbershop world. He forwards them plenty of resources on barbershop history and the Society. A visitor even receives a 10-page brochure about the Chordsmen the first time he walks in the door. It all adds to a barbershop novice's feeling that he has just joined something special.

joining. Their enthusiasm, combined with Fred's pep talks and the loud ovations still ringing in their ears, helped banish the prior hopeless funk. Could it be the Chordsmen really did have something other men wanted? Could it be that better days really were ahead?

It was about this time that Higgins realized that chapter members had mentally turned a corner. He had shown up early to a chapter meeting and saw that other members had shown up far earlier than usual and had already set up the risers. (When was the last time that had happened?) More important, they had put out 25 chairs for the sit-down portion of rehearsal—significantly more than they'd needed even in recent weeks. They really did expect more men to show up. Just one element of a perceptible new lightness in the step and new upbeat attitude.

Just as the Keene Chapter said would happen, new men brought their friends with them, their friends liked what they saw, and they in turn brought other friends. In January 2009 alone, nine new members were added to chapter rolls. Within months, the Chordsmen approached their current numbers. However, interviews with members indicate that the classic "Domino Effect" seen in many growing chapters involved far more than finding a new member and watching the pieces fall. The key appears to be that once chapter members believed they could make a difference, they redoubled their efforts on the many details that ensured visitors "liked what they saw."

What guests need to see and feel before they walk out the door

Success is a science; if you have the conditions, you get the result.
—Oscar Wilde

Newer members may tend to be the best recruiters, but first they have to be sold themselves. Assume that a guest will forget 98% of what you tell him but will always remember what he felt. Here are some critical impressions that helped visitors want to be part of the Chordsmen.

"Wow—let's do that again!" Newer member Rex Dunn, a vascular surgeon, long ago read of an experiment in which a switch in a cage was wired to the pleasure center in a mouse's brain. Mice would forego food and

sleep and just keep pressing the "pleasure" switch until they starved to death. Dunn's first tagging experience was something like that. He suspects the physiology is similar. "It's almost like a drug," he said. "You need to keep coming back just so you can get that little hit." Still far too busy, Dunn has nevertheless carved out time for a quartet, and will now "almost lie" to attend chapter rehearsals.

It helps that the last part of most chapter meetings consists of quartetting and tags. The 7th-chord high from locking chords tends to be more potent when it's just your voice joining with three other men. Guests experience that high just before they exit the door, and they go home wanting more. "They can leave feeling that they have accomplished something," says Music VP Phonse Chiais-

"It's almost like a drug. You need to
KEEP COMING BACK
just so you can get that little hit."

"I think we finally decided that
WE DESERVED IT.
We decided to go out and get them."

son. "For the most part, they come, they hear, they learn and enjoy the meeting, and they're here to stay."

"Never a dull moment." Speaking of singers who leave each meeting wanting more, the pacing of the meeting from start to finish matters. *A lot.* There's a sweet spot somewhere between "working on something long enough to see progress" and "drilling until guys start checking their watches." Higgins' job is to ensure the former, Wilfred Butler's job is to prevent the latter. Meetings are planned out ahead of time, and Butler has a copy of the agenda and a stopwatch. Butler helps Higgins hold to the plan (unless it doesn't make sense), and Higgins responds to cues that it's time to switch gears or yield the floor. Planning ahead rather than winging it keeps the pace moving and ensures that there's literally no time to get bored.

"This feels like one big family." This may be Chordsmen's ace in the hole. Every chapter should aspire to such an atmosphere, but "fake it 'till you make it" only goes so far. One will eventually sense whether the outward trappings of brotherhood run deep: *Does each man really care about me and every man here, or do they just sing together? Can I totally be myself here, or am I expected to conform to unwritten rules maintained by a self-appointed "inner circle"?* Cape Breton's atmosphere was key for Dunn. "I got the feeling of a real brotherhood right off the bat," he said. Miles cannot overemphasize how crucial this "whole new atmosphere" has been to chapter growth. "It's easy to leave a chorus if it's just a chorus," he explains. "If you develop into a family, it's tough to leave."

"I can make a difference here." There's another good reason new members were attracted to the chapter's atmosphere: They helped create it. A spontaneous gesture that bloomed into a tradition; a barbershop novice who offers a musical suggestion from the risers that works



Director Hal Higgins helps script out each meeting ahead of time, which helps boost the variety and pacing.

wonders—new members have not been inclined to wait and see "how things are done" in the chapter. Instead, they exerted "a tremendous force" in shaping chapter culture for the better, Miles said. Many a Society chapter has been decimated by power struggles that begin when members of the established "power structure" feel that their sense of control has been threatened. (Imagine the subliminal effect this may have on recruiting!) Cape Breton has avoided this trap. "No one tries to dictate what we're doing or what direction we're going," Chaisson said. "That can drive members away very quickly. Leaders are open to suggestions ... Members feel their opinion is valued."

"This group is going places." Old-timers haven't forgotten the negatives of focusing too much on competition. Sometimes, you've got to sing for the joy of singing—to start a song and finish it several times an evening. But newcomers, especially, won't let the chapter focus too little on contest. Men want to belong to a group that has a winning vision, a sense of forward motion. "There's a sense of purpose," Miles said. "Everyone realizes the potential that's here and we want to get better." Chapter members believe they've struck a good balance between polishing competition numbers (which helps them perform at a higher level) and the fraternity and cohesion that's developing as they carve out a bigger niche in their community.

"That was time well spent." If a man gets nothing else out of Chordsmen meeting, he's going to get a good voice lesson. "All of us need a lot of work on the fundamentals," Higgins said, so meetings begin with work on the basics of posture, proper breathing and other fundamentals of good singing. This is gradually taking the tension out of voices and improving sound, but to a newer member, it means even more. Confidence builds because he's starting off the meeting on the same level as everyone else. Right off the bat, he realizes he'll go home having learned a valuable skill in exchange for his time. Members work hard to ensure that sense of accomplishment continues throughout the evening. "Even after one night, they can participate in full," Chisson



The "original 12," plus director makes 13

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said. "It gives them a heckuva good reason to come back the next Monday."

"These guys have their act together."

Newer members like Dunn rave about the depth of skill and leadership found among the chapter's more established barbershoppers. "We have some natural leaders and speakers," he said, then elaborated on how well Higgins suits his director role, the infectious exuberance of chapter president John Peach, the perfect touch of chapter secretary Tom Andrews, Chiaisson's openness and skill. "We have such a good set of officers now," Dunn concludes, adding that member confidence in leadership has been an essential element of so many men joining.

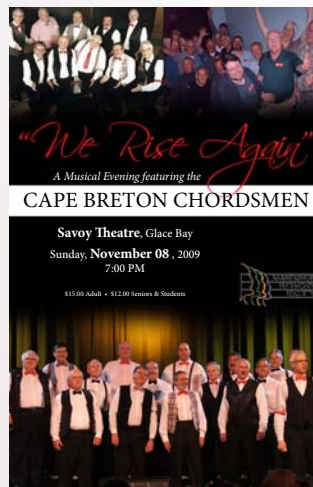
"I can do this!" You already know elements to help a guest feel comfortable: greetings, name badge, guest book, voice assessment, riser buddy, etc. But what about helping a guest become comfortable with the idea of becoming official? The size of the unlearned repertoire alone can shake his resolve. The Chordsmen help by lowering barriers to entry. "If [a newer member] can perform half the songs for a performance, he'll sing half the songs," Miles said. "We don't want anybody sitting the wings." New or potential members also need the chance to make meaningful contributions right away. "Whether he's helping cook this, sell concert tickets, do stage stuff, we get everyone involved," Miles continued. "It's a family, so act as a family."

And now for the difficult part ...

Success is a lousy teacher. It seduces smart people into thinking they can't lose.

— Bill Gates

Chapter members are giddy about the current state of affairs, but long-timers haven't forgotten where they've been. "The success in 1999, that was like winning the Stanley Cup," Higgins said. "We thought, 'Now we've made it.' But we hit



The Chordsmen hosted their first chapter show in years late last fall, selling more than 700 tickets to a show that featured only chapter members—no headliners. Hal Higgins, a CBC radio personality, was key in promoting the event, as was a chapter member who owns a printing business.

a high point and it went away quickly after that." It's especially sobering for chapter members to watch the Keene chapter, which taught them so much about recruiting and supporting new members, as it now breaks in two over differences.

"The question of how do we bring people along, get them up to speed if you will, it requires a lot more work," he said. "More is expected of the experienced members to pitch in and help with the new guys."

It helps that the Chordsmen view themselves at the beginning of a race, not running a victory lap. They realize that not every new member will stick around. They don't expect a fraternal honeymoon to last forever—typical personality conflicts and competing ideas and goals will sure come.

The initial care a new member receives can't be absent by the time he's getting ready to write out his first anniversary dues check.

But look at what the Chordsmen have got: Enthusiastic members, more show requests than they can handle, and a vision of what's next and how to get there. It's all tempered with the realization that nothing stays the same—so they'd better get used to working together. and start working on their next big plans.

Is there any doubt that with attitudes and personnel like that, even better days may be ahead for the Chordsmen? ■

Resources

Cape Breton Chordsmen

www.capebretonchordsmen.com

Keene Chapter Program

www.cheshiremen.org (Red button at bottom of "Marketing & PR Resources page")

"Up with reality, down with pessimism"

www.barbershophq.com/?p=1233

"If you think you can ..."

(Psychology Today article)

<http://tinyurl.com/self-efficacy>

Swipes 'n' Swaps

"New director" ads are free in *The Harmonizer* (first 50 words) to Society chapters. Other ads are \$25 per column inch. Send to harmonizer@barbershop.org.

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Recruiting success with community choruses

No strings chance to sing inspires 10 men to join Ottawa chapter after 2009 concert

Ottawa's **Capital City Chorus** has developed a promising membership strategy that offers men a no-strings chance to experience the pleasure of barbershop singing—and many are taking the opportunity and becoming chapter members.

Suggested by director Denis Laflamme in 2007, every fall the chapter invites non-Society members to learn the chapter's

Christmas show repertoire of 15 mostly-familiar songs to perform with the chorus. Regular attendees singing the lead part have little problem picking it up, and the chapter forgoes tuxes in favour of dressy attire that guests will likely already have in their wardrobes.

In the program's third year, about 25 men attended at least once, 20 stayed the full eight weeks, and 16 sang on the show (names included in the program). About 10 will continue on as new members—a good improvement over 2008, when the same participation yielded three new members.

With no competitive sets rehearsed during this period, the chorus discovered that this is both the easiest time to integrate new members and the easiest time for new members to join.

The chapter publicizes the opportunity in various media, but most attendees receive the invitation from one of the chapter's roughly 80 active members. Membership VP Yvon Blais closely tracks each guest and his attendance and provides name-tags, guest books and learning tracks. Members quickly recognize returning faces and make the guests feel welcome and get them used to our routines.

Extra work, but worth it

"It generates a lot of excitement from the current membership (which has a snowball effect for recruitment)," Laflamme says of this influx of new and inexperienced barbershoppers. "But it also adds a large number of people who have not yet been exposed, mostly, to what we consider our singing

PHOTOS BY RAYLENE MULROONEY



Ten of 16 guest singers in 2009 (inset) joined Capital City Chorus

basics. We use this as an excuse to 'refresh' everyone's basic skills."

At least 20 minutes of each rehearsal is spent working on singing without tension, listening for section unity, etc. Lead and bass would seem the most natural voice parts for

beginners, but voice tests guide guests to the appropriate section.

"I received a few e-mails from guests who were overwhelmed with gratitude for the warmth and open-arm welcome they received from the membership," Laflamme said. "It's a challenging but very rewarding exercise, especially for all of those guests who actually participate with us on the show."

Overall, the chorus has found this to be a relatively easy, rewarding way to spread the word about barbershop harmony, one that any chorus with a Christmas show can attempt and that offers potentially large recruiting paybacks.

—Doug Yonson



For 10 years, the Sound of Illinois Chorus has invited non-members to commit to two months of rehearsals and join the chorus for a community holiday program. Total men on stage for the 2009 concert was 97, including 13 guests, including one member's two sons, son-in-law and six-year-old grandson. Pictured are Thad, Will, Harry and Rhys Lovell and Dave Huisman (Harry's son-in-law).



HELPING YOUTH BY HELPING YOUTH. For 11 years, Larry Matschke of Ottawa's Capital City Chorus has shown up anywhere, any occasion as a professional Santa for any group of kids. Any kind of donation was enough to get him to show up, with all proceeds going to charity. This year, the \$1,600 he raised went to Sing Canada Harmony—enough to make him a member of the President's Council. Anything for the kids.



WINNERS HIRE A QUARTET. Anybody who follows college football knows the name of Bobby Bowden, the second-winningest coach in NCAA Division 1 history, with 375 total wins and two national championships with the Florida State Seminoles. Tallahassee Chapter quartet In-A-Chord (Steve Pennington, L; Nate Golden, Bs; Robbie Brunger, T; Rodney Atherton, Br) performed several songs at Bowden's house at a large gathering to commemorate the 25th season of defensive coordinator Mickey Andrews. The party took place in the brief window between Bowden's announced retirement and the Seminoles crushing victory over West Virginia in the Gator Bowl. In-A-Chord will make calendar space should Joe need a quartet in coming years.



Miss Ohio appears to be stalking Smooth Transition quartet ... again

It was just another holiday performance for the men of Smooth Transition Quartet, who expected to bring good music and holiday cheer to the Woman's Club of St. Bernard, Ohio. Imagine their shock when the sea of reindeer sweater vests parted and in strode a gorgeous, six-foot-tall beauty queen dressed in full regalia.

Amanda Temple, a St. Bernard native and newly crowned Miss Ohio USA, was the keynote speaker. Amanda gracefully posed for this picture and



made Smooth Transition the honorary quartet of her reign. But the story doesn't end there

Singing for beauty queens is becoming a tradition for the quartet. Three years ago they gave an impromptu Applebees concert for Nicole Masters, as reported in the May/June 2006 *Harmonizer*.



60 years, one chapter for Hall-of-Famer George Shields

One chapter, 60 years—another big feather in the cap of George Shields, a Society Hall of Famer who has never left Toronto's **East York Chapter**. The nation of Canada thinks pretty highly of George as well—in 1986 he was honored with the national highest civilian honor, the Order of



Canada, for a lifetime of outstanding achievement, dedication to the community and service to the nation.

George created the Harmonize for Speech Fund, which supports the Speech Foundation of Ontario with funds raised by Barbershop Chapters throughout Ontario.

Visit the www.east-york-barbershoppers.ca and click on the "60th Anniversary" tab for more information and photos. ■

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The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. (DBA Barbershop Harmony Society) is a non-profit organization operating in the United States and Canada.

Mission
The Barbershop Harmony Society brings men together in harmony and fel-



lowship to enrich lives through singing.

Vision
To be the premier membership organization for men who love to sing.



THE TAG

Joe Liles, Tagmaster!!



Bobby is why we get hoarse every convention!

Here's a tag that will put a smile on your face and happiness in your heart. A big thanks to Bobby Gray for this one. He's the one to your right as you look at the picture of the quartet.

Bobby Gray is a second generation barbershopper and has been a member for 41 years, joining at the age of 10. Seven years after joining, he became the first "minor" to direct a chorus in an international chorus contest, directing the 100-man **San Diego Chapter** to sixth place. He is also the only man to direct two choruses to district championships in the same contest cycle, directing San Diego to the Far Western District championship, then directing the **Northwest Sound** to the Evergreen District championship a week later!

He has also competed as a baritone on the international stage a total of 33 times, singing with **The Grand Tradition** (three-time medalist), **The New**

Tradition (1985 gold medalist quartet), **Seattle Sound** (he wished they had been medalists), and, most recently, **Saturday Evening Post** (fifth-place

medalist). He is a certified presentation category judge who has served on the Presentation Board of Review and has arranged several songs heard around the Society, including his unique version of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

The original version of the "Smile" tag was arranged by Tom Gentry for The New Tradition and featured a low, tender finish. However, TNT couldn't handle the "low" tag, so, necessity required the re-

write. You can blame Bobby for causing more calls to security at convention hotels for those loud late-night tags sung over and over and over ...

I made a modified version for those who are faint-of-heart and lacking in certain hormones. Enjoy! ■



SMILE

Tag by BOBBY GRAY

Smile! _____

1 2 3 4

Tenor Lead

Smile, _____ darn ya, smile! _____

Bari Bass

A smile is still worth - while, *as sung by the New Tradition, 1986*

modified version Smile! _____

1 2 3 4

Smile, _____ darn ya, smile! _____

A smile is still worth - while,



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