

INSIDE: How to be a great guest or a great host • Midwinter in Long Beach • Be an effective quartet spokesman

November/December 2013

THE HARMONIZER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP QUARTET SOCIETY



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ATTACHED

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check out Lisa's bio & more:
<http://www.lisaforkish.com/>

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NIEL JOHNSON



KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING: That’s our motto, but do we know what that means? CEO Marty Monson say that if we work with others to promote singing—singing *anything*—and let the chips fall where they may, the influence and visibility of the Barbershop Harmony Society will grow exponentially.

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Cutting the Strings
COVER BY EDDIE HOLT
BACKGROUND PHOTO:
THE ALLANCE CHORUS

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After four years, I'm even more optimistic

As promised, I'm sharing this column space. Rick Ashby has been a highly valued member of the Society Board for the past four years. His expertise in banking and finance has helped us navigate some challenging and difficult issues. He now chairs our new Finance Committee.

— Shannon Elswick



My most important contribution to the Society

During the past four years, I've worked with some truly talented and dedicated men I now call friends. We are fortunate to have men like these who give so much of their time and talent for no other reason than to improve the Society. As a board member, I have been given some truly unique opportunities. I have traveled to many of our District Conventions and spoken with Houses of Delegates about our Society, its plans and its future. I've spoken with individual members about their concerns, their hopes and their dreams. I've served on the Planning Committee where I've had a chance to help set the priorities and to shape the programs for our future. I've chaired the new Finance Committee, where we have tried to plot the course for a financially sound Society.

The most important thing in which I will ever participate during my barbershop life experience was when I served on the Executive Search Committee, to help select the next CEO of our Society. We were fortunate to have some wonderful candidates but blessed indeed to have Marty Monson among the choices. He was the visionary leader for whom we had been searching.

The more I have worked with Marty, the more convinced I am that he has the "it" factor. He has what we need to move the Society into the next phase of our evolution. And that is one reason why I believe in our future. We have a leadership team, staff and volunteers who are energized and filled with ideas and plans to make our future exciting if we take up the challenge.

The growth of the youth movement, our global expansion, embracing mixed quartetting, seeking to serve our communities through music, collaborating with music educators to revive choral singing in our schools, and creating a real presence for barbershopping in the minds and hearts of all who hear our musical message, all these things give me great confidence that our future is bright. We should strive to measure our success by the lives we touch in our barbershop experience, through song or through service. Then, having so touched a life, regardless of whether we have 100 or 100,000 members we will have achieved success.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve on your Board these past four years!

— Rick Ashby

Society Board & Finance Committee Chair
rashby@ptd.net

Barbershop has been a part of my life since I was a toddler. My Dad's quartet rehearsed at our house each month. I'd sit on the stairs, just out of their sight while I was supposed to be in bed, and listen in fascination. Later, as a teen, I wore out his LPs of the **Buffalo Bills** (1950 champ), **Schmitt Brothers** (1951), **Confederates** (1956), and **Four Statesmen** (1967). I could sing lead for any song on the records. I was hooked!

After law school, I finally joined the Society in 1972 and almost immediately was recruited to sing lead in a quartet—hooked again! I've been in three quartets since then and haven't regretted a minute of the many hours of rehearsal, dozens of contests and hundreds of chapter shows. Chorus performances have been fun, but my heart has always been in quartetting.



I don't measure our success by numbers of members, but rather by what the members and our Society achieve. I have great confidence that our future is bright.

What we achieve matters more

Over those 40 or so years, the Society has changed—sometimes gradually, sometimes rapidly. The judging program and rules have changed a number of times. Quartet singing styles and sound have changed greatly. The music and arrangements are more varied in genre and in style. Chorus singing and performance have improved immensely. The way we learn music and hone our craft has changed as well.

Some changes however, are disturbing—our membership decline, for example. But societal and demographic factors often work to our disadvantage as men are pulled in many different ways by competing choices of how to use their time. As a result, some might say our future looks bleak. I did not and do not believe that, and that is why I stood for board election four years ago; I don't measure our success by numbers of members, but rather by what the members and our Society achieve.



“No Strings Attached” not a slogan but a path

I hope you've enjoyed the articles from Rick Spencer and Heather Verble the past two issues of *The Harmonizer* and taken action. Those strategies will allow us to become better Barbershoppers, chapters, subsidiaries, districts and a better overall Society.

While I have been on break from writing articles for *The Harmonizer*, my days have been full of meetings with Barbershoppers, singers, songwriters, music directors, business suppliers, community leaders, teachers, preachers, new neighbors (finally bought a home),



sister organizations, international affiliates, non-profit organizations and university presidents. I've come to the conclusion that the Barbershop Harmony Society is in a great place to really make a difference in our global society.

The Barber-shop Harmony Society is in a great place to really make a difference in our global society.

The Society's potential

In the May/June, 2013 issue, I said the following: “We hope to take you on a journey about how the Barbershop Harmony Society (23,000+ members, 762 chapters and 17 districts) can make a difference in our global society. As I stated in my Orlando Key-

note speech, ‘Are you looking out your window?’”

I'll say more in my interview on page 10, but let me be clear: “Keep the Whole World Singing” will always be our slogan, but “Looking out the Window” and “No Strings Attached” are principles we need to apply much better if we want to live up to our slogan. This is the way forward for our next 75 years.

How do we realize our potential? Look out the window and see a society hungry for what we have to offer, no strings attached. Many of you are already doing this through the outstanding community service occurring in your own backyard, but for others struggling to get more engaged with your community, here are some suggestions:

- During your shows, ask your audience

to sing along with you. Then sing the song a second time and have your chorus or quartet harmonize against it. I believe audience members appreciate music because at some point they liked to sing or play an instrument ...if not, why are they there? Let them experience the joy of singing—and not always just listening.

- Reach out to a high school choir director and offer to pay for a concert program.
- Establish a scholarship program to a high school senior who is interested in pursuing a music degree.
- Donate money to a local middle school choir to help pay music expenses.
- Find a certified choir director or educator and help them start an after school choir by leveraging the chapter's non-profit status.
- Partner with your local Rotary or Lions Club and see what types of service projects they are interested in as well. They like to help, too!

My recent travels have broadened my view of all the good we *are* doing, like **Inland Empire Harmony Carousel Chorus** (www.welovetosinging.com). It is impressive how their website explains who they are ... and they do it! **The New Sound Assembly Chorus** out of Natick, Mass., has been financially contributing to various local high school music departments for the past 15 years, and by our estimates have donated more than \$13,000. That pays for a lot of music! **The Pride of Peoria Chorus** has the historical backbone to which many of us aspire, celebrating 72 years as a chapter. Besides the performing chorus, they have a VLQ called **Sounds of Memories** that performs during the day.

Keep the Whole World Singing!

mmonson@barbershop.org

What's in Marty's Daytimer?

- Nov. 6-9, Sweet Adelines International Convention
- Nov. 21, Choral Arts Link meeting, Nashville
- Nov. 21, Downtown Nashville meeting, Nashville
- Dec. 1, 75 Years of Barbershop, Heart of America Chorus, Carnegie Hall, New York City
- Dec. 8, Society Monthly Board meeting, conf. call
- Dec. 15, Monthly DP Council conf. call
- Dec. 16-20, Staff Meetings, Year in Review & 2014 Rollout
- Jan. 4, NSC Leadership Academy, Hamlet, NC



What is Marty reading?

- Conductors Count, What Chorus Board, Music Directors and Administrators Need to Know, Chorus America in collaboration with Westminster Choir College.



What is Marty listening to?

- Jim Clancy Collection CD



Toronto coverage, Jerry Orloff passes away

Kudos for "How music changes your brain"

Wow! What a fascinating article by Shane Scott in the September/October issue of *The Harmonizer*. Shane researched his subject well and did an even better job of writing about it. Reading the article certainly would strike many a chord with Barbershoppers and any other music lovers. I intend to share the article with family, friends and music educators in northeast Ohio.

MIKE SITTER
Berea, Ohio

A set worthy of the wait will return in Vegas

Lorin, thanks for the congratulations and wonderful picture in the recent *Harmonizer*. **The Alliance** was so proud of The TAGCO Circus! The setup timing certainly did not go as planned in Toronto. We worked really hard to get the entire stage transformed in four minutes and eleven seconds, as seen in a video on our YouTube channel (<http://bit.ly/TAGCOCircus>). There were circumstances backstage, to no one's fault, that were different from our preparation and which immediately created a lot of stress as we wanted to execute our plan of transforming the International stage into a real-live, over-the-top circus.

I was so proud of our guys, and it is a testament to our program and training that they were able to go through all of that distraction of running around backstage and were still able to perform at a medalist level. In Vegas, The Alliance will perform in our 15th consecutive International Convention. There is no place like that stage, and we feel so lucky to be able to sing for that crowd each year. The TAGCO Circus is coming back and will be bigger and better than ever! Circus in Vegas? OHYEAHMAN!

DAVID CALLAND

Director, The Alliance

Unfortunately, my coverage of the unexpected setup time overshadowed what should have included better acknowledgement of a truly amazing set. Even if I got sidetracked, the judges did not. Congratulations on a well-deserved medal!

— Lorin May

Dan Davenport is an even better bass than Dave

I read Lorin May's "Toronto Memories" and thoroughly enjoyed it, even more so when I saw the following entry (page 15): "10:54: "Beautiful Dreamer" from **Vocal Edition** (FWD). Dave Davenport, haven't even heard of him, but that's a good, LOW bass." Thanks for the nice compliment! Now, if you had just gotten my first name right (DAN), I might actually start to gain

that elusive fame we all secretly dream about. (And I wish I had a quarter for every time in my life I've been called "Dave.") I guess, for now, I remain the *nearly* famous bass ...

DAN DAVENPORT
Phoenix, Ariz.

Dan, we're afraid that what gets published in the magazine is legally binding. It would be easier if you could just begin the process of legally changing your name to Dave.



Jerry & Dan Orloff, Reggie Jackson, and "Joe" from Yuba City, Calif.

Jerry Orloff, RIP, tags with Reggie Jackson

Regarding John Krizek's letter about World Series MVP Jesse Jackson's 1977 tagging experience, here's the photo from the wall of Jerry's office. ■

KIM ORLOFF
Aptos, Calif.

Note: Kim's husband, Jerry Orloff, passed away on Oct. 25, 2013, at age 82. He was the Society's all-time leading recruiter (more than 200 Men of Note!) and a member of the Society Hall of Fame. His obituary is at bit.ly/orloff-obit.

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Song	Arranger	Contest	Pitch	Files	Group Learning Status
I Miss You Most of All	SPBSCSA/C Metzger	C	1 files	14	edit
Sweet Mar	Bob Jones	Regular	Bb	10 files	14 15 edit
Bring Him Home	Rich Hasty				
Country Roads	Lloyd D. Steinkamp	G	5 files	17	edit
Freddy Freilond	Dave Briner	A	6 files	25 26	edit
Hallelujah	Duke Sharon	G	11 files	41 43	edit
If My Friends Could See Me Now	Ray Danley	F	6 files	45	edit
Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair	Ed Waesche	Bb	10 files	46 47	edit
Nevertheless	Tom Campbell	F	5 files	48	edit
Only You	Jim Kahike	C	6 files	49	edit
Sh-Boom	Dave Briner	Bb	6 files	49	edit
The Drinking Gourd / Lonesome Tra...	Bob Jones	F	10 files	49 50 51	edit
Keep the Whole World Singing	Permanent	Bb	6 files	50 51 52	edit

Go to Midwinter in Long Beach for the best entertainment and good times Queen Mary has ever seen

Get yourself to Midwinter Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 2014. This incredible week includes full show sets from all the 2013 International Medalist quartets, the Youth Chorus Festival, and the best Seniors quartets in the world!

This year's Youth Chorus Festival will bring 20 choruses to the stage (including several returning, better than before!) Friday, from the sublime (**O-YA! Chorus**, top) to the ridiculous (**Georgia Spirit**, channeling mentors **FRED**,) and all points in between (**Cleveland Heights Barbershoppers**, right), these young singers have helped make Midwinter "fly-across-the-country-GREAT," along with many other activities designed to give singers a "mountaintop experience" of barbershopping.

It's been said that barbershop is a young man's sport that we stick around

in the rest of our lives. At the Seniors Quartet contest, where you'll see a lot of older legends but you won't believe your ears. This is any man's sport that keeps us young the rest of our lives! Check out the Saturday contest.



Full show sets from all the 2013 international medalists!

COMPETITOR PHOTOS BY MILLER PHOTOGRAPHY / QUARTET MEDALIST PHOTOS BY LORIN MAY

Long Beach
MIDWINTER 2014



2013 Seniors champ Border Patrol

A Thursday night opening gala aboard the Queen Mary will feature, among other groups, the legendary **139th Street Quartet**, one of the Society's all-time best and most influential groups. Knock some tags with them!



139th Street Quartet

Long Beach has incredible weather, a fabulous theater for all events, excellent hotels—all within walking distance and plenty of world-class restaurants and nightlife just steps away. Register at www.barbershop-convention.com/longbeach.

Harmony University adds Chorus College for 2014—but only two slots are left

For years, we've made it possible for individuals and quartets to get the finest vocal instruction and performance coaching. Now, a chorus of any size can get a full, immersive week of education as an ensemble, with the world's top coaches and clinicians at the new Chorus College at Harmony University in Nashville, July 27-August 3, 2014.

More than just an intensive coaching session, Chorus College will be an all-around immersion for your members, helping them grow as individual singers and as an ensemble.

Your director will grow under the guidance of experts, and your complete chapter package—music, performance and marketing—will be reviewed with an eye toward growth and satisfaction.

Choruses enrolled in Chorus College will receive:

- Daily chorus coaching and vocal instruction from a pod of coaches
- Group discount: \$50/man off the regular tuition rate
- Recorded coaching sessions to take

home at the end of the week. Marketing materials created during the week for the chapter to take home (like this great video! www.harmonymarketplace.com/987654.)

Walk away with a real plan for the future growth of your chorus!

Four choruses will be accepted for Chorus College 2014; two have already made commitments. Discuss with your chapter board and begin the exploration now! For further details, contact moneill@barbershop.org.



First-page music previews are first step of a massive music upgrade

Finding the perfect song keeps getting easier—and the Music publications team is only getting started. Check out “Sheet Music” at the top of www.harmonymarketplace.com to check out great new and coming features:

- **First-page previews:** Already available. View the first page of every arrangement before you buy!
- **Learning tracks:** We’re making rapid progress toward obtaining learning tracks for all popular sheet music. Arrangements from 2005 and newer often include a 30-second online preview of the learning track. Listen before you buy.
- **Improved searching:** Check back often. Very soon, the website will let you search by category, decade, date, composer, lyricist, arranger, and/or topic. Looking for 1950s and 1960s Frank Sinatra uptunes ar-



anged by Roger Payne? Disney ballads from the 1990s? Soon you’ll be able to find anything in a flash.

- **Difficulty rating:** Much of our library does not have a difficulty number assigned to it, but soon you’ll easily know which version of “Sweet Georgia Brown” is within your difficulty range.

By 2015, the Music and Performance Committee plans to rank all 7,000 pieces in our catalog between 1 and 5 (Easy, EasyMedium, Medium, MediumAdvanced, and Advanced). This 1-5 scale is widely used in the publishing world and more accurate than our current three-point scale. This ambitious project will also make it far easier for music educators and non-Barbershoppers to buy barbershop music that suits their needs.

Check back often at www.harmonymarketplace.com.

Huge Harmony Foundation success; David Calland joins staff

Continuing fundraising success and program expansion have brought staffing changes to Harmony Foundation International. The Foundation concluded its fiscal year 2013 with a 26% increase in revenue over last year, continuing a trend begun in 2008. The Foundation has grown by 211% in gift income since then.

To support this exploding growth, David Calland has joined the team as a Director of Development focused on the Midwest Region. David is widely recognized throughout the Society as a coach, Harmony U faculty member, director of medalist chorus The Alliance, lead of medalist quartet The Allies, a past Johnny Appleseed District president, and a 2013 Society Board member.

Additionally, Ryan Killeen has been promoted to the position of Senior Director of Development for Harmony Foundation International. In this role, he



Ryan Killeen

will manage the field fundraising staff and all their development activities and projects.

Killeen joined the Foundation staff in May 2009 as Director of Major Gifts, and has since more than doubled the growth in his regions, helped break the \$1 million goal in fiscal 2012, and continues that trend today. In addition to this management responsibility, he will also continue the fundraising responsibility for the Southeast Region of the U.S. and begin a Principal Gift program, defined as gifts of \$50,000 or more. These contributions have fueled our significant growth to date and can launch the exponential growth necessary to achieve bold initiatives for an exciting future.



David Calland



CONVENTIONS 2014

LAS VEGAS
June 29–July 6

2015

PITTSBURGH
June 28–July 5

2016

NASHVILLE
July 3–10

2017

MINNEAPOLIS
July 2–9

2018

ORLANDO
July 1–8

2019

SALT LAKE CITY
June 30–July 7

MIDWINTER

barbershop.org/midwinter

LONG BEACH, CALIF.
Jan. 28–Feb. 2, 2014

NEW ORLEANS

Jan. 6–10, 2015

HARMONY
UNIVERSITY 2014

Nashville, Tenn.
July 27–Aug. 3, 2014

Captain America sang Barbershop? ... Well, duh!

The trailer for next April’s highly anticipated *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* movie opens with the following dialog:

Black Widow: Are you doing anything fun Saturday night?

Captain America: Well, all the guys in my barbershop quartet are dead, so no, not really.

So the most noble of the Marvel™ superheroes, the WWII hero frozen for decades only to become the modern-day embodiment of old school manly virtues, knew how to have a manly great time? Thanks for noticing the connection, Hollywood. And real men are *still* connecting through harmony ...

See the trailer at bit.ly/CaptainShop. ■





Be an effective quartet or chorus spokesman

So your quartet (or chorus) has picked up a performance and you have been designated as spokesman. No problem: a quick look through the repertoire, pick some songs, think about a couple of jokes, perhaps even do some ad-libbing to show how talented you are as a comedian, and you're ready to go!

Hang on there, Sparky—not so fast.

Questions to answer before each gig

There is more to this spokesman thing than simply talking after each song while the rest of the quartet sips some water. Answer these questions first:

Who is our audience? This affects both the song choice and the talking material.

What is the age group? Ditto.

Are there any dignitaries? If you have a chance to meet them before the performance, they *might* be willing targets for a story. (An old politician's adage: "I don't care what you say about me so long as you pronounce my name correctly.") Make an advance connection.

What is the function? This can provide additional material for chatter and create a positive connection with the audience.

Is it a fundraiser? For whom? You will endear yourselves to the audience if you connect your performance to the support of something very important to them. Such a lasting impression will help those watching remember you when they are later looking for their own groups' entertainment.

What is the venue? Hall, theater, cocktail party, outside? Some venues support talking and some do not. Be wise.

Are we the headliners? If not, who is? This can affect not only how much you say but what you say. Trying to upstage a headliner with longer stories or funnier material will endear you to nobody. Remember, you are there to sing.

How big is the anticipated audience? If you relate your story to the audience, your group will make a better connection.

Putting together the performance

First, agree on the song sequence and what, if anything, you are going to say between songs. The next

question is *when* to talk. See the sidebar for an example of a strong seven-song package. Now answer these questions:

What about jokes? Don't use them unless you are a great joke teller. If you do tell a joke, try to relate it to the quartet, to members of the audience or to the group for which you are performing. Don't tell a joke without practicing it as if it were a song. Keep it G-rated and keep it short. You are there to sing.

What about stories? They can be very effective for mood or as a setup for ballads or novelty songs. Make sure you have all the facts right, particularly if it was a story recited to you. Keep it short. You are there to sing.

Ad-libbing? Many of us can get our friends to laugh at our spontaneous comments during chapter meetings or quartet practice; but successfully ad-libbing for an audience that doesn't know you requires a higher level of skill, plus a lot of practice. Those who have training (like Toastmasters) may be able to do that, but the average person cannot and should not.

Get help with your whole show package

You are now thinking, "My goodness, this is tough stuff. Do I have to think about all of this and more

for every performance? Why can't we just do our canned performance? Audiences seem to like us. Admittedly, we don't get invited back by that group, but they got their money's worth." Never forget: a well-planned performance welcomes repeat performances.

You'd never perform a song until you'd practiced it and polished it—why wouldn't you do the same for your talking? Practice your delivery and get feedback from an experienced performance coach. If you want to work through some performance scenarios in a non-performance environment to get ready for that show, attend Harmony University's Spokesman for Quartets class.

Heed all the questions outlined in this article and they will eventually become second nature. Tailor-

ing your words to the audience and practicing your delivery in advance can make all the difference between an okay show and a memorable one—a show that gets you many more gigs in the future! ■



Segment order for a seven-song set

1. **Song 1:** Grab the audience with best up tempo
2. *Talk here? If you've been introduced, don't do it*
3. **Song 2:** Another Tempo song
4. *Talk to relax audience and relate to event*
5. **Song 3:** Slow it down
6. *Good opportunity for "fun" talk, setup of next song, or wait for one song*
7. **Song 4:** Swing or show tune
8. *Definite opportunity for "fun" talk to set up the next song*
9. **Song 5:** Novelty song
10. *Set up ballad: no joke here—perhaps a story that relates the message of the ballad*
11. **Song 6:** Strong ballad
12. *Fun story, thank audience, set up final ovation*
13. **Song 7:** Closer—strong finisher (leave them wanting more)



Barry Towner
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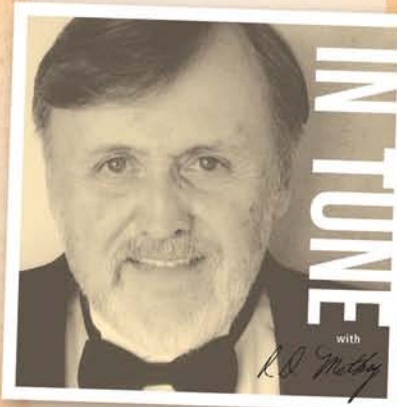
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STRINGS ATTACHED

CEO Marty Monson discusses the need for a culture shift

Lorin May: What are you talking about when you say “No Strings Attached?”

Marty Monson: We Barbershoppers don’t realize how much we are needed, or how much bigger the Barbershop Harmony Society’s footprint could be in each community if all 23,000 of us offered what we have freely, no strings attached. Our ability to Keep the Whole World Singing will increase exponentially when we join with others who want to promote singing.

Why work with others to promote singing?

We know to our toes what it means to sing and what it does to your soul, what it does to your emotions, to your family life. We know what it’s like at the end of the day to show up to a chapter meeting and know you’ve forgotten about your tough day because you are now in a different mode.

We take that for granted. We have overcomplicated what it is that we enjoy about this organization. We’ve gone into 500-page manuals to describe what that is. *We are a singing organization that has fun.* When people sing, they feel good. You can’t get in an argument while you’re singing. (Unless it’s about the wrong chords!) Kids who sing rarely get into trouble, and they grow up to live longer and more productive lives. The power of singing is the message we need to get out in the world. And we need to get more people singing—singing anything.



Lorin May
Editor,
The Harmonizer
LMay@
barbershop.org

Why not just focus on promoting barbershop harmony singing?

Of course we have a bias to barbershop. But our motto has

always been to Keep the Whole World Singing—singing *something*. They’ll get to know barbershop when they get to know us, but first others need to know that we’re true advocates of singing, no strings attached.

Look at the impact singing has on lives. No matter what you’re going through, you always have that to go back to. It is a way of life. That’s why churches love to have music—it’s so much more uplifting than hearing someone talk all the time. The music expresses a different emotion, a new energy, a new emotion; it’s just that simple.

Focus on getting more people singing *something*, and we can multiply our profile and our impact far above what we’re doing now. This is about what singing does for your soul. If people sing *something*, we win.



Is “No Strings Attached” a new Society program?

No, and it’s not even a slogan. We’re talking about a culture shift, one that is going to take a lot of time. I’m asking chapters, “What are you doing in your community? Are you making a difference?” That’s an important question if your chapter is doing well. It’s especially important if your chapter is struggling.

We need to stop working separately from each other and from others who have an interest in promoting singing. Our impact can grow only as quickly as the barbershop culture shifts from looking inward to looking outward. A key part of that is giving without the expectation of receiving.

“We need to stop working separately from each other and from others who have an interest in promoting singing. Our impact can grow only as quickly as the barbershop culture shifts from looking inward to looking outward. If people sing *something*, we win.”

If it's not a program, then what do you hope chapters do?

Share the joy of singing and let the chips fall where they may.

Sing with quality, expression, emotion and excitement. Work with partners whether or not they want to sing barbershop. We can't make everyone love barbershop harmony, but we can make everyone love Barbershoppers.

There is no perfect answer because every community is different, every chapter has different skill sets. It's not "one size fits all." But there is so much we can do if 23,000 members work together and join forces with the millions of others who recognize the impact that singing can have on individuals and communities.

Where can a chapter or quartet begin?

For example, join with others to promote singing among elementary-age children. Four-part harmony isn't really an option for them, but get them singing. Go to the concert of a middle school or high school choral program. Fill up some of the empty seats. Just go and support them. Maybe even show up early and watch all the preparation going on. Choral directors have so many details to take care of, and after it's all set they're supposed to flip the switch and put on artistry. (Yeah, right.) See what they need. Ease their burdens, boost their program. After attending three or four choral concerts, introduce yourself, talk about their needs and pledge to do something specific and meaningful. Just tell them you want to support others who love singing—no strings attached.

Are we stopping or changing our traditional Youth in Harmony programs?

What chapters have been doing is awesome. Don't stop. Be proud to use the power of our music. But start viewing

Be proud to use the power of our music. But start viewing all the people who want to promote singing—singing *anything*—as part of our team.

all the people who want to promote singing—singing *anything*—as part of our team.

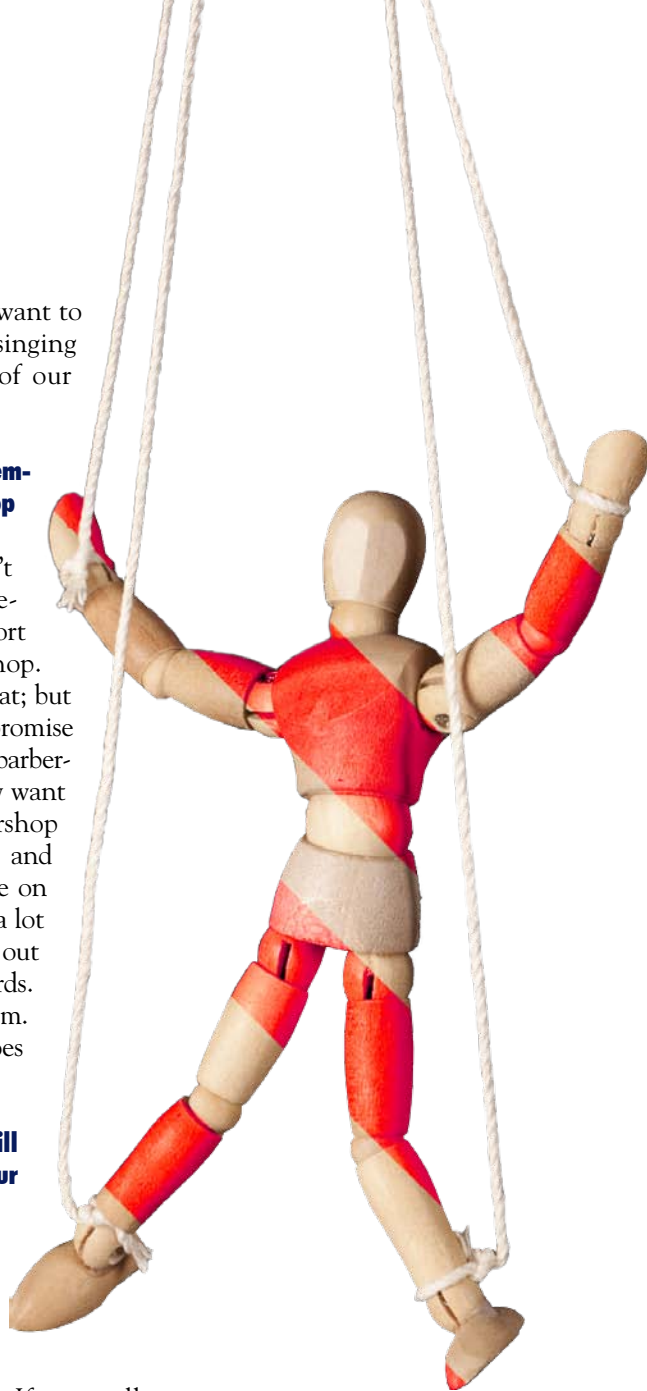
Does that mean de-emphasizing barbershop harmony?

Not one bit. Just don't give anyone reason to believe that you'll only support groups that sing barbershop. If they want to sing it, great; but live up to the no strings promise and support them either in barbershop or whatever else they want to sing. Represent barbershop harmony by singing well, and let them come to our style on their own terms. It solves a lot of challenges when you go out there and really ring chords. This isn't about us vs. them. This is about what music does for your soul.

You said a culture shift will take a long time. What's your vision for the future?

We are, right now, the biggest organization of singers in the world. There is no other association of singers like we have in the barbershop world. If you pull all of us together, Barbershoppers and others who know how singing changes lives, we can start working on common goals and efforts. *We* are the juggernaut that can work with others to make this happen. If not us, then who?

A lot is at stake. We have a social responsibility to take our art form to the world, to allow our singing to be expressive and change lives—just like we've all been changed because of our involvement. It's not just about four voices. It's about the power of 23,000 and the millions who sing with us by attending our concerts, events, etc. Let's be that powerful voice that tells and shows the world how singing changes lives. ■



"No Strings Attached" is indeed not a Society program or a slogan, but part of a larger culture shift that will need to take place over the course of years. "No Strings Attached" is an critical ingredient for a new direction that will be discussed in future issues. Watch for the Jan./Feb. 2014 issue of The Harmonizer for an explanation of how this vision will help build the Barbershop Harmony Society's brighter future.

Real Men (help others) Sing

The ACDA's Scott Dorsey on how to best help music educators

Imagine walking into rehearsal next week to find that the chorus' balance had changed. Instead of a generally equal division of parts in your 48-voice group, you now see what's in the below triangle.

With very few exceptions, a good sound in a vocal ensemble is built upon a pyramid, with a slightly larger number of voices singing the fundamental of the chord structure. It would be nearly impossible to create any sort of pleasing blend or balance with the division of parts indicated in the accompanying figure (quartets are the exception). It's also safe to say you could kiss a district trophy 'bye-'bye.

Tragically, that inverted pyramid is exactly what faces a huge proportion of public school choir directors every day as they struggle to provide an engaging and successful choral experience to their students. Simply replace the barbershop voice parts above with a standard SATB voices and you can see the problem.

This problem—specifically, not enough males singing in the school chorus—is a problem affecting the entirety of the choral art form. It is, though, a problem that a local Society chapter can help repair.

Switch parts? You wish!

Because of the peculiarities of the post-pubescent male voice, we adult guys find it easier to switch parts than do our singing sisters. It would be easy for some of the gents in your chorus to switch when the director says, "Hey, we need four baritones to sing tenor on this piece" (thank you, falsetto).

The choral conductor at the local middle school does not have that same level of flexibility. It is critical to the healthy development of the voice that young singers be carefully placed in an appropriate vocal part. One cannot simply transplant a

14-year-old soprano into the bass section.

The fact of the matter is that there are vastly more young women interested in singing than young men. True, there has always been a need for more male singers; J.S. Bach was faced with the same issue almost three centuries ago. However the tectonic pressures leveled against school-age kids in the early 21st century have made getting guys to sing in the choir a challenge worthy of Hercules.

Real men (help others) sing

More than ever, young men need the one-to-one influence of positive male role models. We need (both for the singing arts and society in general) to help young males find a place in their school chorus. I can guarantee you that there are guys walking the hallways of your local school who would love to sing, but who are being prevented from doing so by a variety of factors (not the least of which are peer and societal constraints).

The local school has their finger on your pulse, and they need YOUR chapter's help.

Step up to the plate

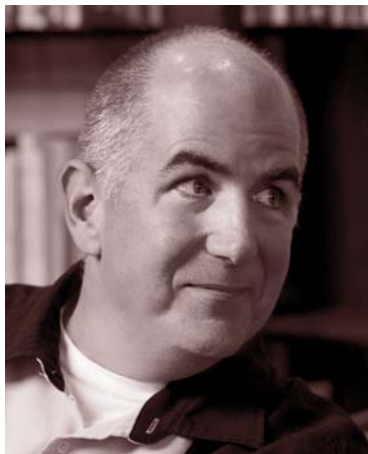
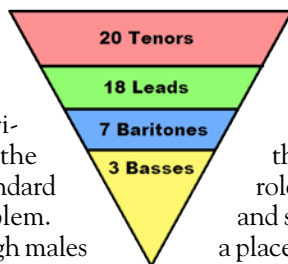
Choral directors are some of the busiest members of any school faculty. The demands on their time are staggering. So when you reach out to them—and you *should* reach out to them—do so in a way that they can actually fit into their day.

Step 1: Write the director a crisply worded email telling him/her that you want to help the cause. Offer to bring lunch to them during their planning or meal period for a brief introduction.

Step 2: With a smile on your face and a sandwich in hand, pose the following question: "Ms. Hoffman, if you had a group of 40 adult men who were prepared to invest time, energy, and resources to help your choral program, particularly as concerns helping you find more male singers for your choirs, what would you have them do? There are NO strings attached."

(The look on his or her face will be priceless.)

Step 3: Take careful notes, agree on a course of action and then follow through. A word of reality is probably necessary. By our very nature, we choral



Dr. Scott Dorsey
Director of Education and Communication,
American Choral Directors Association
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folks are altruistic, optimistic and passionate, which makes us easy prey for various slick-talking sleazebags.

All of us in this profession have been conned by self-serving hucksters (I myself have been blatantly lied to by college presidents, various professionals, and self-avowed "leaders" in the arts community who were dedicated solely to their own greed). If your

local school choral conductor believes that you are in it for the purpose of advancing your own agenda, the door will slam shut.

If you are genuine in your desire to help your sing-

More than ever, young men need the one-to-one influence of positive male role models. There are guys walking the hallways of your local school who would love to sing, but who are being prevented from doing so by a variety of peer and societal constraints.

ing colleague, then listen carefully to her suggestions. Her concerns may not make any sense to you at all; remember that challenges faced by teachers are complex and often confusing.

Your chapter's involvement in the school choral program will help them in ways you cannot imagine. The quid pro quo of

course, will be that you will make a friend and ally of the school's choral music staff. After that relationship blossoms, the opportunities for mutually beneficial collaboration will be limitless. ■



Quality quartets always a hit as mentors for young singers

International collegiate bronze medalist and 2012 JAD quartet champ **The Con Men** provided an enormous boost to the **Akron, Ohio Chapter's** Youth in Harmony program. A Dec. 13, 2012, visit with Tom Gentry to three area high schools helped cement relationships with the area schools. David Strasser (T), Matthew Hopper (L), Russell Watterson (Br) and Brent Suver (Bs) met as freshman at Capital University in Bexley, Ohio, and all sing with 2013 International chorus medalist **The Alliance**.

They treated area students to first-rate singing, promoted the Singing Buckeyes Harmony Camp, taught tags and mingled gracefully with the young



The Con Men were a big hit as performers and mentors as they worked with students at three high schools in Marion, Ohio.

performers. The Youth in Harmony team encouraged the formation of high school quartets and offered to support them with sheet music, learning tracks and coaching. One of the chapter's goals is to spawn student quartets that can compete in district contests and perform on chapter shows.

Dozens of students at each school watched, sang with and sang for the quartet. Green High School had been prepped by an earlier visit by the Akron Chapter's **Keyed Up** quartet. Some male students expressed interest in attending Harmony Camp and in forming a quartet.

About 80 male singers at Firestone High School, Akron's magnet school for the performing arts learned the "Impossible Dream" tag from The Con

Men. So impressed was the choral director that she asked the quartet to linger for her female ensemble.

Kent Roosevelt High School choral director Corey Fowler brought nearly 100 choral students in the school's auditorium. The quartet later participated in a lengthy coaching session with the school's quartet, **Tetrad**. The chapter later featured the quartet on its

annual show. A week later, the quartet competed in the Johnny Appleseed District contest at Huntington, W. Va., where it won the high school division and scholarships to a district summer harmony camp. The chapter is also providing performance opportunities to **HERB** quartet of Medina High School.

— Mike Sitter, chapter Youth in Harmony chairman
msitter09@gmail.com



45 RPM quartet from Pride of Iowa Chorus at a half-day Harmony Workshop



Members of Ebb 'N Flow mentor students at a Big Chiefs Chorus high school outreach event



GNU Director Peter Benson rehearses with the combined choirs. 225 young men and 24 music educators attended the chapter's first "Real Men Sing" event

KYLE WEAVER

GNU goes stringless with "Real Men Sing"

One question asked during the Saturday Night Spectacular in Toronto was, "How can we help music educators attract and keep more young men in their choirs?" The **Great Northern Union** (GNU) had already been working on one answer to that question.

GNU's "Real Men Sing" event was built around one basic idea: encouraging young men to sing. It doesn't matter what you sing—just sing and share in the joy of music.

The one-day "Real Men Sing" event was offered to choral music educators in the region and open to young men in grades 7 through 12. This was an "all-comers" event, with no selection or audition process, nor was it only for a choir's "best singers."

The young men were divided into two different choirs: one comprised of young men in grades 7, 8 and 9. The other choir for young men in grades 10, 11 and 12.

The inaugural event was held in September of 2013. There were 225

young men and 24 music educators in attendance. Two choirs, grades 7-9 and another for grades 10-12, had just about equal numbers. Given it was the event's first year, we were thrilled to have those numbers.

GNU and **The Limestones**, an eight-member contemporary a cappella group from St. Olaf College, were both guest artists. Each conducted a master class during the day and performed on the festival concert that evening.

Educators teach all kinds of different styles of choral music. They are not necessarily attracted to an event that focuses exclusively on one style.

Goals of our Real Men Sing event

We had three basic goals in designing and building this event:

- Provide an atmosphere in which young men can have fun singing with other young men.
- Allow the students to experience a measure of success as singers in a choral ensemble.
- Provide positive male singing role models for younger men.

The event was also designed to ad-



Jeff Taxdahl

President, Hilltop,
Minn. Chapter

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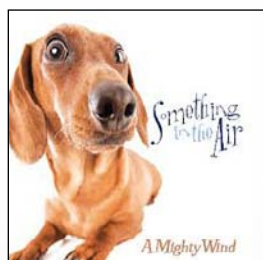


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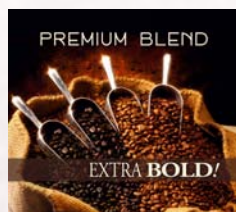
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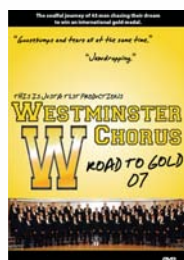


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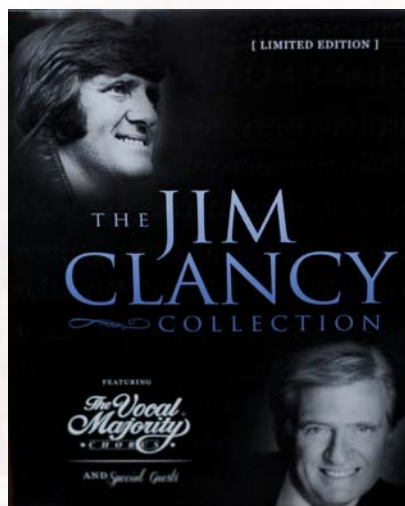
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LIFE WITHOUT MUSIC WOULD B

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I SING TEE

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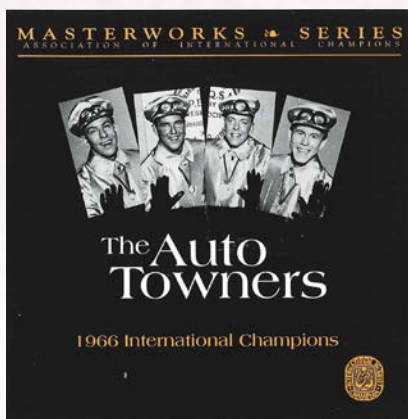
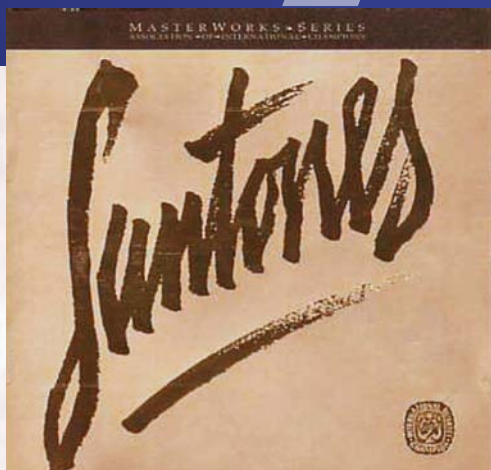
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dress the needs of music educators as they work to build their choral programs. A number of key elements helped attract music educators and motivate them to recruit and bring students to this Saturday event:

- **It wasn't about singing barbershop.** These educators teach all kinds of different styles of choral music. They are not necessarily attracted to an event that focuses exclusively on one style. The students would be learning and singing three songs for the festival concert. Two were standard choral repertoire appropriate for the two groups' ages, skill level and changing voices. The third was a barbershop song they sang in a mass choir with the GNU.

- **The registration fee for each student was just \$5.** That made it very affordable for any student.

- **The GNU's reputation.** Music educators in the region have seen and heard the GNU in performance a number of times over the past few years at state and regional ACDA conventions. They know the GNU, how well we sing, and our reputation for excellence as role models with good singing technique. We do a lot of the things vocally that they are trying to teach their kids to do.

- **The directors of each choir were well-known and well-respected choral music educators.** One was GNU Musical Director Peter Benson, who is a trained and accomplished music educator.

- **It was an all-male event.** One teacher com-

mented on how important it was that there were no girls there. It took the pressure off the young men to try and impress the girls, giving them an opportunity to focus on singing.

- **Free lunch and t-shirt.**

The event was held at Bethel College in St. Paul, Minn., a small liberal arts college with excellent facilities. The students had their choice of lunch items at the school's cafeteria for lunch and received a free t-shirt with a contemporary design.

- **Festival Concert.** The day ended with a performance by each choir, The Limestones and the GNU. It gave the students an opportunity to perform for their parents and see the other groups in performance.

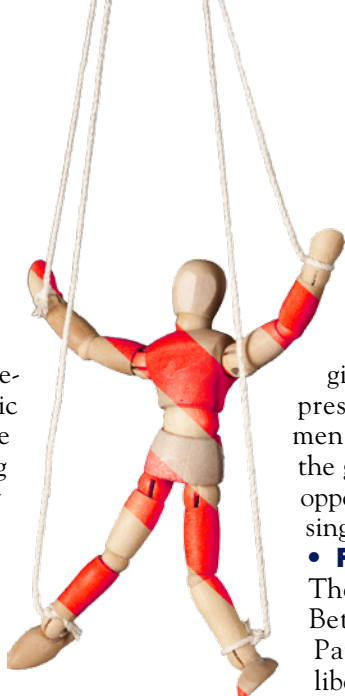
- **Outside support helped us think big.** A \$10,000 grant for this event came from the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council in the Twin Cities. That really helped cover our costs and keep the registration fee very low. Tickets for the festival concert were \$10, which allowed entire families to see their children on stage and experience the GNU for the very first time.

Find out more details about the event at <http://gnurealmensing.wordpress.com>. ■

Music educator feedback

You never know how you may impact someone with an event like this. One teacher told me of a junior high student from a family that has fallen on hard economic times. After lunch, this young man told his teacher that was the best meal he had eaten in months. That, my friends, is making the music that is making a difference. Here are some of the comments we received from teachers after the event.

- "I think the best terms I can use to describe the feeling they exude now are "passion," "pride" and "confidence." Words cannot describe how appreciative I am for all of you understanding the importance of music in the lives of these boys. Singing is something that they can do for a lifetime and you so eloquently displayed this with the diversity of the Limestones and the GNU chorus. Thank you again for this wonderful opportunity and I look forward to next year!"
- "It had a huge impact on my students. Before the festival was even over, they were asking about going to this event next year. The men sang all the way home on the bus. Their enthusiasm was seen the next day in Men's Chorus Rehearsal. They gained a confidence that they can sing "all this stuff."
- "This event has energized my choral program. Boys who told me they didn't think they could sing are now singing out with more confidence."
- "Well, now you just created more work for me. Thanks. The boys I took want to start a cappella group. They want to meet before school. I am auditioning beat-boxers next week. They want T-shirts and to tour 8th-graders. What on Earth have you started?"
- "I loved that the performing groups represented so many different types of choral singing. Please maintain that."



Both the middle school and high school choruses performed two pieces of standard choral repertoire, then performed a barbershop number with the GNU Chorus.

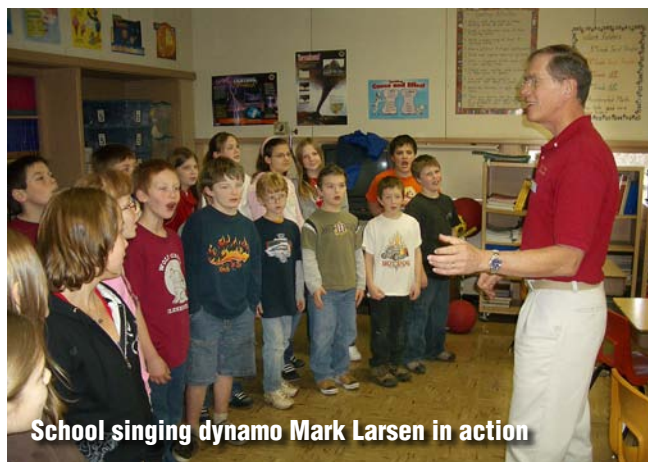


Share the gift of singing and watch what happens!

The answer to one chapter's problems was to get school children singing

Seven years ago, the **Rogue Valley, Ore., Chapter** was shrinking, aging and broke. Today, it is happy, growing, singing better than ever, drawing larger audiences—and getting \$400 per man in donations from community leaders every year.

What did the chapter do to fix itself? *It consciously focused on something other than fixing itself*, says Bob Hall, chapter VP of Marketing. The transition from “obscure chorus” to “community pillar” began when they realized that one of their community’s problems—school kids were no longer learning to sing—was right in their wheelhouse. As they have sought the help of others to address this problem, new opportunities, partnerships, extra gigs, community prestige and outside funding have followed.



School singing dynamo Mark Larsen in action

Be the solution to a community need

As outlined in the March/April 2011 issue of *The Harmonizer*, members spent time assessing the strengths and weaknesses of both the chapter and of the community. Then they looked for ways in which a chapter strength could address a community weakness (and perhaps vice-versa).

A lack of singing in the schools was a widely recognized problem, and the chapter had members with the time and enthusiasm to address it. (Mark Larsen and Bob Meisner led the effort.) They would have to look outside the chapter to get support from the schools and funding for song books. They obtained both, thanks to good planning and reaching out to others.

In seven years, more than 4,000 area kids have participated in the chapter’s “Get America Singing, Again” effort, named after the music book of the

same name. (Published by the Society in collaboration with NAFME and ACDA, available at www.harmonymarketplace.com.) The chapter is widely recognized in the community for its support of singing and now enjoys a seat at the “popular kids table” of community affairs. Recently, the chapter has even begun teaching an a cappella course to dozens of kids who lack a formal choral program at their high school. (Mark Larsen leads that effort as well. See sidebar below.)

Principles of success

Following are principles that Bob Hall says have been essential to the chapter’s success.

Solving someone else’s problem gains you far more friends. If you are motivated by the need to boost your chapter’s membership numbers or bottom line, don’t expect much outside help. “If you are looking



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Lorin May
Editor,
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For students of one high school, a twice-weekly a cappella class taught by members of the **Rogue Valley, Ore., Chapter** is the **only** singing option available from the school. About three dozen students signed up for the a cappella elective after the school released its band teacher, who had also been teaching choir. The chapter stepped in, having already built a strong working relationship with the school superintendent during seven years of teaching singing in elementary schools. The chapter is doing its best to bridge the musical gap while encouraging the



Bob with a mixed quartet

district to hire a full-time music educator.

The students wanted to learn something contemporary, so the chapter commissioned

famed arranger Kirby Shaw to create mixed voice versions of “When I’m Gone” (“The Cups Song” made famous in the movie *Pitch Perfect*) that are suitable for high school voices. (Donations from community leaders were already in hand.) The students can’t wait to perform it for their peers. The chapter, which now owns the rights to the song, is looking at ways it could someday be available through the Society. Kirby Shaw, meanwhile, is creating barbershop arrangements of contemporary songs specifically for widespread release by the Society.

for friends to help you carry *your* burdens, those are hard to find,” Bob said. “If you are looking for friends to help you carry *someone else’s* burden, they are very easy to find.”

Go where you are needed. “When you are talking, you are selling. When you are listening, you are marketing,” he said. Rather than build a program in isolation and try to sell educators on it, the chapter has talked to educators, leaders and donors and addressed a problem that they all recognized, and in a manner others found compelling.

Be patient as you develop resources. A successful outreach requires planning, time, talent, training and financial resources. “Your program will be the product—not the sum—of all those factors multiplied together,” Bob warned. “Zero times any number is still zero.” In other words, if any of the above factors is missing, nothing much will happen. Assess what resources you do have and make a plan to acquire those you don’t have.

Have specific plans. “The schools are in trouble—you don’t have to sell that idea at all,” Hall said. “You just need to be specific and have a plan that others can get behind.” The chapter’s pitch is simple: “These kids don’t have music,” Bob said. “If [community leaders] can provide the money, we can provide the time.”

You probably have more to offer than you realize. “Every chapter has guys who can stand in front of a group and who like to sing,” Hall said. “That’s what Barbershoppers like to do, and most of the general public doesn’t have that. You don’t have to be a great solo singer, you just need the time, planning and ability to follow through.”

Support singing, not only barbershop singing. While Barbershoppers wish to promote our style of music, that’s not what motivates others in the community. “It’s easier to sell, ‘These kids don’t have music and we’re helping them sing’ than it is to convince community leaders to support one older a cappella tradition,” he said. The students experience the joy of singing many kinds of music, barbershop included, and everybody wins.

Donors are eager to fund an effective plan. “Some people remember when people were more community-oriented, and they want to help the communities they live in remember those values and those ways,” Bob said, “but they aren’t in a position to do it.” He merely needs to present the chapter’s program to get more youth singing and people immediately respond.



Tone Deaf (tenor Michael Biggs, lead Thomas Walker, bari Al Robins and bass Douglass Borngasser) brings the funny in one of their many school performances.

Why did the chickens cross the stage? To get to the Cook Islands!

To what length would you go to spread the joy of barbershop and help others? Would you dress up in a chicken suit in the middle of summer singing fowl parodies like “Don’t Fry With Me” or “The Chicken Sings Tonight”? **Tone Deaf** quartet would and does ... REGULARLY!



Tone Deaf quartet, part of the **Rogue Valley, Ore. Chapter**, was invited by the Ministry of Education of the Cook Islands to entertain and educate 1800+ school children on the main island of Rarotonga. To help raise money, they had the honor of participating at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, where they wowed the crowd with their great singing and endless supply of chicken jokes. What better way to tell chicken jokes than to be dressed in feathers and tights, right? (The bass is a penguin because he’s a frozen chicken. The lead is a little too shy to come out of his shell. You get the picture.)

They are planning to introduce barbershop in the Cook Islands through concerts and teaching tags in the native language. They also plan to promote cultural understanding and develop personal relationships among the children of Rogue Valley and Rarotonga by facilitating the exchange of letters and photographs. They also plan to perform a school fundraiser for the Cook Island schools that will include performances by musicians and dancers of Rarotonga, with all proceeds going back to the Cook Island schools.

It appears that Tone Deaf quartet not only has a sense of humor, but an incredible sense of philanthropy as well. It looks like they’re doing #10 of the Code of Ethics very proud:

10. We shall render all possible altruistic service through the medium of barbershop harmony.

“They will offer money even without the ask,” he said.

Get support at the top. Hall said one of the biggest barriers to connecting with music educators is the fear that they could get into trouble if they innovate. “School districts tend to be hierarchal, rules driven,” he said. “Teachers tend to be very protective and feel their jobs are at risk if anything unusual is done.” His chapter’s success is partly due to seeking the superintendents’ blessing to accept his chapter’s help in their schools. “If the superintendent says he or she wants it, your task is incredibly easier,” he said. “The teachers’ ‘We can’t do anything’ changes to ‘How can we help you?’ Now you fit into their program.” ■

Youth in Harmony has always been “No Strings”

Pride of Iowa teams with Sweet Adelines to grow area Youth in Harmony

The Pride of Iowa's Youth in Harmony Program is in its sixth year. In previous years, the chapter has conducted both a half-day school-week workshop in early November, and “Harmony Nights,” in which the chorus visits a school where the young men and chorus learn a song and tags then present a short show. Last year, the chapter partnered with the Sweet Adelines

Harmony Central chorus to offer a joint workshop.

Over the past five years, the Pride of Iowa chapter has established relationships with area high school music directors, and based on those collaborations and evalu-



experiences to our students not found in other areas of high school music.”

These same vocal directors have also requested the participation of young women and have requested barbershop sheet music for their own performance curricula. The school year format encourages the formation of high school quartets, which then look forward to performing at the free concert at the conclusion of the workshop. It also encourages schools to integrate these songs into the curriculum and school shows and concerts.

For next year's Harmony Explosion Workshop, 100 male and 100 female singers are expected at the workshop. They'll have their charts already memorized, so they will be fully prepared to learn vocal production and performance skills in the barbershop style.

Pride of Iowa members' contributions to Harmony Foundation's Ambassadors of Song and Presidents Council provide a significant amount of the funding necessary to support the Youth in Harmony Program. A third of the chapter's members contribute to Harmony Foundation, with Donor's Choice allocations dedicated to Youth in Harmony programs and chorus coaching and improvement. The chapter actively seeks grants and contributions from patrons, local foundations and businesses.

A local television news channel created a video of a Harmony Event event at bit.ly/IowaYiH.



ations from the annual events, the chapter has changed the workshop from a half-day school week event to a full-day Saturday event during the spring, 2014.

Heather Nail at West Des Moines Valley Southwoods Freshman High School has assisted with scheduling, planning, design and promotion of the Youth in Harmony program. This past summer, she prepared and distributed flyers at the Iowa Choral Directors Association Summer Symposium.

“Opening up young, interested students to a new form of music has been not only fun but a rigorous challenge, she said. “I believe in a holistic education that exposes students to proper technique, differing styles, and opportunities that are varied and suit the diverse student populations. This workshop and performance help give unique



Seattle quintet helps launch Calgary's youth outreach

The **Western Hospitality Singers** hosted Calgary's first-ever Youth Harmony Workshop at Bishop Grandin High School on Oct. 5. Sixty-one young men from five Calgary high schools attended the full-day "Harmony Explosion" workshop, focused on improving a cappella singing and performance skills.

Traveling from the Seattle area were clinician Donny Rose and the young and enthusiastic teaching quartet **Code Blue**, members of the **Northwest Vocal Project**. Using interactive techniques and a fun, fast-paced approach, Donny taught new four-part a cappella harmony songs to be performed for families and friends at the end of the day.

Both the chapter and Sing Canada Harmony funded this workshop. Feedback from the boys was overwhelmingly enthusiastic and positive. With remarks like "I never thought I could learn so much good stuff about singing in one day" and "Wait 'til my friends hear me now!" it's a safe prediction that the workshop will be expanded to include more high school music students and teachers and repeated next year.

The event concluded with 20 members of Western Hospitality Singers joining the students and Code Blue on stage to perform the signature song of the Barbershop Harmony Society, "Keep The Whole World Singing."

Clinician Donny Rose



Members of Big Chiefs Chorus help young singers inspire even younger singers

Members of the **Pontiac-Waterford Chapter's Big Chiefs Chorus** and their member quartets **Limited Edition** and **Bidin' Our Time** have made mentorship the cornerstone of their partnership with middle and high school men's choirs. Through a series of demonstrations and coaching sessions, the Barbershoppers have become trusted resources and models for younger singers, who in turn have sought further exploration of barbershop and mutual performances.

It began in part when Milford High School student Michael Oberstadt brought his dad and three other "Chiefs" to the high school in the spring of 2010 to sing for and with teacher Maryanne Lambrecht's a cappella ensemble, **Men of the Chorus**. This led to annual "high school night" chapter meetings attended by Ms. Lambrecht and her boys. Mentor quartet Limited Edition subsequently

worked with an eight-man ensemble, and performed with them on the school's spring concert.

This success carried into the next school year, when all the young men in choirs at the Milford and Lakeland High Schools, and their feeder middle schools combined to form a 100-voice chorus for a day-long tour of elementary schools, and performed for nearly 700 kids.

"The multi generational aspect is really powerful for the kids and the staff. The message that you can sing when you are grown up, that men sing, is so big and so important."

"The multi generational aspect is really powerful for the kids and the staff," said the instructors. "The message that you can sing when you are grown up, that men sing, is so big and so important. It is hard to believe our students don't know these things, but they don't."

Further appearances and collaborations fueled the fire, and this past summer, with financial support from the chapter and from their teacher, the students attended the Harmony Explosion camp at Central Michigan University. Afterward, Maryanne wrote, "The guys that went to the camp came back really excited and so did my young lady. I know the guys would like to see the connection to Barbershop grow. It is the first time in their life where they can watch people singing, and the men are the majority not the minority. For our young men, it is a powerful visual."



The Pontiac-Waterford Chapter helped take a 100-voice male chorus from three schools on a day-long tour of area elementary schools. They performed more more than 700 kids.

JEFF DOIG

First-ever Pittsburgh YiH Festival

On Saturday, Oct. 5, 2013, 30 girls, seven boys and four teachers joined the **Sweet Adelines Greater Harmony Chorus** and **North Hills Harmony Line Chorus** for a day of singing followed by an evening performance. Two of the teachers were totally unfamiliar with the barbershop style and are now completely hooked.

Chuck May, Director of Greater Harmony Chorus, and Jennifer Fogle, Assistant Director of Greater Harmony, directed the boys and girls choruses. The gym



was full for the 5:30 show and additional seats had to be brought in. The Second Annual Pittsburgh Youth Harmony Festival is already set for Oct. 4, 2014.

Kitsap Chordsmen expect nothing back for their giving but gain plenty all the same

For Washington's **Kitsap Chordsmen** (EVG), the key to our good working relationships with local high school choral teachers has been to recognize their busy load and find ways to help them generate interest in singing without adding any unnecessary burden. We have also been providing financial support to help in these times of restricted budgets when cuts are made in music programs.

In 2013, the Chordsmen ramped up our efforts when we began including a Youth Division in our annual West Sound A Cappella Festival, with cash prizes.

attended Harmony College Northwest in the summer, and this gave a real boost to our younger members.

One key is that these educators recognize we are there to help them and expect nothing in return; however, that hasn't stopped participating young men from getting hooked on their own. The A Cappella Festival led directly to one young man joining our chapter, and we gained another from the workshop, along with the father of another participant. A continuing relationship with one high school brought us three young members who have started a high school barbershop quartet.

The high point for our 2013 outreach efforts was an Aug. 9 Youth in Harmony Workshop led by 2012 Champion **Ringmasters** the day before they appeared on our annual show. The all-day workshop introduced the 32 youth participants (slightly more boys than girls) to a cappella singing, vocal production, and the intricacies of barbershop harmony. Ringmasters thrilled all those present and shared their excitement for barbershop harmony.

On our annual show the next night, we invited all youth participants to join us and Ringmasters on stage for a reprise of a chorus song they had learned the previous day. We are having our Christmas Show at a local high school and are incorporating a couple of their a cappella groups. We are also singing a set for the

Christmas concert at another high school.

It has been a very fruitful relationship for all involved. It is especially valuable for high school students to see adults enjoying singing later in life. ■

— Ric Cederwall, Music & Performance VP
Kitsap County Chapter, ric@stanfordalumni.org



2012 champ Ringmasters conducts an all-day summer youth workshop in Washington state.

Youth participants represented three different high schools. Our support of youth music education led to a chance for our chorus to sing on the spring shows at two high schools, where our four youth members sang with us as well as with their choirs. (Their fellow students thought that was pretty cool!) Our chorus

Be Our Guest

How traveling Barbershoppers can be great guests—and how chapters can make an enjoyable meeting for either a visiting Barbershopper or a first-time guest

I've got a cool job right now. I'm in the Army and have a consulting/training job that requires me to travel around the country to various Army posts domestically and overseas. As an avid Barbershopper, I have visited a wide variety of Society chapters during my many trips. In fact, because of my inability to attend rehearsals at my home chapter with any sort of frequency, visiting other chapters has become my primary barbershop choral experience.

By and large, my visits have been overwhelmingly positive, and I credit all those fellow Barbershoppers serving as "Guest Coordinator" or "Greeter." But some experiences have been better than others. As a process improvement guy, I can't help but want to pass on some lessons learned from my travels in the hopes that even more guests, like me, have awesome experiences visiting other chapters.

Tips on being a great guest

1. Call ahead. Be sure the chapter is actually holding its meeting and is not at a performance or taking a night off. They might have even changed rehearsal locations. The chapter website may offer directions, times, and locations, which may or may not have been recently updated. The Point of Contact (POC) is the most important information there. (You can also find local chapters and POC info at ebiz.barbershop.org.)



Niel Johnson
Member, General
Assembly Chorus
drniel@aol.com



Author and long-time Barbershopper Niel visits an Alexandria Harmonizers rehearsal with a guest he knew only as "Jared." This article discusses the relationship between chapter and guest, whether the guest is a long-time Barbershopper or a first-time visitor to a chapter meeting.

Don't be shy about calling; that's why the phone number is there.

2. Arrive a little early, but not too early. You'll want to check in, sign for a book, and meet a few members before the warm-ups start. They'll want to talk to you, but don't put them in the position of choosing between getting you checked in and starting their vocal warm-ups. Ten minutes or so should be good.

3. Participate 100%. This is your chance to experience another chapter's way of life. You don't do that by watching—get up there and sing! Learn their warm-ups, play their games, and get as much out of your experience as you can.

4. Be prepared to show off one of your talents. Can you teach a tag? Do you know a woodshedding melody? Can you sing in a step-out quartet? Even tell a good joke—they've probably never heard it before. Be ready to show a talent if invited to do so.

5. Sing their versions of songs. It doesn't help if you know another version of the song they're singing, even if you think your version is better (and it might be). Get over it and sing what's in your guest book. This can be challenging, but show them you are interested and respect

It's not your show. Unless the director specifically asks for feedback, do not offer any. You are not there to fix their meeting, so free yourself of the compulsion to do so. Just have fun!

Ensure guest books contain all the current repertoire.

Lending a guest a member's music might seem like a nice gesture, but now the guest will feel like he is imposing on someone.

their arrangement choices.

6. Be prepared for their routine.

It's their meeting, after all. You like quartetting and they don't? Oh well. You don't love tags, but they do? Oh well. Enjoy the parts you like and be a good guest.

7. Have some sound bites ready to go.

Invariably, someone's going to want to know what you do, where you're from, how you got into barbershopping, etc.

Think about how you would answer these questions, briefly and easily. Some chapters may ask you to introduce yourself at some point, so have the answers in your head so you can get through it quickly and get back to singing.

8. Don't try to change anything. Again, it's not your show. Unless the director specifically asks for feedback, do not offer any. Don't offer to share feedback later, either. You are not there to fix their meeting, so free yourself of the compulsion to do so. Just have fun!

9. Help out with risers at the end. Don't offer—just do it. Chances are they'll appreciate the help but try to pull you away. Still, try to help somewhere.

10. Follow-up. I wish I was more consistent about doing this, but it's important. Send a thank-you afterwards telling the chapter how much fun you had. Highlight one or two things you particularly enjoyed and point out something you really liked about their meeting. Not only does it close the loop for you on your end, they probably really value your feedback.

If the evening didn't go well, that's perhaps the only unsolicited feedback you might share—but only if you absolutely believe you can share something the chapter is likely to act upon. Connect with perhaps the membership VP or program VP or chapter president on an individual basis. Keep the emotion out of it and just share specific observations in a gracious and non-condescending manner.

How to be ready for visiting or potential Barbershoppers

Here are my tips for chapters who want to increase the chances of their guests having an awesome experience:

1. Be sure the Point of Contact man is ready. Identify who your guest POC is and ensure he will be there at least 10-15 minutes early looking out for both expected and unexpected guests. Have a back-up every week. Make sure that his POC information on the website and on ebiz.barbershop.org is correct. Make sure members of his household know he is the chapter's POC so that if they get a call from a stranger

asking about the next rehearsal, they know what's going on. Take a lesson from the **Palm Springs, Calif., Chapter**. The listed POC wasn't home when I called, but his wife had a card by the phone with all the information I needed, including directions.

2. Ensure your website information is thorough and up to date. Be sure any changes to the normal schedule

are reflected. Kudos to the **Lawton, Okla., Chapter** for clearly indicating which weeks they were at their one rehearsal site and when they were at the other. (Sorry I missed you; I was there on the off-week).

3. Prepare signage every week. Finding the building is up to the guest, but helping the guest find the correct room in the building is up to the chapter. If your rehearsal location isn't easy to find, put up signs directing guests to the right door, entrance, elevator, etc. Snaps to the **Temple, Texas Chapter** for doing this so well, as their elusive chorus room is one of many in a large performing arts center.

4. Have up-to-date and complete guest books ready to go. There's no need to have a massive archive of every song the chapter has sung in the past 20 years in the binder, but ensure the most recent versions of all the potential repertoire are in there. Oh, and lending a guest a member's book might seem like a nice gesture, but that's worse. You can't be sure it has the right stuff, and now the guest will feel like he is imposing on someone who now has no music. Get ahold of the guest book from the **Golf Capital Chorus** from Pinehurst, N.C., and you'll see a complete, up-to-date, and light-weight guest book that works great.

5. Wear your chapter name badges. Chapter members may not even know everybody's name, but I guarantee you the guests know nobody. Badges ensure everyone is known by name, and it sets the tone for a great first impression. To promote this behavior, the savvy Membership VP in the **General Assembly Chorus** in Raleigh, N.C., puts guest name tags on members who forget their badges. It works!

6. Have options available for different levels of participation. Some guests like to jump right in and sing; others just like to sit and listen. I've done both. Make it easy for your guests to feel comfortable picking an option to enjoy their evening. Visit the **Heart of America Chorus** in Kansas City, Mo., and see a large guest seating area filled with a small audience *and* other guests scattered about the risers singing—the best of both worlds!

7. Invite your guests to participate fully. Invite them to sing in a quartet, to participate in the choreography, or to teach a tag if they know one. Take advantage of this guy's talents—you never know how much fun he'll have unless he tries. Granted, he might need clearance from his physician if he visits the **Vocal Majority Chorus** in Dallas a month before contest in order to partake in their choreography, but that's what makes this so much fun.

8. Keep your business meetings short. This is generally good advice, whether you have guests or not. But take it from a guest who has endured some long ones. Ouch! If you have to go longer than 5-10 minutes, consider another activity for the guests. Maybe a chit-chat with the membership guy about requirements to join. Maybe someone can break away and do auditions. Maybe a hallway tag or Polecat with the other guests and a section leader. Something to show that you value their time and to keep the momentum going.

9. Recognizing guests? Keep it short and sweet, but do recognize them for coming. Your new members are among that group, and you don't want to overlook their enthusiasm. Oh, and this is important: if you sing a "Welcome" song, sing it well. Get blown away by the **Alexandria Harmonizer's** welcome tag and you'll know what I mean—you will feel *welcome!*

10. Don't overwhelm prospective members. Some guys mean well, but it's easy to accidentally overwhelm the guests with excessive membership encouragement. It's great to provide a brochure or something like that, but putting the high pressure sales on someone who just

Some guys mean well, but it's easy to accidentally overwhelm the guests with excessive membership encouragement. Putting the high pressure sales on someone who just came by to sing can be a turn-off.

came by to sing can be a turn-off. Also, if you have members that, for whatever reason, are not "happy" chapter members, try to gently steer them away from the guests. Guests (aka prospective members) are there to sing and have fun, not hear about the latest soap operas in the chapter.

11. Offer the guest a ride home, if you can. He might not need it, but he might be very appreciative. Going from the hotel to your rehearsal site might cost \$50 in taxi fares for just a 15-minute drive, and someone is bound to be going that way. A very classy touch to a great evening. I recall my visit to the **Heralds of Harmony** in Tampa, Fla., and they went above and beyond in offering me a lift back to the hotel.

12. Follow up. A brief, friendly follow-up email or card shows the guest that you enjoyed his or her visit and that you'd really like for them to come back. It also establishes an email contact that the chapter can use to promote a future show or special event, for example.

Conclusion

In summary, your membership in the Barbershop Harmony Society affords you the opportunity to share four-part chords with Barbershoppers across the Society. Seeing how other chapters experience the hobby is a lot of fun, and will add to your enjoyment of the hobby tremendously. Individuals can set themselves up for success by planning ahead for their visit and allowing themselves to simply enjoy their evening. Chapters that continually polish their guest program can increase their chances of their guests (and prospective members) having an awesome visit to their rehearsal. ■



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A Gold Medal Moment for two college quartets

Two 2013 International Collegiate Quartet Competitors, **'Shoptimus Prime** and **Pitch, Please**, had a simultaneous “gold medal service moment” when they took time out of their busy international contest schedule to be a part of the final presentation for the Harmony is Healing Campaign sponsored by Sing Canada Harmony.

Sing Canada Harmony teamed up with the Toronto SickKids Hospital's Treasure Box program, where they asked people to buy special bracelets. The proceeds benefitted both the hospital kids and also went toward a scholarship offered by Sing Canada Harmony. The Treasure Box program helps the kids have a positive hospital experience, and the money from the 500 donated bracelets created a scholarship for Pitch, Please to attend the convention. Along with



that, 'Shoptimus Prime received the Community Leadership Award from Sing Canada Harmony. Both of these inspiring young quartets had the honor of entertaining the event's audience. The bracelets were a hit, and the hospital's music therapy program utilized them as well.



Members of the Southern Gateway Chorus recently toured Ireland, and a special quartet had the honor of singing for the Lord Mayor of Dublin Oisín Quinn at his residence. We certainly hope he appreciated his serenade, because many people would pay high dollar to hear a performance by Ringmasters tenor Jakob Stenberg, Old School lead Joe Connelly and bass Joe Krones, and Marquis bari Paul Gilman. The quartet sang “The Old County Down” and then had tea and cookies. (Side note: That seems a like a good idea at any occasion.) To close out the visit, Southern Gateway sang “Irish Blessing” before going on its way. See both performances on YouTube at bit.ly/SGCDublin.



PHOTO BY STARLINE

The **Fun City Chorus (Hot Springs, Ark. Chapter)** recently serenaded the WWII bomber *Sentimental Journey* and her crew at the Hot Springs Memorial Airport. Chorus members were encouraged to wear any military gear to show their connection to the service to which they were affiliated. Many of the chorus members are retired military who served valiantly.

Especially honored was Dan Baker, a WWII veteran who served as a recon-

naissance scout in the "Ski Troops," the only army division trained for mountain and winter warfare. (It was later designated as the 10th Mountain Division and is still active today.) Baker was a scout in a platoon of 24 who fought in Italy's Apennines and the Alps. The Fun City Chorus is honored to have him singing in the chorus. Following the performance, Baker and Ernie Naydan, another WWII veteran, were asked to sign the bomb doors.

DO THIS: The Commemorative Air Force flies its restored aircraft on tour all over the nation. Check the calendar at commemorativeairforce.org for appearances at your local airfield, and offer to sing the National Anthem, Armed Forces medley or other appropriate songs in tribute to the men and women who served in and around these great birds..

Baker is standing front row center wearing the red shirt.

Gulf Tones Chorus helps honor Wounded Warriors

Members of the **Gulf Tones Chorus, Panama City, Fla. Chapter**, were recently honored to perform at the "Warrior Beach Retreat" opening ceremony held in Lynn Haven, Fla.

Fifty Iraq and Afghanistan Wounded Warriors and spouses or caregivers from all over the U.S. came to Panama City Beach to enjoy a seven-day retreat hosted by local businesses.

The guest speaker, U.S. Air Force Retired Lt General Bill Welser, walked among the Wounded Warriors and greeted attendees all around the church while delivering a dynamic presentation praising the Wounded Warriors for their service, calling them heroes, and thanking them for "standing up and bravely answering the call of duty when asked to do so."

During his speech, General Welser recognized two men in the large audience as World War II Veterans. The Gulf Tone Chorus was proud when the General walked into our seats and congratulated Hank Dusseault, age 92 and a 40-year Panama City Chapter member, for his World War II U.S. Army service. The Retreat is sponsored twice each year by "Warrior Beach Retreat, Inc" a local non-profit that honors Wounded Warriors.

— Sky Cunniff, *President Panama City Chapter*



SHE SAID YES! ... TO PROM. Who said barbershop quartets are only good for marriage proposals? Want to be voted "Best Boyfriend of the Year" in your high school yearbook? Hire Take Note quartet to help you ask your girlfriend to senior prom! High school senior, Ryan, called upon the quartet to help him surprise his girlfriend with an important question. As Take Note serenaded the blushing girl with "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" in front of a large crowd, Ryan waited patiently with a dozen roses. When the song ended asked her if she would go to prom with him. Watch it at bit.ly/takenoteprom. ■



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The Barbershop Harmony Society brings men
together in harmony and fellowship to enrich lives
through singing.

Vision

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



THE TAG

Joe Liles, Tagmaster!!



Warm up to this new tag for winter nights

Here we are, in the midst of a special time of year. Truth be known, each of the four seasons is loved in various degree by different folks. I enjoy them all just for the variety they bring. Each division brings with it characteristic scents, sounds, sensations, passions, emotions and music!

Ah, yes, music! I was contemplating the idea of writing a tag for each event and thought this might be

a good time to start. So, here's one for winter. Pretty timely, eh? The first things that came to mind were much-longer nights and beautiful snow. For a tag, that's about all of the room we have to cover. Then, too, if I stretched it to an entire song, we might celebrate many more of the facets of winter, but this page is about tags, right? Here it is in both male and female settings. Hope you enjoy it. ■

WINTER

Music score for Tenor Lead and Bari Bass. The score is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The lyrics are: Long nights call - ing, snow is fall - ing, it's that time of year, that time of year. year. year.

Joe Liles 2013

WINTER

for female voices

Music score for Tenor Lead and Bari Bass. The score is in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The lyrics are: Long nights call - ing, snow is fall - ing, it's that time of year, that time of year. year. year.

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