

January/February 2017

THE HARMONIZER

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY



HEALTHY CHAPTER INITIATIVE

What
makes a
chapter
healthy?

Decide for yourself &
grow a better future



INSIDE: Skipp Kropp talks the Society's future • Leading diverse generations • The 2016 district champions



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(ARR. SCOTT KITZMILLER)

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Having moved from chairman of the Strategic Planning Committee to Society President, Skipp gives insight into the Society's Strategic Plan
DAVID CALLAND

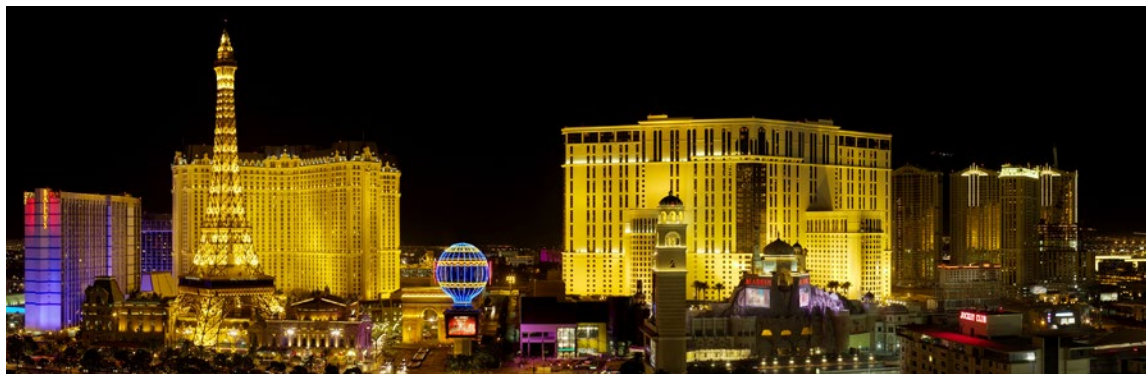
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KYLE WEAVER

WHO KNEW? Three years ago, we didn't know we would be returning to Vegas in 2017. But what a difference a mile down the road will make! Even though the party this time will be under these three roofs instead of one, somehow we'll still be less spread out and have far more options than for any convention we've ever had. And wait until you experience the venue!



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COVER BY EDDIE HOLT

Make the Music that Makes a Difference

It has been a whirlwind six months since I was honored by being elected president of the Barbershop Harmony Society for 2017. As I write this in December of 2016, things are happening pretty quickly. I was asked to prepare a program greeting for Midwinter, I'm working on my first *Harmonizer* column, I participated in an interview for the *Harmonizer* "meet the president" article, and I'm in the process of contacting committee chairs and candidates to make appointments. Who knew?

I also had the pleasure and honor of chairing the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) in 2015 and 2016. By now you know that, as part of the strategic planning process (in which we will develop a directional plan, to be reviewed annually, for the society over the next three to five years), we surveyed the membership twice in 2016. The first was to ask how we are doing with existing programs and the other was to ask you for future directional guidance. The



Our music makes a difference both to those of us who make it and those who experience it.

SPC and our Harmony Hall liaison, Kevin Lynch, are now working hard to analyze the data you provided and beginning to use that data to prepare an initial draft of a plan.

You'll get an update at Midwinter and the schedule calls for the strategic plan to be rolled out in May of 2017. Thanks to all who replied to our surveys. Your opinions count and you're being heard.

That said, it won't come as a surprise to you to hear that the survey data shows that we Barbershoppers are both a vocal and an opinionated lot, and we don't always agree on issues. Thus, when our strategic plan is published, some of you will immediately think "Wow! They were listening to *me*!" Others will read the plan and say "I knew it, they didn't care about what I said and the plan is nothing like what I want." We have diverse opinions on some matters and it's the job of the SPC and Society Board to decide which way we go on those, and I promise we will use all available data to make the best decisions for the Society as an entity. It's going to be an exciting year!

Finally, as has been a tradition of Society presidents for many years, I've spent a fair amount of time thinking about a slogan. You see the fruits of my brain labors, or labored brain, above: Make the Music that Makes a Difference. A couple of years ago, I was touched by Marty's use of the catch phrase "together,

making the music that's making a difference." I think that phrase captures our recent essence. We have been, and are making, a huge difference in the lives we reach. Our music makes a difference both to those of us who make it and those who experience it.

We touch the lives of tens of thousands more people than the number of us who are current Society members. Who among us hasn't sung at a nursing home, hospital, or assisted living facility and seen faces light up? I guarantee you that the results of such performances warm hearts of the performers as well as the recipients. We also touch the lives of tens of thousands of young people at harmony camps in whatever locations that we have members, and through the Youth Chorus Festival held every year at Midwinter since 2008.

As testimony to the value of our music, Harmony Hall receives a remarkable number of emails, videos, and social media posts recounting the manner in which our programs have positively affected the lives of those who have been able to participate in them, both in making and receiving our music.

All of that led me to believe that we should all be encouraged to sing as often as we can, and know that our music has an amazingly positive effect both on us as we sing and on those for whom we sing. Hence, a slogan that exhorts all of us to continue to make the music that makes a difference.

Get out there and sing!

Skipp

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It's *still* the best time to be a Barbershopper

"Now is the very best time to be a Barbershopper—more than ever."

That's how I led off my End of Year letter a year ago. It's *still* true. Our growth investments in programs, volunteer leadership, personnel and strategic planning have been unprecedented. We have added capacity to boldly expand support to the life of our chapters. We've embarked on a sweeping effort to understand our past and present barbershop world, as lived by you. We've reached more people with the sound of barbershop and the rewards of the barbershop experience: the joy of singing, the joy of friendship, the joy of joining together, and the joy of making a difference in people's lives. And we're just getting started.

Here are some of 2016's highlights:

Meaningful local and national media coverage. The media is interested in our impact.

More collaboration with the world's a cappella groups, helping all of us expand our audiences and outlook.

Music educators "get" barbershop! More and more attend Harmony University and regional Harmony Colleges, and more and more are attending Our Youth Chorus Festival and regional festivals and camps. They are beginning to understand our "no-strings-attached" support for their choral programs.

We are better understanding how we can help these music educators, while they train our future chorus and quartet singers and directors.

The Healthy Chapter Initiative (www.barbershop.org/healthy chapters). The bedrock of a healthy, growing chapter is a compelling weekly experience. The HCI addresses the entire experience: musical/artistic, social, leadership and community involvement. Self-assessments are paired with resources to help chapters determine their guiding star and reach their chosen futures. A dedicated full-time staff member serves as a direct point of contact for all chapters.

Harmony University Online. Our team released more than 50 new videos this year and even more class options at our week-long school in Nashville.

Sheet music. Our publications team has dramatically increased the number of titles published, and introduced more voicings for the education market (SSAA) and the growing fans of mixed harmony (SATB.)

The All-Chapter Chorus, Seniors Chorus Festival (pilot) at Midwinter expand participation options past the chapter chorus. Many districts now have similar options that give non-competing members the joy of singing at district conventions.

New leadership curriculum. Working through the Lead-

ership Operations Project Team, the "First Five" topics and the "THINK" program have already impacted 80-100 chapters. We've also published extensive new chapter business and financial documents and a User's Guide to the mandatory Financial Review process.

Leadership facilitators. We've certified 15 who will impact seven districts this Leadership Academy cycle and already have more than 200 hours of engagement with chapters in the last five months.

We are financially stable and positioned for strategic growth.

Our annual report reflects the health and well-being of our organization. **Even with flat or declining membership revenues,** we will see no Society dues increases for the fourth straight year, while growing our programs and budget by nearly 21%. **How? Through increased non-member interest in our programs.**

Member philanthropy continues to grow, with donations through Harmony Foundation International fueling programs in outreach, chapter support, and continuing education through Harmony University. Your contributions have reached over 100,000 people, which is significant growth given four years ago the Outreach department didn't even exist. Thank you!

Strategic planning to chart our future has focused on multiple member surveys and board and staff strategic planning kickoffs, and we have partnered with other leading choral societies in our choral "ecosystem." We are working to position our Society as a major arts organization that has a \$30 million annual impact.

A Better World. Singing. You are building it. We are building it. We are making a difference in people's lives with every chord.

What's on Marty's daytimer?

- Jan 14 - ILL Leadership Academy
- Jan 17-22 - Midwinter, San Antonio
- Jan 24 - NAfME Music Educator Roundtable
- Jan 27-28 - Wilmington, NC, Chapter visit
- Feb 7-9 - Medford OR
- Feb 8 - Hobbyist/Serious Leisure study, Nashville
- Mar 8-12 - ACDA National Convention, Minneapolis



What's Marty reading?

- The How of Audience Development for the Arts, Shoshana Danoff Fanizza

What's Marty listening to?

- Send me a sample and I will listen and share.

Follow Marty's social media

bit.ly/martyfacebook
twitter.com/Marty_Monson



Let's look at some of 2016's successes

Marty
CEO@barbershop.org



College president / music professor / chorus director to lead Harmony Foundation team

Perry White, D.M.A., has accepted the position of Chief Executive Officer of Harmony Foundation International and is scheduled to begin April 3, 2017.

"Members of the staff, the Board of Trustees and I are very enthusiastic to welcome a talented person uniquely passionate for both music and education, with a history of success in leadership roles," said Sharon Miller, Acting CEO of Harmony Foundation. "There are not enough words of gratitude for our search team, Shannon Elswick, Mike Deputy, John Miller, Brian Sagrestano, Ryan Killeen, Don Laursen and Lynn Weaver, who worked tirelessly to make this happen."

White has served as the president of Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., since 2010. During that time, his successful track record of leadership includes completing two strategic planning processes, leading a record-breaking fundraising year for the institution, and creating the Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Innovation.



In addition to his experience at Bethel, White has 32 years of experience with administrative focus on strategic planning, staff leadership/professional development and fundraising. Holding the degree Doctor of Musical Arts in Choral Conducting, his career track ultimately led him to Harmony Foundation where he can combine his love of music and philanthropy.

"I always intended to return to music in some fashion before my working years were through," White said. "However, I never expected such a perfect fit for my experience in choral music education, fundraising and organizational leadership to come



along this soon. I am thrilled and honored to join the Harmony Foundation team!"

White was selected from an extensive national search process led by Aspen Leadership Group. Once on board with Harmony Foundation, he will be located in Harmony Hall in Nashville, Tenn. He will assume the leadership role from Miller, who is the immediate past chair for the HFI Board of Trustees.



HARMONY UNIVERSITY ONLINE PRESENTS: DAVID WRIGHT'S HISTORY OF BARBERSHOP. Each episode is an hour long, but watch the minutes fly by as you get deep into the history of barbershop by one of our best historians. In our latest Harmony University Online video series, Dr. David Wright takes an in-depth look at the barbershop art form, its history, how it formed, and how it continues to evolve even today. His class combines many years of extensive research with his own experience of singing barbershop to craft a presentation that's both entertaining and enlightening.

All videos were professionally shot at the 2016 Harmony University in Nashville. The full class will eventually be hosted online! Jump to the YouTube link at bit.ly/bbshistory1.

A guide to personal U.S. income tax deductions for Barbershoppers

Many members contact Harmony Hall looking for information about personal tax deductions for barbershop activities. While we cannot dispense legal or financial advice, there are a few guidelines that may be helpful:

- You may be able to itemize some of your barbershop-related expenses. These include verifiable out-of-pocket expenses in connection with a chapter duty as an elected or appointed officer or board member. It may also include travel expenses to local shows, telephone, postage, parking, etc., for which you were not reimbursed.
 - The expense of travel to chapter meetings is not deductible unless you hold an office directly involved in the conduct of the meeting.
 - Away-from-home transportation, meals, and lodging may only be deducted if there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation or vacation for the trip—there must be substantial, sustained duties throughout the trip, with less substantial recreational aspects.
 - Society, district and chapter dues cannot be deducted, nor can tuition for Society schools.
- If you use these deductions, here is the procedure:
- With Form 1040, use Schedule A, under “gifts to



charity, other than cash or check,” enter the total of your out-of-pocket expense.

- Remember the words “non-reimbursed” and “verifiable.”
- If over \$500, attach the appropriate schedule and categorize expenses by groups (lodging, transportation, etc.), captioned “Expenses incurred in connection with contributions of services to an organization classed as exempt under Section 501 (c) (3).” Then state the name and location of your chapter and the full name of the Society.

Your chapter should have a list of events that are applicable to this expense tabulation.

Charitable contributions can be directly deductible. Cash contributions to your chapter, district, the Society or to Harmony Foundation may be included in Schedule A under “gifts to charity, cash or check.” Be sure to retain verifying records such as appointment books, calendars with notes, etc.

For further clarity, consult IRS Publication 526 Charitable Contributions. If in doubt, always consult with a tax accountant or other professional.

For more details, read the full post at the Society’s blog. Direct link: bit.ly/bhs2016tax. ■



CONVENTIONS

2017
LAS VEGAS
July 2-9
2018
ORLANDO
July 1-8
2019
SALT LAKE CITY
June 30-July 7

HARMONY UNIVERSITY

NASHVILLE
July 23-30, 2017
July 21-29, 2018

MIDWINTER

ORANGE COUNTY
Jan. 16-21, 2018

GET READY FOR A HIGH-CLASS EXPERIENCE IN ORANGE COUNTY
Midwinter 2018 will be held one of the most elegant, modern parts of Southern California—and then there’s the venue across the street. The Renée and Henry Segerstrom Concert Hall may be our finest Midwinter venue yet. Join us in Orange County next January!



How to lead in our intergenerational Society

A message to my fellow Baby Boomers: The term cultural lag refers to the time it takes to catch up with innovation, and how we can experience social problems and conflicts caused by this lag. One of the most fascinating parts of our barbershop world is that we are proudly multigenerational! I have witnessed high school kids teaching a senior citizen a new tag they wrote, followed by our older singer sharing an Earl Moon beauty right back! This bounty of life experiences makes barbershop so much richer, but is filled with challenges due to this cultural lag between age groups.

Let's talk about these differences and how this might impact your chapter or your leadership meetings. Because the labels of "Baby Boomer" and "Gen X, Y, and Z" are generalizations, we know there are many exceptions in the groups listed below. The lines between each are fuzzy and there is no consensus on the dates. However, please consider the reality of general trends from each age bracket and how this may impact your weekly chapter or quartet environment.

Various generations' cultural values

The Lost Generation (1883-1900) and the **Greatest Generation (1900-1925)**. Our Society founders were well into adulthood during the Depression and World War II eras, when they helped our Society explode into existence. These generally difficult times led them to be more conservative and compulsive savers than later generations. They also felt a responsibility to leave a legacy to their children, be patriotic, to respect authority, and to have a sense of moral obligation. This influence is pervasive in our BHS structure. If you read the back of your membership card, you can see we have a Code of Ethics. We call our stage outfit a uniform instead of a costume. We have a charitable arm called Harmony Foundation. It's everywhere.

The Silent Generation (1925-1945) was strongly encouraged to conform to Society norms. They more often focused on their careers than on societal change. Having been born prior to the end of WWII, they tend to share many of the prior generation's values.

Boomer I (1946-1954) had formative experiences marked by the Kennedy and Martin Luther King assassinations, the Civil Rights movement and the Vietnam War. This generation had huge economic opportunities.

Boomers II (1955-1965) did not have all the benefits of the previous class as many of the best jobs, opportunities, and housing were taken up by the much larger and more powerful Boomer I's. A large majority of our chapter, district, and Society leaders are a Boomer I, with some Boomer II's. These leaders grew up with chapter leaders from the previous generation, and were taught that it's our duty to serve.



Adjust, flex,
and use the
people you
have today,
not the people
you had
30 years ago.

Gen X (1966-1976) was the first generation of "latchkey" kids, and for them both daycare and divorce were a normal part of life. Gen Xers are the most educated generation. With that education, they have a higher level of caution and pragmatism than their boomer parents. Gen X will not give you instant respect because you are older and hold a title: you will need to earn this respect. They may not choose to serve on the chapter show committee or sell tickets, because they joined to sing. Gen X may even suggest outsourcing tickets and ad sales, which bothers our Boomers.

Gen Y or "Millennials" (1977-1994) have less brand loyalty, and the speed of the Internet has led them to be much more flexible with their discretionary time and money than the previous generations.

Gen Y was often raised in dual income or single parent families. As children, they were raised to look adults in the eye, speak for themselves, and to participate in decisions that affect them ... everything from groceries to new cars. If you don't let Gen Y have a say in rehearsal content, music, outfits, and scheduling, they feel disrespected, and have many other choices over barbershop. They are often more interested in a finite commitment than ongoing weekly meetings. Engage them or they move on to another chapter or activity. If you ramble on in a rehearsal or meeting, they will multi-task and shoot a text to a friend. It's not personal ... why waste time listening to this when it's already on the website?

Generation Z (Mid 1990s-early 2000s) were children during the post 9/11 and Great Recession eras, and grew up in families that struggled for long-term security. Compared to the prior two generations, they are more mature, responsible, risk averse, religious, entrepreneurial, independent, open-minded and inclusive; they want to be the solution to the problems inherited from prior generations. Much



Donny Rose
Director of Harmony University
drose@barbershop.org

of their socializing is through social media.

Four thoughts for leaders, from a fellow Boomer!

Careful coach. If you correct the pitch of a trumpet player, they nod and adjust their tuning slide. If you correct the pitch of a vocalist, you are correcting the singer. It's very personal. Boomers have stories of previous directors yelling in the style of a football coach, berating, and even hazing as a part of their experience. *Gen X and later will not tolerate these practices*, and believe they are more than inappropriate: they are wrong and needlessly cruel. As a boomer myself, I had a paddle in my music classroom and whacked more than my fair share of behinds, but I didn't do that after 1986. Change to meet our people where they are today!

Don't waste time. For many of the boomers, quality was the most prized attribute a business could offer, but now it's time. Stop talking and get singing. Don't have a business meeting over five

minutes ... it's all in email and on your website anyway. Let them sing!

Practice inclusion. Gen Z is the most diverse generation in U.S. history; 47% are ethnic minorities. They have been referred to as the first "pluralist" generation, actively seeking understanding and tolerance among different races and religions. Inclusion is not only important to them, it is expected. Why would they join a group that appears to be only older, straight, white men? Welcome people from many backgrounds and ages as your intentional practice.

Find a job for everyone. Boomers hate it when a job is unfilled, so they will volunteer, even if they don't want to be the show chairman for the 23rd year in a row. This includes *many* of our directors and leaders who were afraid if they didn't step up, the chapter would die. Boomers, the later generations do not always align with this practice, and we know it hurts you! That's not how everyone is wired, but it's not selfish.

Bring new people out front during a

chorus rehearsal or business meeting and share for one or two minutes on a subject they are passionate about ... don't decide the subject for them, let them choose an area of interest. Once the culture of rotating new people is established, people will look forward to their turn and not view leadership in a negative light.

If you only demand the young guys set up the risers while the old guys pick the music, you are creating a divisive culture, and the disenfranchised will move on.

Conclusion

The culture I and my Boomer brothers experienced 30 or more years ago was fantastic *and* wildly different than today. Music and chapter leaders, engage all your people by respecting these cultural differences, and our collective barbershop experience will be much richer! Younger men may wish to have a leadership role, but it may not be for an entire year. Adjust, flex, and use the people you have today, not the people you wish you had, or the people you had 30 years ago. ■



WORLD HARMONY

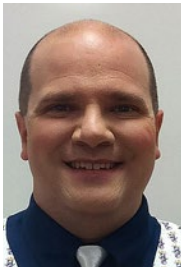
JAMBOREE

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Ticketing information &
performers coming soon!



It's a wrap: what dedication looks like



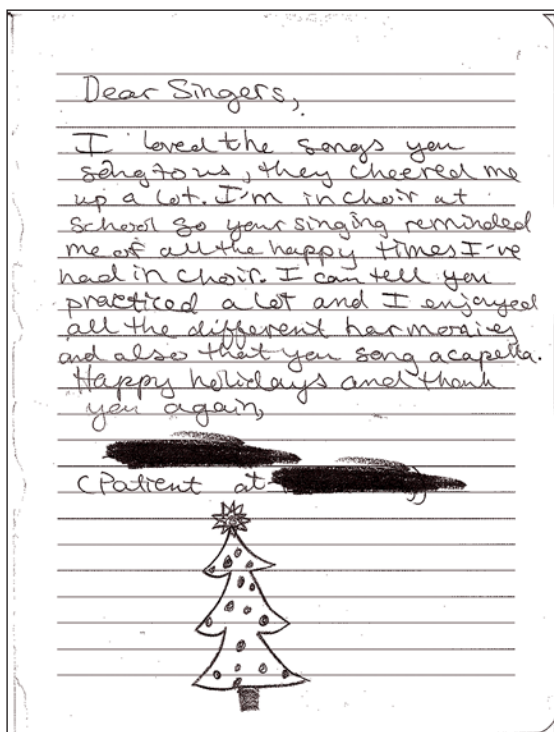
A lot of Barbershoppers put chapter bumper stickers on their cars, hoping someone will notice and call. No worries about anybody noticing third-generation Barbershopper Chris Eitman's car. The Ohio singer works for a company that does car wraps, and in 2014 Chris had them cover almost every inch of his 2012

Chevy Equinox with the most "unmissable" advertisements imaginable.

"I get a lot of compliments on it while stopping at the gas station or a drive-thru window," Chris says. "As for strange looks, I don't pay attention, but my quartet could tell you about some. I hear sometimes, 'What are they staring at?' and then they remember what car they are in."

He has the 800 number for the Canton chapter across the rear bumper and a license plate frame for his Akron chapter.

In December he was named Akron's Barbershopper of the Year. Are you surprised to know that Chris doesn't do anything half-way?



Story Tellers

Send to storytellers@barbershop.org

Want to be a storyteller? Contact storytellers@barbershop.org or harmonizer@barbershop.org



We had the honor of being invited to perform the Canadian National Anthem in a quartet for over 10,000 fans at the Veteran's Day "Battle for North America," featuring the local professional hockey team the San Diego Gulls taking on the Manitoba Moose. Quartet members, all members of the Masters of Harmony, included Craig Ewing (tenor), John Rhodes (lead), Scott Hansen (bari), and Kent Richardson (bass).

— Scott Hansen, Masters of Harmony

Singing for Kids gives company a great name

GCI, an Alaskan telecommunications company, encourages its employees to provide regular community service. On December 20, employees Chris Kilday and Phil Brewer joined two other member of **The Midnight Sons A Cappella Chorus** to sing for pediatric patients at two area hospitals. L-R are Phil Brewer (Br), Chris Kilday (Bs), Steve Kari (L) and Dave Laymon (T). After one of their stops at Providence Alaska Medical Center, one of the young adult patients wrote the letter to the left to them.



Past international chorus champ director Ray Danley still a champion: Two Canadian snowbirds meet in Florida to form Ontario's first Seniors Chorus



Shortly after returning from Florida to Canada the spring of 2014, I was shocked when Dr. Ray Danley, the director of my Ontario District chapter in Simcoe, asked if I knew of any Florida chapters looking for a Director. My **Charlotte County Chapter** had been looking for more than a year! I couldn't believe someone of his talent was interested in directing a chorus of "old guys." One of the Society's elite directors, he directed **The Scarborough Dukes of Harmony** to two international gold medals and countless other district and international medals. He also had increased the membership in **Simcoe Chapter** from 32 in 2001 to 84 in 2014. From helping write the Society's first Chorus Director's Manual to recipient of the Society's Joe Liles Lifetime Achievement Award, Ray had seemingly done it all.

But I asked anyway, and after considerable thought, Ray opened up to the idea. Yet when I sent his application to our Board, I was informed that many expressed concern about hiring an older (77) director who would only be available six months each year. I was totally shocked! This would be like turning down Jim Clancy. Thankfully, over time, I managed to convince the board that Ray could accomplish more in six months than most directors could in 12.

Once Ray arrived, only a month before the Christmas

season, he surpassed our expectations. Due to his stellar reputation among Ontario snowbirds, we had to upgrade our rehearsal space to accommodate all the extra guests. And by our spring show we'd gone from 30 to 42 members on stage.

Since returning to Canada, Ray has been instrumental in organizing Ontario District's new Senior's Chorus (already 65 strong), which will perform at the first Seniors Chorus Contest in San Antonio. He's also in his seventh year as coordinator of the Ontario Quartet Event (a scaled down "Brigade") and moved to Harmony Ranch, where he directs the **Black River Chorus**. He's also bari in Seniors quartet **Trailer Park Boys**.

Thanks to Ray, as we grow in numbers, it will be feasible to become a year-round chorus again. Anyone out there interested? ■

— Jack Cronkwright
jackandcyn@comcast.net





Maui Barbershop Festival | Maui, HI
December 6-9, 2017
www.barbershopfestival.org



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Skipp Kropp

Our new Society president talks about his past—and the Society's bright future

At the Midwinter Convention in San Antonio, the 64th BHS Society President was installed: Skipp Kropp, a 44-year Barbershopper with a long history of singing, volunteering, dedication, service, and philanthropy in the greater barbershop world.

One of his proudest moments was sharing his barbershop passion with his son, Brad, as they sang together with the **Kanawha Kordsmen** of Charleston, West Virginia. Father and son went to the 1994 Pittsburgh International convention together and Skipp got to sing a Barberpole Cat with his son. It doesn't get any better than that!

Why are you a Barbershopper?

My first exposure to barbershop was at the annual shows in Lafayette, Ind. I was a Purdue engineering student and played trumpet—I was determined to never sing! The big moment on the show that got me was when I saw one of the most entertaining quartets ever, the **OK 4**. They were followed by **Gentleman's Agreement** (1971 champ). I joined after being “tricked” into singing a tag at a chapter campout. A guy asked me to hold what later I figured out was a lead post and then three guys came up behind me and put a tag around that post—I was hooked! So yeah, I joined the chapter immediately.

I love singing in a quartet, being one of four guys that carry his load in a four-part chord—to hear it and feel the result is incredibly gratify-

ing. (Please note, Skipp is a baritone, but after midnight, somewhat strangely like Cinderella's curfew, he turns into a bass!)

It is important for all to recognize how much enjoyment we receive from being Barbershoppers. We need to give back and use our financial resources to perpetuate and preserve barbershop for generations. That is why I have been a strong supporter of the Harmony Foundation as a charter



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member of the President's Council and have been a Midwinter Youth Festival Sponsor. It is so rewarding to see your gifts come to life.

How did you get started in barbershop administration?

I have served all of my chapters as Music VP and have held many other positions. Chapter leadership is very rewarding and a necessary component of a healthy chapter.

In 1996, the then-current JAD President, Jim Legters, asked if I would serve as chair of the Laws and Regulations Committee. Two years later, I was asked to join the Events team. Two years later I was the Events VP. Two years later, I was the JAD Executive Vice President, and two years after that, as JAD President and then Immediate Past President.

How did you get involved with the Society Board?

In 2006, I was elected to my first term on the Society Board. After that term ended in 2009, I served on the Society Ethics committee and then served on the Nominating Committee.

In 2013, I was elected for a second term on the Board, elected Executive Vice President in 2014, and that started this wonderful journey to the Society President's role.

What part of your barbershop experiences leaves the biggest impact?

Singing Valentines—watching recipients have great reactions, ranging from emotionless to making their day. It is incredibly moving; seeing how our music can change lives has been extremely rewarding to me.

The coming Society Strategic Plan

Can you share some information on the upcoming strategic plan?

There is a popular adage often attributed to Benjamin Franklin: *Failure to plan is planning to fail.*

We need to be working smart to ensure that the barbershop artform is preserved for many generations to come, not just this generation or the next one. It is important to preserve our artform for the benefit of everyone who enjoys barbershop harmony. The fans need it in their lives. But, it is the participation that benefits each singer—you can't be angry when you are singing or listening to a good old barbershop song!

Successful organizations in the non-profit world seek to have all parties understand the core values and benefits of affiliating with the organization. Those groups experience organic growth and success. When there is alignment, it makes the efforts and the work



on programs easier because everyone is swimming in the same direction.

The strategic plan will be a living document that is reviewed on an annual basis. It will articulate the goals and objectives of the Society as we move into the future. Over the decades, the world has changed, and social environments have changed. The initial plan will be rolled out and the implementation will force us to continually validate and update to meet our current and future needs—not to change direction. Internal and external factors will influence the alignment of the plan, but we will continue toward the North Star so that we cannot go off course too far.

The Four Pillars are new to a lot of Barbershoppers. What are they, and are they linked to the strategic plan?

The Society Board and Harmony Hall recognize the need to provide programs for Barbershoppers that align with our core purposes. Our Four Pillars framework captures what the Society is at its core—its essence, if you will.

Some facts about Skipp

- Joined Society in 1970
- Has been a member of 6 chapters from the JAD, MAD, and CAR districts
- Chorus Director — Assistant director and then director, Charleston, WV, Assistant director and then director at Heart of Ohio, Assistant director in Roanoke, Va.
- Sung on international stage 3 times (4th time this year in Vegas!)
- Barbershopper of the Year for Charleston, W.V., Chapter and Johnny Appleseed District
- JAD Hall of Fame 2006
- JAD Golden Apple Director of the Year 2009
- Boardmen quartet made up of JAD board members takes 4th place in JAD contest
- Graduated from Purdue with two engineering degrees
- Graduated from Capital Law School and practices Environmental Law (While Skipp was studying at law school, his father was asked, "What's your boy gonna be when he gets out of school?" His father said, "35!")
- Has been married to his lovely wife, Nancy for 16 years. They have two cats. Skipp has a son and daughter who are both married, two stepsons, one granddaughter, and a step-grandson.

The strategic plan currently under development looks at how we will accomplish those pillars through the lens of the Society and the broader choral ecosystem. We have great relationships with numerous other singing and musical groups—NAFME, ACDA, SAI, HI, and CASA. They are all inter-related, and for us to thrive as an art form and advocacy group for our art form, we need a road map for dealing with singers internally and other organizations externally. The strategic plan is designed to do just that.

How are we arriving at this strategic plan?

When the Strategic Planning Committee first met, we wanted to develop a means to examine all factors that could be identified. We did not want to create a top-down plan, but a grassroots plan that strengthens the core of who we are collectively and individually. To do so, we needed to gather invaluable input from Barbershoppers, chapters, and districts. A satisfaction survey was sent in early 2016 to all members. We received about 2,900 responses. This survey gave us a baseline understanding of opinion and ratings of existing programs.

A follow up “Future Direction” survey was again sent to all members, and garnered 3,051 responses. We were seeking opinions on potential directions the Society could take. All of this data is shaping the plan. We believe the responses were representative of the membership.

We also asked for more extensive, open-ended feedback from 76 individuals (irrespective of Society titles) who we believed to be influential and in tune with the needs of particular barbershop constituencies. We received responses from 46 of these “influentials.”

Additionally, Society Strategic Planning Committee members attended each 2016 district convention and held listening sessions to hear from attendees regarding our biggest opportunities and threats, and the thorniest issues that must be addressed.

Can you hint at what the plan will include?

No formal decisions have been made as of December, 2016, but I can say that some bold and exciting ideas are emerging from our research. The combined feedback from these surveys clearly indicates that most members are okay with innovation as long as they can continue to enjoy all the cherished elements of their barbershop experience.

As optimistic I am about the ideas that are emerging, I hope that our members recognize that the strategic

The Four Pillars

1. Through the medium of barbershop harmony, we maintain and expand supportive services for a global community of artists.

2. Through the medium of barbershop harmony, we elevate artistic and leadership skills through education and best practices.

3. Through the medium of barbershop harmony, we establish lifelong singing as a core community asset.

4. We increase our impact by building diversified revenue streams including earned income, individual philanthropy, and institutional philanthropy.

plan will not be a panacea—it cannot please everyone or resolve every issue.

A preliminary draft will be shared with the Society Board at Midwinter, 2017. We will finalize the plan and bring it to the Society Board for approval in May 2017, then roll it out during the second half of 2017.

The expected result is that we will provide programs and resources so that every singer has opportunities and support for the global community of artists. That’s what we as a Society really are: a global community of artists.

The future of our organization will soon be in the care of our younger Barbershoppers. Do they have a seat at the table for the strategic vision?

They do. Society Board members are primarily baby boomers, and we recognized the plan needed to reflect the needs and desires of all Barbershoppers, present and future. Recently, Millennials were the most recruited age, so a Youth Advisory Council (YAC) comprised of young men has been meeting and giving feedback to the Society Board. Matt Gorman is chairing that council.

What can our members and Associates do at this point?

What can you do? Go out and Make the Music that Makes a Difference. Participate in your chapter, district, and the Society. Most importantly, Make the Music that Makes a Difference *in your community*; that makes a difference in your life and lives in your community.

Actively be a part of the call to action to implement the strategic plan through the Pillars to greatly increase both our numbers and our impact in the world.

Make the Music that Makes a Difference. ■



Skipp in his first chorus contest, singing with the Tippecanoe Chorus from Lafayette, Ind., (Tippecanoe County), 1971.

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HEALTHY CHAPTER INITIATIVE

BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

"People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it."

*— Simon Sinek, author of **Start with the Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action***

What makes a barbershop chapter a "Healthy Chapter"? The Barbershop Harmony Society cannot and should not dictate the answer to this critical question. Instead, your chapter can benefit from taking the time to discover *why* you do what you do, and answer for yourself whether your chapter could be healthier.

While we continue to expand the options people have for engaging with barbershop harmony, for most members, the single most significant point of contact remains the chapter. Because of this, BHS is re-doubling its commitment to ensure that our chapters are given top priority at all levels of Society operations.

There is no time for platitudes or what the business world calls a "silver bullet" solutions that supposedly solve every challenge. Chapters deserve real solutions that address their actual challenges and goals now and in the future. We have not created just another program—we've instead created a larger framework called the Healthy Chapter Initiative.

The health of our own chapter can determine whether we have the kind of experience that keeps us personally engaged, and whether community organizations or potential members desire to be a part of us. The Healthy Chapter Initiative is designed to help your chapter recognize *your own* guiding star and also provide resources that can help you achieve your goals.



Antonio Lombardi
BHS Chapter Leadership & Education
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Grassroots: One size does not fit all

The chapters on the following pages are a few of many who are already benefitting from and executing the Healthy Chapter Initiative. While they arguably were already healthy, they are zeroing in on where they really

are, where they want to be, and developing a sense of community with like-minded chapters who can support them in achieving their highest goals.

With the Healthy Chapter Initiative, we want healthy chapters to get healthier and struggling chapters to improve their quality of chapter life. Rather than dictate what chapters should do, the Initiative is focused on helping each chapter better chart its own course to a healthier future, and acquire the resources to achieve success.

The "why" of chapter life matters most

Many members can already describe what kind of chapter they belong to. Some chapters are community or service oriented, others might be competition driven. Some have large budgets, others have little. Some are content where they are, while others want to do and be more.

While it's important to know *what* your chapter is and what it does, it is even more critical to know *why* your chapter does what it does. The answers are not necessarily as obvious as one might think, but they are critical.

Where do members find value in being part of your chapter? What drives you collectively? Why do you want to integrate with a local and broader community of artists? What aspects do chapter members most enjoy about being Barbershoppers?

In short, the Healthy Chapter Initiative can help you answer these questions, develop goals and plans that better achieve your *whys*, and then connects you with resources that can help you achieve your goals.

barbershop.org/healthychapters

Elements of the Healthy Chapter Initiative

Assessment: where are you now? One of the first steps is an assessment to help you recognize the difference between where you think you are and where you actually are. Have you asked your members what kind of chapter experience would energize them most? Are your stated priorities also your authentic priorities? How are you perceived in your community? Are there strengths you may not recognize, or untapped opportunities that deserve higher priority?

What is “success” to you? The BHS has Certified Leadership Facilitators who can help your chapter determine your own concept of success. What does having an engaging chapter experience look like to your members? What can you offer your community that will inspire others to either build a relationship with your chapter or to sing with you?

What could success be in the future? While your chapter may be doing things now that you simply want to do better, the BHS curriculum utilized by our facilitators can help chapters investigate ideas and resources they may have not considered before. Is there an opportunity in your area you haven’t noted or acted upon? Other arts groups that could share stages? Interchapter possibilities? Sister organizations with compatible outreach goals? Could you benefit from a different way of viewing contests? Are grants or other financial resources available?

Develop goals and a plan. Our team will help you develop specific qualitative and quantitative goals that

help you achieve your *whys*—goals that can improve your chapter product, increase member satisfaction, and which can improve your profile and impact in your community. You will then develop a plan to achieve those goals.

A growing library of resources. Unfortunately, training and other resources for our chapters was neglected at the Society level in recent years. We are working to close the gap by uncovering the best ideas from the past and present and making them available to all chapters. This includes training and chapter leadership resources, including the bare bones necessities of chapter management. The library will continue to grow.

Chapters helping chapters. The most critical aspect of the Healthy Chapter Initiative may be to assist in fostering a “community of communities.” Your chapter might have very different goals from one the next city over, but may have everything in common with other chapters throughout North America. We’re working to help like-minded chapters communicate and collaborate; but we also will not keep them sealed off from other chapters that may have valuable approaches as well.

So far, 15 facilitators have been certified, with more to certify this summer. Dozens of chapters have already started on their path forward to an improved chapter experience, and a more sustainable relationship with their current and future community of artists.

The Barbershop Harmony Society is committed to help your chapter chart a path to success by providing the tools and resources you need. We look forward to joining you on this journey. ■



MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE. This shot from the 2016 Chattanooga Choo Choo Chorus Christmas show says a lot about the balance and mission of a very active chapter.

Many of the male singers on the left are part of the chapter’s Chattanooga Community Christmas Chorus, which since 2003 has allowed men to rehearse and perform with the chapter without pressure to join. To the right are women from the Sweet Adelines’ Scenic City Chorus, who helped boost both the impact of the show and the size of the audience. In the foreground are audience mem-

bers singing—the sing-along moments are a big draw. All proceeds from the concert went to the Walter E. Boehm Birth Defects Center—totaling than \$40,000 since 2009. Additional donations have come from area businesses.

The chapter maintained high community visibility in 2016 with 24 singouts, a successful Singing Valentines program and annual show, and continued it’s long-standing relationship with The Special Olympics. In Dixie District contests the chorus won its plateau as well as “Most Improved,” posting its highest score in 17 years.



JOE CERUTTI

Facing outward

Prepare for performances of a major oratorio or prepare for our International contest? The Alexandria Harmonizers chose both—and showed once again that Barbershoppers need not be an insular Society, but can be an important part of the broader choral world

The **Alexandria Harmonizers** got to do something extraordinary in 2016: serve as the chorus for the Strathmore Art Center's production of the contemporary oratorio *I Am Harvey Milk*. It wasn't easy to take on this very challenging, very long performance while also preparing for the 2016 international contest, but we couldn't pass up either honor. We are Barbershoppers at our core, but we are also citizens of the broader choral world.

Milk, written by and starring Andrew Lipa (Broadway composer of such hit musicals as *The Addams Family* and *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown*) and also starring legendary Broadway

soprano Kristin Chenoweth, is the story of the life and death of San Francisco city supervisor Harvey Milk, America's first openly gay elected official, who was assassinated by a fellow member of the board of supervisors.

Everyone who participated agreed it was an amazing, in some cases life-changing, experience. But how did it happen and how did we prepare for it?

Being active in the broader arts community

The opportunity arose because the Harmonizers have, so to speak, come out of the "barbershop closet" in our area and beyond. Rather than confine ourselves to BHS contests, concerts, and venues, we seek out outside engagements. We

"What did ... move me ... was the choral singing, and the commitment all of the performers had to sharing the story. The Alexandria Harmonizers lived up to their name, and offered up some of the best choral singing I've heard."

— **Broadwayworld.com**



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are fortunate that our location near the nation's capital does get us high-public gigs, such as the White House and Supreme Court. But there's more to it than that.

Although BHS is our home, we strive to be part of the larger choral world beyond barbershop. We make efforts to conduct ourselves as members of the local choral community.

For example, because we are a chorus, we are also members of Chorus America (the national organization of independent choruses); we take part in university choral festivals and musical anthology events; we meet frequently with the leaders of area choral groups to learn from one another and explore potential artistic collaborations and joint shows.

Similarly, because we are an a cappella group, we try to acquit ourselves as outstanding members of that community as well. We are members in the Contemporary A Cappella League (the national organization for adult a cappella groups) and participate in 'aca' events like the SingStrong festivals. We have for eight years fielded our own contemporary 'aca' group, the 13-man TBD, which often

performs with other contemporary ensembles. TBD, in turn, hosts on our chapter's behalf an annual prize competition for a cappella ensembles, the 'Aca-Challenge,' that has become an annual must-see event for local fans of a cappella, drawing quality contestants from the entire east coast.

And because we are Alexandrian, we serve as part of our civic community. We are active members in the local arts forums, we regularly donate public performances to the city, and we conduct sing-outs

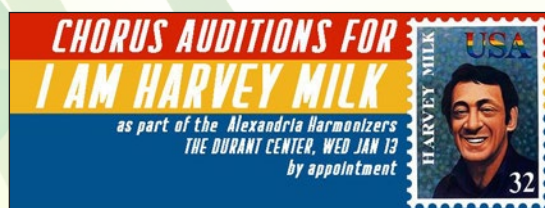
at hospitals, schools, and seniors facilities. Our Singing Valentines program is a good example. Most chapters run Singing Valentines as a fundraiser where they charge for their singing services; the Alexandria Harmonizers have repurposed our entire Singing Valentine program as a free public service to seniors centers, schools, and restaurants..

Taking on two big challenges at once

These outreach efforts, including some hired gigs of particular interest to the gay community (including DC's Gay Pride Parade and the Human Rights Campaign

"The Alexandria Harmonizers added beautiful vocals throughout."

— DC Metro Theater Arts



While Barbershoppers know the Alexandria Harmonizers for its long run of competitive excellence, the chapter balances many priorities. For many years, the chapter has placed far greater priority on making a name for itself in the greater Washington, D.C., area and on integrating with the greater arts community.

The Harvey Milk performances were a natural progression for a chapter that is equally comfortable taking on gigs in cathedrals, outreach to D.C.'s large community of veterans, or organizing a contemporary a cappella competition. Many of the chapter's performance opportunities have come as a result of the good will generated by frequent free outreach activities throughout the area.





Fund's annual fundraiser party) made the producers decide that we were the chorus they wanted for *Harvey Milk*. For our musical director, Joe Cerutti, it wasn't an easy sell; the music was challenging, the topic was sociopolitical, the lyrics were transgressive. Besides all that, preparing a major work to be sung with orchestra and Broadway professionals in a few months' time ... while preparing for BHS international competition? The idea was unheard of.

After consultation with the board and many personal advisors, Joe said "yes" to Strathmore and began to prepare the chorus. He explained the background of the work, its place in explaining history and helping audiences to see one man's life as an example of fighting to make the world safe for us all. He helped us understand that it wasn't a show about a gay man for a gay audience, but rather about a show about an advocate for all those who have ever felt the need for social change. He played for us the most shocking portions of the oratorio, so that we had the opportunity to understand them.

Everyone was given the chance to opt out of the performance if they thought it was too much for them, either musically or emotionally. Almost none did; in fact, we were able to recruit about 20 new "Milk men" (non-chapter singers who joined us in practicing and performing the piece, some of whom have since joined the chorus as members).



"The 100-plus men of the Alexandria Harmonizers, who occupied the balcony above the stage, filled the hall with a tender, cohesive tonal blend, the finishing touch on a memorable evening."

— Opera News

Stretching ourselves musically and artistically

Technically, we were challenged as musicians. We had to acquire new musical skills, ones less used in barbershop: singing non-homophonically in complex rhythms, such as 5/4; performing antiphonally with an orchestra; emphasizing diction and passion over perfect tuning; singing in four voice sections of equal size rather than in a traditional barbershop pyramid of voicing.

Artistically, we were challenged as performers. We had to sing from the perspective of a gay politician and of the assassin's bullet that killed him; from the

perspective of a bully hurling vicious epithets and of the victims of his hate; from the perspective of a repressive society and of its citizens yearning to find the bravery to become free.

During this process we were left mostly alone by the producers who trusted us with our preparations. When the time came to work directly with the professionals

involved in the production, we challenged ourselves to behave as fellow professionals, rather than as fans. No easy task when dealing with bright lights like Kristin Chenoweth!

The performances themselves were triumphs for all involved, garnering rave reviews from the press and audience.

But the greatest reward was the powerful personal impact the performance had on each one of us. We



"The Alexandria Harmonizers played the additional voices for Milk, and they were glorious. Not like your standard choir, they put all the emotion and energy into everything they sang."

— Prue Reid (theater critic)

were humbled and honored to have been a part of such a stirring production.

The challenge continued when BHS asked us to conduct a Milk class for Harmony University at the International Convention in Nashville, so that other Barbershoppers could share in and learn from our experience.

With Heather Kronos of **Class Ring** quartet and Cy Wood of **Voices of Gotham** chorus ably substituting for Chenoweth and Lippa, the Harmonizers performed some powerful excerpts from the show, while interlocutors from the chorus explained the process of being chosen by Strathmore, preparing for the show, working with the professionals, and the emotional and spiritual impact of actually performing it. The class was honored with a standing ovation and

many in attendance stayed to discuss the experience.

All this was possible only because we chose to step outside our barbershop neighborhood ... just as your chorus can. No one is suggesting that any chorus should

leave its barbershop home or "abandon" contests. BHS conventions and events are where we bond as musical brothers. But that brotherhood deserves to harmonize as part of an even larger family.

While singing with one another is nice and brings pleasure, to sing for others is important and brings responsibility. A shift in priorities towards community outreach can have impressive effects. We have been amazed by what other possibilities start to arise when your chapter turns its attention outward instead of inward! ■



Author Scipio Garling speaks at the chapter's Harmony University presentation of selections from the oratorio during the 2016 International Convention in Nashville.

Due to the unflinching sociopolitical nature of *I Am Harvey Milk*—which includes a litany of epithets jarringly set to music—the chorus's Harmony University performance at the 2016 International Convention was advertised with multiple disclaimers and took place across the street from other Harmony U courses. The selections from the oratorio, with commentary by various chorus members and solo roles by Barbershoppers Cy Wood and Heather Kronos, was well attended and enthusiastically received.

The previous day, the chorus competed in our International Chorus Contest, putting together a memorable "Sgt. Pepper" inspired set featuring past director Scott Werner.



The chapter's memorable "Sgt. Peppers" set took place a day earlier.

GNU at the Nashville
Farmer's Market, 2016



KYLE WEAVER

The Great Northern Union has come a long way since the days when it lived and died by its contest scores. The Minneapolis-based chorus scored big last July by swapping the contest stage for the chance to be seen and appreciated by a far larger Nashville audience

For the first time since debuting in the international chorus contest in 1987, **Great Northern Union** walked onto the Barbershop Harmony Society stage last July with no chance of posting a high score and no hope of earning a medal.

This time the chorus had other goals.

In partnership with the Society, GNU attended the 2016 International Convention not as a competitor, but to serve as an ambassador to barbershop music in the Nashville community.

"This was going above and beyond the tradition of participation at Convention," said Society CEO Marty Monson.

Throughout Convention week, the chorus performed more than a half dozen times around Nashville. Tour stops included the Grand Ole Opry, the Nashville Farmers Market and the Music City Walk of Fame. All shows were done to promote awareness of BHS's Convention presence and to invite Music City residents' participation in the many free "A Better World Singing Day" events.

"We weren't really there for us. We were there for them," GNU Artistic Director Doug Carnes said. "This was about advocating for BHS and showing the music community that barbershop is a legit art form and lifestyle."

The idea for the tour began to percolate among GNU's leadership in late summer 2014. The chorus knew it would be sitting out of the international contests in 2015 and 2016, and knew that there would be a period of adjustment with a new director coming on board.

The question was asked: what if the chorus could still attend Convention and still get the chance to sing on barbershop's biggest stage, all while being of service to the Barbershop Harmony Society? Instead of enduring the pressures of competition and

spending the week of Convention rehearsing a two-song set, what if the chorus could sing full show sets for new audiences and simultaneously help BHS reach out to its headquarters-city community?

The GNU leadership team pitched the concept and



KYLE WEAVER



Kyle Weaver
Great Northern
Union Chorus
swsman28@
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the Society board gladly accepted.

"Why wouldn't we want to bring in one of the best among our best for the week-long Convention?" Monson asked.

The tour

For GNU, the week was not without its logistical challenges. A handful of GNU's performances were outdoors, which meant singing in the hot Nashville sun under less-than-ideal acoustics. As Convention attendees will remember, it threatened to rain nearly every day, too.

"It was a challenging week filled with obstacles," Carnes said.

Often is the case, though, that great obstacles lead to even higher achievement.

At the Grand Ole Opry, for instance, the chorus was supposed to sing in the open air plaza near the Opry building, but rain threatened to cancel GNU's performance before that evening's Opry show.

At the last minute, though, Opry officials allowed the chorus to sing in the atrium overhang near the two Opry entrances—something they are apparently reluctant to do.

It ended up being one of GNU's better performances of the week.

Kirk Lindberg, president of Great Northern Union, said the Opry show was a top highlight for many of the chorus members.



On the home front

A feature story in the Nov/Dec 2009 issue of *The Harmonizer* discussed how the Great Northern Union's intense competitive focus had left the chapter smaller and almost unknown in its own community. The chapter refocused on collaborations with other area choral organizations and has since flourished.

GNU has since continued to grow as a chorus, both in its internal operations and, perhaps more importantly, in its youth and community outreach initiatives.

Real Men Sing Collegiate Showcase. Initially known as the Collegiate Men's Choral Festival, GNU has played host to 12 annual collegiate collaboration concerts. Now called the Real Men Sing Collegiate Showcase, the annual show has put some of the top collegiate men's choruses in the upper Midwest on stage and given them the opportunity to sing with GNU in the finale. The show has also featured some wonderful guest artists, including several reigning BHS Collegiate Champions, including **The Vagrants** (2010 show), **Prestige** (2012), **The Newfangled Four** (2014), and two BHS Collegiate Silver Medalists in **Shoptimus Prime** (2016), and **Instant Classic** (2013)—now, of course, better known as the 2015 BHS International Champions.

Real Men Sing Festival. With an initial grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, in 2013 GNU began producing an annual fall singing program for area high school and middle school singers called the Real Men Sing Festival. Featuring performances by GNU and by area collegiate male a cappella groups, the program is designed to immerse young men in singing of all varieties. In each of the program's first four years, students from more than 30 area schools participated in the one-day workshop and concert, with more than 200 students participating annually. As with the collegiate show, the students round out their day by singing on the risers alongside GNU.

Urban Tour concert series. Collaborating with nearby school districts, GNU has given three concerts at Twin Cities-area schools, allowing the host school to promote the show and sell tickets. The shows have had the dual benefits of helping schools fundraise for their music programs and introducing GNU and the barbershop style to a new audience.

Going forward, GNU plans to expand and revamp its programs by inviting young women into the mix, by getting more music educators and choral community leaders involved with the programs, and by featuring and collaborating with more college-level and community choral and a cappella groups than ever before.



"The acoustics were the best there, of all the outdoor venues we had," Lindberg said. "It was really fun. We could see people smiling."

GNU's aforementioned turns on the BHS stage were also tour highlights. Those appearances included

opening the Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest show at Nashville's Schermerhorn Symphony Hall, performing "Rhythm of Love" on the Saturday Night Spectacular in collaboration with a cappella giant Deke Sharon, and debuting a new BHS arrangement called "Sing!," a medley that featured the Society's theme song sung in four different languages by four champion groups.

Through it all, Great Northern Union members were able to gain some important reps with Carnes, the chorus's relatively new director who celebrated his first anniversary with the chorus while in Nashville. Perhaps most importantly, the chorus



The final 2016 GNU performance in Nashville was its most prominent—a major role in the convention's Saturday Night Spectacular, for a combined convention/local audience of more than 8,000.

members developed closer bonds of fellowship with each other between tour stops and during the bus ride to/from Nashville.

It is telling that, for Carnes, the best moment of the tour wasn't seeing the chorus overcome acoustic obstacles at venues, quietly debuting a new contest chart, or even related to performances at all. It was the group yoga session the chorus members and their families participated in the morning of the first day in Nashville.

"It was a quiet moment of us advocating for each

broader marketing and outreach goals of the Society.

While each BHS Convention brings \$13 to \$15 million in revenue to each host city, Monson said, the question has always been: what do we leave behind?

As research continues to trickle in that shows how beneficial singing—especially ensemble singing—can be for people, a disconnect remains between having that knowledge and having an opportunity to do it.

"There is a big blue ocean of people who don't really know about singing beyond the K-12 systems," Monson

other, knowing it'd be a tough week," Carnes said. "There was just this release of tension and a togetherness."

That GNU was able to strengthen its internal community while outwardly serving the BHS and Nashville communities would mean the tour was an unqualified success.

The goals

For Marty Monson, the idea of GNU touring Nashville during the BHS Convention synced nicely with the

Getting the risers to Nashville: Jim Barloon goes \$26,000 beyond the call of duty

For any large group to plan and execute a successful tour, there are a host of logistics that must be handled.

There are risers and equipment to move, people to transport, housing to arrange, schedules to coordinate. Great Northern Union is no stranger to these challenges and the organization relies on a cadre of volunteers, as so many choruses do.

Sometimes, though, a volunteer goes above and beyond reasonable expectations.

In order to transport GNU's 11 risers to Nashville for use on several of its tour stops, the chorus had planned to rent a truck to tow its riser

trailer. GNU bosses Jim Barloon and Rick Hurd and their spouses volunteered to do the driving.

But as fortunes would have it, the rental company failed to deliver the original truck it promised and the substitute they offered wasn't quite big enough to handle the GNU trailer safely. The four made only as far as Rochester, Minn., before Barloon made the call to turn back.

"It was a scary ride," said Barloon, a former Land O'Lakes District champ. "That trailer was all over the road (with the rental towing it)."

To remedy the situation Barloon did what he felt he had to do. With his own money, he

purchased a one-ton, dual-rear-wheel Chevy for \$26,000. GNU's risers, sound system and other miscellaneous equipment all arrived in Nashville safely and on time.

Barloon only shrugs modestly when the subject arises and writes the topic off as "something anyone would have done."

"I made a commitment to get the risers down there," he said.

GNU members, however, felt differently about Barloon's all-in effort.

"He said, 'What else am I supposed to do? I can't let the guys down,'" GNU President Kirk Lindberg said. "That to me embodies the commitment that a lot of guys have to what we do," Lindberg said.



said. "At the end of the day, there is a world out there wanting to sing as much as we do."

In that regard, Barbershoppers have plenty of opportunities to offer; and what better way to share those opportunities than putting a multigenerational group of barbershop singers in front of people, for free, when they were least expecting it. Suddenly a typical lunch at the Nashville Farmers Market or at Street Food Thursday, for example, might become something to talk about back at the office, something worth remembering.

"It becomes a part of our package, if you will," Monson said.

Monson believes the concept of such a tour can be scaled to fit any convention community. BHS districts might apply

the model at their own host cities, for example.

"If we had two or three chapters do this at every district convention, how would that change things?" Monson asked.

Though the early returns from GNU's tour were positive, BHS is still weighing the feedback as to whether Convention tours will be a regular thing in the future. There need to be both willing groups and the right opportunities to make them happen.

But if it is feasible, it almost certainly becomes a substantial opportunity, if not a responsibility.

Carnes agreed.

"It is every chorus's responsibility ... to do what we did," Carnes said. "If there's one person in that audience and even just four guys, you can change a life." ■

New Hampshire chapter takes cause for the needy on parade

The Lakes Region Chordsmen (New Hampshire) not only plan and executes paid performances throughout the year, but we also look for opportunities to assist other charities in their fundraising efforts.

Our support of a new local charity started as a result of our growing parade involvement. Four years ago, we decorated and entered a large construction trailer, carrying up to 21 seated singers, in a Fourth of July parade in Gilmanton, N.H. where we performed the National Anthem and other patriotic songs. The Anthem had previously been provided by a recording and we knew we could do much better than that!

Three years ago, we started our annual participation in the very popular Gilford, NH Old Home Day parade. Our singing has expanded at both events as parade attendees have asked to hear more. We have met the challenge!

The year 2016 witnessed even further expansion, when we decided to carry a model of the Belknap House, a large older home in Laconia, N.H., being refurbished to provide cold-weather housing for the needy. Our objective was to help raise the visibility of the Belknap House and attract additional donations to the effort.

We carried the house for our parade performances in Gilmanton, Gilford, Center Harbor, and Tilton, N.H. We also displayed the model at



the 2016 Alton Bay Barbershop Jamboree and when we sang at a local church fair. Members and friends of the Belknap House board of directors were on hand at all of the events to field questions and thanked us for helping publicize the shelter.

Belknap House is planned to open by the end of January 2017 and the Lakes Region Chordsmen chapter is proud to have contributed a bit to its success!

For the Christmas season, the Chordsmen performed in nine retirement communities, rehabilitation centers and libraries over five weeks. We happily admit that the best part of

our performance is not singing, but the time we spend after singing, personally wishing each and every resident and attending staff Merry Christmas!

— Wayne Hackett, Lakes Region Chordsmen
www.facebook.com/belknaphouse

Carolinas innovate with college chorus contest

Both chapters and colleges took a while to warm up to this new idea, but by the time the Carolinas District's November "Collegiate Challenge" barbershop contest was over, everyone considered it a great success.

The Carolinas District had not had effective youth outreach since becoming a district, and Bob Johns, Bob Clark and Denny Evans wanted to fix that. They saw little outreach to college choruses taking place at the Society level, and saw this as opportunity to connect with an underserved community. Key elements included:

- The "Collegiate Challenge" was part of the district's Fall Festival, ensuring that an audience, judges, and venue were already in place—no additional costs.
- Choruses qualified with in-district judges and via video.
- The district tracked down all known post-secondary music programs in the district and pitched the program extensively to chapters, who were asked to contact their local colleges.
- The district launched a dedicated fund-raising effort and obtained a Society Innovation Grant
- A "help team" provided assistance to chapters that felt uncomfortable approaching colleges.



- BHS point men for each college chorus coordinated the onsite elements.

How did it turn out?

Participant numbers were lower than hoped, mostly because many chapters contacted colleges too late in the year; many who missed expect to be involved next year.

Otherwise, the event was a huge success for the district, participating choruses, and the audience. For example:

- Participants described "magic moments," and the Clemson men confessed that their initial mixed feelings had changed to high enthusiasm. They asked for information on how to participate in the Society's upcoming Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest.
- Collegiate directors asked how to attend Harmony U, and how to start a barbershop youth camp.
- At least two chapters intend to have the ensemble nearest them participate on a chapter show.
- One chapter intends to incorporate a nearby school and host a benefit concert for its music program.
- One judge/coach commented that this program might be appropriate for his district.

It might work for your district as well!

— adapted from a report by Bob Johns,
omarconsulting@msn.com

Tiny Pueblo, Colorado, Chapter goes all in to create holiday concert to supply food banks

In the middle of the night early in the fall, the idea came that we needed to do something positive for a world that had had an overload of negativity. We decided to make our Christmas program a gift to the community. We committed to \$1,000 of our treasury and solicited donations, in addition to a free-will offering at the program on behalf of two area food banks.

We decided to host the matinee event early in the season so that more could be reached in time. Among other patrons, we invited nursing homes with vans to bring some of their clientele, and we would sing some barbershop arrangements of Christmas songs and ask them to sing along on some. The December 3 event was well attended, and there there



was \$466 in the donation baskets plus an advance \$310 in donations. With an anonymous matching offer, \$3,552 went a long way for feed some hungry people.

An audience member shared his

feelings when he said; "I had trouble singing on the audience sing-a-long portions of Christmas carols as I was moved to tears of how much they mean to me." Truly, a miracle took place.

— Wil Meiklejohn

As seen on Facebook ...

Compiled by Amy Rose

WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/BARBERSHOPHARMONYSOCIETY

Your Music Team At Work
AUDITIONING METHOD STANDARDIZED AND SIMPLIFIED

Tenor, Lead and Bass audition

Ma - ny had a lit - tie lamb, lit - tie lamb, lit - tie lamb.

Leads will be considered for membership if they recognize the melody. Those who actually hit the first note after hearing the pitch receive bonus points. Those who reach measure 4 in proper key will be considered for section leader.

Tenors & Bases making it to measure 2 will be considered for membership. Those making it to measure 3 will be considered for section leader, and those making it to measure 4 will be hospitalized immediately— (after signing them up, of course).

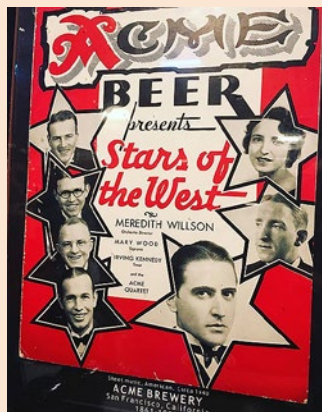
Baritone audition (simplified)

Baritones: It is expected that anyone applying as a baritone already know this simple little tune. We won't insult them by supplying the words.

San Fernando Valley - Valleyettes Vocalizer - AUGUST, 1955

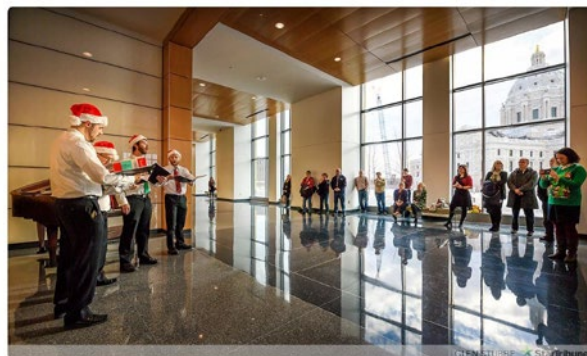
An oldie but a goodie

Seen in Seattle ...
This brewery claims to have the world's largest collection of beer-themed sheet music!



Glen Stubbe @gspphoto · 21 Dec 2016

Unofficial barbershop quartet of the MN Senate -#FiscalNotes gave a beautiful, and unfortunately final performance Wednesday.



(B) ONTARIO—2nd—The Teentimers, Orillia. LtoR—rear—Terry Whelan, lead; Bob Branch, tenor; front—Gord Lightfoot, bari; Bill Hughes, bass.

17-year-old Baritone Gordon Lightfoot in his barbershop quartet, The Teentimers. The multi-platinum artist became a BHS Honorary Lifetime Member in 2006.

In December, 2012 champ Ringmasters celebrated its 10th anniversary with a huge stage show from the Stockholm Concert Hall. The show was also broadcast on the radio.



MÄRTEN SOHLMAN



Barbershop Harmony @barbershopnews · Jan 5

"Singing... if you get really serious, do some crooning on the side or start a barbershop quartet." YES. #getserious



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Evergreen

Clif Caldwell
Coeur D'Alene, ID

Far Western

Spencer Graves
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Palomar Pacific, CA
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South Orange
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Fullerton, CA
Gene Slingerland
Hemet, CA
James Sumstine
Ventura, CA
Jerrold Valencia

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Illinois

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Rockford Metro, IL
Barth Richards
Chicagoland West
Suburban, IL
Ron Scott
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Johnny

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Bill Merry
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Don Rivers

Kingston, ON
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Nepean, ON

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Barny Barnett
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Seneca Land

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Mission: 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



Try this smart old tag from the Village Idiots

Anyone who's been immersed in barbershop singing for a number of years will generally agree that there has been a gradual evolution of the style. To a large extent, quartets have moved the "barline," so to speak.

A landmark change was established by **The Sun-tones**, 1961 champs. We now sing more vocally correct today than we did in the far past. Our arrangements have a little different flavor. Our repertoire has been broadened and expanded but there remain, fortunately, arrangements for every ability-to-sing level. The pure elements of the style have remained intact, simply put: 1) melody primarily in the lead part, 2) bass primarily on roots and fifths, 3) lots of barbershop 7ths, 4) noticeable lack of non-harmonic tones in a chord (and a limited chord vocabulary) 5) primarily homophonic (all parts on the same vowel

sound) and 6) primarily based on the circle of fifths and use of chromatic harmonies.

However, we don't want to lose some of the stirring, spine-tingling elements that were such a treasure trove of true happiness to those in the early days. One of those fine ears-singers, and still active, is Tom Neal (top). Tom joined the Society in 1951 but had been actively singing for years before that, beginning with a fine high school quartet. He sang a mean baritone in his most famous foursome, **Village Idiots**, for about 15 years. He has been active trying to keep alive some of the special tiddlies (a Dave Stevens original term) through his leadership in The Pioneers organization.

To quote the late, great Huck Sinclair, "Those chords rattled my britches!"

This tag is part of an arrangement by Tom Neal. It has all of the above elements plus some interesting twists that will surely bring on a smile of delight as you experience performing it. Thanks for the memories, Tom. ■



ROCK ME TO SLEEP

TAG

Words and Music by TELL TAYLOR

Arrangement by TOM NEAL

Tenor Lead

8

1 2 3 4

Rock me to sleep in an old rock - ing chair,

Bari Bass

8

tenor melody

5 6 7 8

safe in my mother's arms.

Take the conventions home with you.



2016 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION TEE



SAN ANTONIO MIDWINTER TEE



2016 NASHVILLE INTERNATIONAL PINT GLASS



BARBERS HOP TEE
(NOT DISCOUNTED)



2016 NASHVILLE CONVENTION STICKER



2016 NASHVILLE CONVENTION PIN



2016 NASHVILLE CONVENTION HATCH SHOW POSTER



ALL-CHAPTER CHORUS TEE



SAN ANTONIO MIDWINTER TEE



SAN ANTONIO MIDWINTER POLO



YOUTH CHORUS FESTIVAL TEE



SAN ANTONIO MIDWINTER PINT GLASS



2017 LAS VEGAS INTERNATIONAL STICKER

2017 LAS VEGAS INTERNATIONAL PIN



Reduced prices on convention merchandise

SHOP.BARBERSHOP.ORG

**THERE'S SO MUCH
MORE BENEATH
THE SURFACE.**



HARMONY UNIVERSITY

AT BELMONT UNIVERSITY IN NASHVILLE, TN

JULY 23-30, 2017

**TAGS
CLASSES
CAMPS
FACULTY
SHOWS
ICE CREAM**



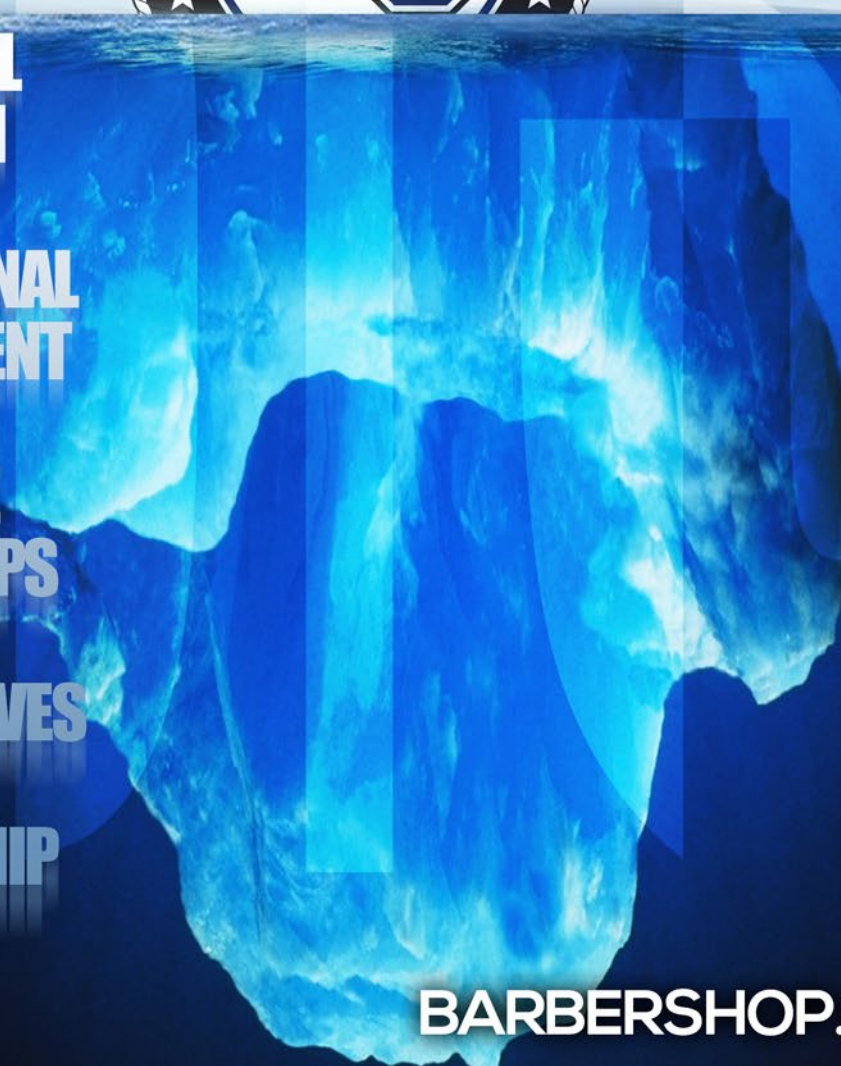
**PERSONAL
GROWTH**

**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

**LIFETIME
FRIENDSHIPS**

CHANGED LIVES

MENTORSHIP



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