



The Voice of Rushmore



Mt. Rushmore Chapter "Shrine of Democracy Chorus"
Rapid City, South Dakota

Volume 13

June 2011

Number 6

The croon has ended... but the medley lingers on



David L'Esperance
Show Chair



Photo compliments of Ron Evenson

Now that I've had a couple of weeks to decompress after ***Crooning the Memories Barbershop Style***, a bit of reflection:

First of all, I'm extremely grateful and humbled by the efforts each and every one of you put forth in accepting, mastering and performing the challenging music the Music Team and I chose for the Show. As some of the audience members told me after the performances "Thank you for choosing music which had real and meaningful lyrics which we could understand and relate to!" Additionally, the sing-alongs were BIG hits—many in the audience LOVED that.

The Elks proved to be a fine place to perform, once we learned the limitations we had to work with. Again, our patrons loved the intimate and comfortable venue. Special thanks to John Elving and Curt Small for their incredible efforts to get the sound systems to perform as we needed them to.

There are many to profusely thank for their efforts, and I hope I don't omit anyone: the entire Music Team, Clayton, John and Jim for their ownership and interpretation of their songs; Pete Stach and Alan Schulte for the research and photos for projection; Gary Welsh for his imaginative use of our collection of crates and boxes and stools and for walking his dog and coming up with amazingly wonderful and simple ways to stage a song (the audiences LOVED the *World on a String* balloon!); Carroll Korb, Wayne Anderson and others for shepherding the advertising booklet; Steve Ferley for leading the ticket sales team.

Our FOUR quartets, the fearless soloists, and Jim, Doug, Bobbie and Clayton for the combo which lent SO much to the shows; Jim Gardiner and Doug Andrews for their numerous hours of additional rehearsal time in support of the soloists; Barbara Elving for her fabulous repast at the afterglow—many of us didn't realize how really hungry we were!

Thanks to Rex Field and Marchita for running the spots, and to Chuck Knowlton for manning the video camera and for his expert coaching "from the balcony!" And a special thank you to Dwight Edstrom, who showed up at 8:30 ready to work at whatever needed to be done and didn't leave until everything which could be loaded was in place and ready to move at around midnight. I'm hoping that someday he'll be able to take the time off to again be a weekly regular.

Curt and the staff at The Elks were such gracious and accommodating hosts –THANK YOU.

To The Potter Family, thank you for lending so much additional pizzazz to the afternoon show and to the Glow—I hope we get to do it again sometime!

I knew we could do it, and you all exceeded my hopes and dreams at least 100 fold! Thank you again for the privilege of being your Show Chair for 2011!

In Perfect Harmony,
DAVID



Shrine of Democracy

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The Voice of Rushmore

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The Mt. Rushmore Chapter is the home of the Shrine of Democracy Chorus. The chapter and chorus meet each Thursday evening at 7 P.M. in the choir room at Central High School on Mt. Rushmore Rd. in Rapid City, S.D. (Look for the banner.)

For more information visit our website, www.shrineofdemocracychorus.org, or contact the editor.

Articles, information and address corrections may be sent to the editor:

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Print off two copies of this newsletter to share—one with your family and one with someone you are bringing to a chapter meeting. Let them know they belong here!

SUPPORT YOUR QUARTETS!

Black Hills Blend

- Al Kelts, tenor
- Pieter Wouden, lead
- Wayne Anderson, baritone
- Pete Anderson, bass

Convergence

- Jeff Elving, tenor
- Dave Sommers, lead
- Clayton Southwick, baritone
- John Elving, bass

High Mileage

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- Jim Olson, lead
- Al Pitts, baritone
- Del Beck, bass

Vintage Reserve

- Dwight "Digger" Edstrom, tenor
- Doug Andrews, lead
- Clayton Southwick, baritone
- Gary Welsh, bass



Happy Birthday to you!*

Alan Schulte	June 1
Dave Sommers	June 2
John Sundby	June 3
Jim Olson	June 12

**It was a COMPELLING Saturday...
And the world didn't come to an end**

Here are some thoughts from your fellow chapter members as to what Saturday's **Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meeting** workshop meant to them. All of them interesting reads. What were your thoughts? Please share.

I came down with this really bad cold on Thursday and I still have it today (Tues.) though it is somewhat better. I'm sorry that I was unable to attend the all day session on Sat. I'm glad that I did get to hear an hour or so of the presentation. I thought the part I heard was very good and I hope to see some of the ideas put into our chapter meetings and also learn more about the entire program.

Also, I want to thank **Chuck Knowlton** for taking over for me and doing such a good job of organization for the church that day. THANK YOU CHUCK!

Again I say I hope to see good things happen for the chapter as a result of the all day session.

AL PITTS

Thanks for the superb weekend! Thanks to Barbara for the best food in town!

Keith Schulte

Just a note to share. I was pleasantly surprised at the **Chuck Greene** workshop last Saturday, especially, the session regarding what we individually were looking for the chorus to accomplish. I'm certain the board got a wealth of information from it and will discuss and implement what is best for the group.

I just want to say I believe the board and directors do a truly outstanding job. With all the individual goals and aspirations among us their jobs are difficult to say the least. I just want to give an **Atta-Boy** to the board and all directors and let you know I support your efforts.

Rod Pfeifle

Hi John,

Thank you very much for being such an exceptional host and coordinator for the Rapid City workshop last weekend! You and your chapter epitomize the welcoming and helpful community culture that seemed to be everywhere from the motel and restaurant staffs to the nightshift parking attendant at Rushmore. No wonder you like where you live!

The area touring you arranged exceeded expectations. The Visitor's Bureau ought to have you on stipend. Bev and I have added South Dakota to our bucket list—maybe we'll see you again several years down the road. If you are ever in the Asheville area, please let us know!

Best to you and all the guys!

Chuck Greene
www.21stn7th.com

MORE SHOW DIGESTINGS

To all of you who participated in the show, it was a wonderful event and I thank you for putting meaning to "**Love Letters**." It seemed to be very well accepted and I could feel the warmth of the song as we sang it.

To me it was a powerful reminder of a day gone by, of the years that I recall Dad's Army footlocker and the letters that I will never be able to read. The picture speaks volumes, but the song brought it all together.

I find it rather remarkable that as soon as we got the music, that my sister would call me from Australia and say she had just found a picture of Dad holding a bunch of letters. I can presume they were from his future bride, but I will never know.

They are very dear to him and his buddies by the smiles on their faces, which probably was the common theme among the troops during the war. It helped them survive the atrocities of war, kept them in touch with loved ones, and gave them reassurance that someone was back home waiting for them. Talk about an incentive to get the job done.

It was a pleasure singing at this spring show. The music was the toughest stuff I have done to date, but it was by far the most rewarding. You just can't beat the oldies. I can only hope that the next show chairman can fill the shoes of David. You did a wonderful job. Thanks for the memory.

Pete Stach

"Your show yesterday was very enjoyable!! Thanks!!"

(written on the SOD Facebook wall)
Angi Langley

All the directors are very happy with the performances.
Clayton Southwick

"The music was great, the show was fast moving and there was a minimal amount of talking which I like. The combo also was a great addition."
Kathy Sundby

"It was great to see the young guys up there on the stage."

"Loved having the popcorn and soda in the theater. It was a nice, comfortable place to see this show."

♪ MUSICAL NOTES ♪



How will you get involved...?

John Elving
VP Music & Performance

As I write this column, I have been glancing at the calendar. There are now 220 days left until Christmas. Sounds like it's a long way off, doesn't it? That it is if you count the days. But wait! That means only 13 weeks until Harmony Happening in the Hills. Then there are only about 14 rehearsals after that before we start singing our Christmas songs in public.

We will be starting our music learning for Harmony Happening by the time this publication hits your mail (or email) boxes. There are two new songs to learn, one of which some of you may remember from years past—*River of No Return*.

Even before Harmony Happening is here, we need to start thinking about attending the Fall RMD Convention in Colorado Springs in October. In preparation for that, even if we decide we shouldn't go, which would be a mistake in my opinion, we will be scheduling a chorus advance in September. We have already contacted Matt Swann, baritone with Ignition! Quartet to come and coach us. Matt brings a wealth of musical knowledge and can help us tremendously with our musicality.

Then it's time for our Christmas music. We will be using the music we had last year and adding a couple of new songs to go along with what we already have. Hopefully we can also schedule a major concert in one of the area churches for the season, or a concert in one of the outlying communities. What a great way to bring Christmas cheer to people who otherwise wouldn't get to hear our brand of good music.

Before you know it, spring of 2012 will be on us and another show to do. Whew! But you know what? We live for that opportunity to perform new music for people, many of whom have never heard barbershop style music, let alone good barbershop music.

In preparation for all of this, your help is needed. President Jim Olson is looking for someone to take the reins as chairman of next year's show. (David L'Esperance's wife has told him in no uncertain terms that it won't be him again). We will also need someone to be in charge of the Christmas activities. Are you willing to step up to the plate and offer your time and services?

They say that 90% of the work of any organization is done by 10% of the members. However, it is also true that the most successful barbershop organizations are the ones that have everyone involved in something above and beyond just the singing. How will you get involved to make this a very successful organization which we are all proud to be a member of?

Sing-cerely & Humm-bly,



"WE'RE TRYING TO TEACH HIM TO SING FROM THE DIAPHRAGM..."

It's a membership thing



Bob Melvin
VP-Membership & Member Development

Let's bring the joy of ringing chords to new members.

Well, It has been a wonderful two years, since rejoining the chorus. The level of excellence you have achieved is astounding. The shows you perform are superb. What is most impressive is your diligent use of the learning CD's to facilitate learning the music, even if it is more difficult than any music we ever tried before. You have been challenged and you have grown. Using the CD's makes everything we do at chapter meeting more focused and constructive, and you well deserve every kudo you receive.

Let's start to grow numerically. There are a lot of men in the Rapid City area that can fill vital roles in our chapter. It is up to us to search them out and to do so continually. This is not just a 2011 responsibility. Let's bring the joy of ringing chords to new members, expand our numbers and our horizons.

Harmoniously yours,
Bob

Being Involved is a "65" Chorus ("C" level).

Being Committed is unlimited.

From a judge/coach who has heard us, but given to a different chorus

PR BEGINS WHERE? IN OUR CHAPTER MEETINGS



A Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meeting is what we want to experience every Thursday night.

Del Beck

VP of Marketing & PR

Saturday's workshop, **Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meetings (CACM)**, provided numerous excellent ideas in enhancing our chapter's public relations effectiveness. PR starts right here, inside the chapter with all of us and spreads outward. This article will refer to concepts and details within those concepts by using the terminology recorded in the CACM manual. Everyone attending **Chuck Greene's** session has this manual. If you do not, borrow one, copy the key pages, read, study, apply.

Six basic CACM concepts, some with sub-headings, will be reviewed here. Each will be followed by a capital letter and a number directing the reader to the specific page in the manual which contains the needed information. Here are the concepts:

1. Involve everyone

You mean there is more to do than rehearse our music?

Here are some examples:

- a. Watchers - B.3 - Take turns observing the body language of the chorus members. Give feedback.
 - b. Audio coaches - B.5 - Listen and make suggestions.
 - c. Entertainment coaches - B.7 - Is the chorus entertaining the audience?
 - d. Section leaders - B.15
2. Activities within the chapter meeting - C.1 - What should be included on meeting night besides rehearsal?
3. Tools
- a. Song learning method - D.6 - We have been using this method.
 - b. Attractive pacing - D.2- This will provide for more singing time and less talking during rehearsals. Only five seconds allowed for a reminder to improve a sound-byte or gesture. Only 20 seconds to demonstrate an improvement of a technique.
 - c. Other ideas are listed in the manual.
4. Top Strategic Priority - E.2 - "Seek, develop, use and enhance the skills and talents of each member to such an extent that progress seems limitless". (quote E.2)
5. Deal Maker Characteristics - Listed here are the top eight factors which attract and keep members: (paraphrased)

Your talents are appreciated; positive payoff for your time and effort; opportunity to be creative; participation in well-organized group, help make decisions, experience success; grow in skill, knowledge, etc.; work with good leaders; experience peer approval; fun, upbeat, positive activities.

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Warming-up: Tips from the top

By Scott Hansen, Masters of Harmony
From the Santa Fe Springs **The Master's Voice**

Warm-ups are important. They set the tone for the rehearsal that is to come. Each Wednesday night at 7:30 p.m. as the Masters of Harmony gather, we say goodbye to the worries of the weekday world and welcome the opportunity to meet with other men to make musical magic.

A common misconception exists that vocal warm-ups are for warming up your individual voice. Not so. The warm-up's primary purpose is to warm up the ensemble, not the individual singer.

The two most important aspects of warming up the ensemble are the mental and the aural. The mental warm-up involves the process of casting away concerns of the day and focusing our attention on the task at hand. As we are warming up, these thoughts may cross my mind:

- Am I in proper singing position?
- Am I focused on the director?
- Have I made a commitment tonight to maintain personal discipline?
- Am I using the same vocal placement throughout my range?
- Is there any physical tension in my voice?
- Are my vowels shaped properly?
- Am I connecting all of the word sounds to create a seamless melodic line?
- Is my face reflecting the emotions I am singing about?

The second aspect of the warm-up is the aural tuning of the ensemble. As anyone who has sung in a quartet is aware, all four singers may be completely warmed up without the quartet itself being warmed up. Time and attention are required to match our voice to the voices around us.

As we are warming up, the director is listening to the sound of the chorus and the various sections and making suggestions to fine-tune the ensemble. While he is doing this, we are fine-tuning our own individual instruments, much as an orchestra does before a performance, paying particular attention to how our voice fits with the voices of the men behind and beside us.

So beginnings are important. Warming up the ensemble is about melding the minds and voices of the chorus into musical excellence. You can't do that without all your brothers in harmony, and we can't do that without you



TUNING ISSUES

by Tom Metzger

from owningthestage.com

Top five reasons you can't tune

Here's one for the singers, or really anyone who includes singing in their performances.

If you're a close-harmony singer, you and your ensemble live and die on your tuning. With tight voicings, like four parts within an octave and a third, missing a note by a few cents can make the difference between beautiful music and nails down a chalkboard. No other aspect of the music is as critical as tuning.

And tuning well is not easy! So whether you are a singer or a person who coaches them, this article is for you.

These are my top-five. There are certainly more. You might have other favorites.

Before we start—can you hear pitches?

Lots of people talk down their own hearing skills, but only about one percent of the population really can't distinguish pitches. I'm talking about people who can listen to a middle-C on the piano and then a C-sharp, and they can't tell which one is higher. If this is you, it's not your fault—your parents probably didn't play enough music at home before you were two years old. But sadly if you're in this state, I have advice: take up bowling. It's really hard to rewire your ears after the fact.

The rest of the reasons are for people who don't suffer from this neurological issue, but still don't tune perfectly all the time. Now on to the Top Five List!

Reason 5—you don't know what "in tune" sounds like

If you're beginning, and you didn't grow up harmonizing with everything (dial tones, vacuum cleaners, air conditioners, bathroom fans...), you might not know what "in tune" sounds like! Each interval, properly tuned, has its own distinct character or "texture"—an octave sounds very clean and free of beats. A perfect fifth is quite open but has a "flutter" in it, down low. Same with a major third, but the flutter is lower. Part of learning to sing close harmony is to discover all these musical textures.

Just for fun, turn on your bathroom fan and sing a major scale, slowly, in that key. Notice what all the intervals sound like. You should get killer undertones on some of them! Now sing a semitone scale, and discover what all thirteen intervals sound like. When they're right, they kind of "lock in." You'll be able to tell.

Reason 4—you don't know what to tune to

Tuning is of course a relative thing. You don't just tune, you tune *to* something, and sometimes it's not so obvious what that something is supposed to be. I mean if you're tuning to the piano notes as you play the melody, you're trying to match those notes—simple enough. If you're singing the same notes as a bunch of other people in your "part", like a bass section or an alto section, tune to them! (They will also

be tuning to you, but let's keep this simple.)

However, if you're supposed to be the only person singing a given note in an ensemble, you have to decide which of the other parts you're going to tune to. And it might not be the same person all the time!

Here's what I find works in practice. If you are the melody singer, tune to the tonal center almost all the time, and if you're a harmony singer, tune to the melody singer. Practice singing your melody part so that the intervals are correct, and yet the tonal center doesn't migrate up or down as you go. So if you start in the key of F and there are no key changes, you finish in the key of F! So most of the time, a melody singer can practice with a piano and be just fine (but see reason #2, below).

Reason 3—you can't hear what you're supposed to be tuning to

Once you're in the habit of tuning to the ensemble, you really get in trouble if you can't hear them. It's like trying to drive on a road with no lines. Groups tend to rehearse so that they can hear each other well. Lots of quartets will stand and face each other in rehearsal, because it's easy to hear. Then they get into a performance situation and stand in a line for the first time, and the "end guys" can't hear everybody else! Predictably, the tuning goes to hell in a hand basket (as my grandmother used to say).

This is what sound checks are for—make sure you can actually hear each other well on the stage in the venue where you'll be singing. If you can't, get it fixed! Ask for more monitors—whatever it takes! Nothing is worse than singing out of tune and not knowing it until the audience fails to applaud.

Reason 2—you don't know what part of the chord you're on

In close harmony singing, the piano notes just aren't good enough. The piano, you see, is "equal tempered," which means all the notes are evenly spaced, rather than tuned by ratio. It has to be that way, so that you can play in any key, but it's a compromise. Just intonation sounds better if you can do it, and that means your notes will fairly often be *quite different* from the piano notes. Thirds and fifths feel like they need to be higher than the piano note (even though one of them actually doesn't). Dominant sevenths feel like they need to be lower than the piano note.

So take a couple of pieces and analyze all the chords! Go ahead—it's not *that* hard. If you need help, don't be too proud to get it. Go through your music and put a square around your note if you have a root, and a circle if you have a fifth. Draw an up arrow for a third, and a down arrow for a seventh. Or make up your own notation. Next time you get together with your ensemble, really go to school on the tuning. Don't let anything go by if it's not exactly right. Hard work, but well worth it!

Reason 1—you're not singing well enough

The **NUMBER ONE** reason why ensembles fail to sing in tune is that they are singing too heavy, with too much pressure, and that drives the pitch down. Often this is because

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THE JOY OF QUARTETING



Al Kelts
Tenor, Black Hills Blend

"...**BLACK HILLS BLEND!!**" We're on...look at ease, smile, you love them all...

WOW! Those lights are bright! I can't even see Sally and the Grand kids! It's so easy to forget how lonely it is up here—just us four against the world! Got to get that first line right...Man, I'm really emoting in this love song and singing it right to Sally...wish I could see her...

Even though I have sung in quartets in spring shows and in contests several times, I continue to be amazed at how stressed I feel when I step up to the mike and start to sing. A few years ago one of the Denver quartets suggested the use of "little blue pills" (propranolol) to help calm those jangled nerves during a performance. Members of BHB have differing opinions about "LBPs" (not an unusual situation for us), but medical folks have known for years that LBPs have a calming effect without producing side effects. Aids, such as LBPs, can help us fight normal anxiety and allow us to "take command of the stage."

As quartet or chorus members, we need to know the words and notes, listen to other parts, match vowel (bowel) sounds, and develop a good blend. Then we have to perform the music in a way that will communicate a message to the audience. I just knew that I was communicating a message of love in our BHB songs... Then I looked at the video which Sally had filmed with my little Sony "point-and-shoot" camera! I really wasn't getting the message out! We need to REALLY EXAGGERATE our emotional message, especially if we have furry faces, like I do! Can you imagine the impact on the audience if the male lead of the Potter Family wrapped that wonderful voice in the performance of Tony Bennett or Perry Como?

In our concert, our directors really gave us a message. For instance, did you ever think you would see Clayton mouth the words, or jump back three steps? Now the ball is in our court, i.e., it's up to each of us to convey the message of each song to the audience!

AL

EDITOR'S DESK from page 8

all got on that Saturday with Chuck Greene, it may come from what you have read in the books you all received, it may come from experience in visiting other chapters or reading about what they do in the Harmonizer or Vocal Expression. Whatever it is that you feel would make this a better chapter, please let us know. Remember, it is your chapter and together we can make it a compelling experience for all who come.

Gahn

The lighter side with Rod P.

What Is The Difference Between a Harley And a Hoover ?!
The Location Of The Dirt Bag. (Just for Pete Anderson)

How do you get a bass singer off of your front porch ?
Pay for the pizza.

Singing Offenses:

- Doesn't know key to songs – \$10
- Doesn't know when to come in – \$15
- Continues singing in old key after key changes – \$30
- Sing bad harmonies – \$35
- Late for gig – \$30
- Stops song halfway through and starts over – \$25
- Forgets words – \$20
- Uses cell phone on stage during gig – \$30
- Sing verses out of order in song – \$15
- Makes up 4th verse to 3 verse song – \$100
- Walks off stage to use cell phone on gig – \$15
- Holds words to song while singing onstage – \$20
- Looks at pager while singing song – \$10
- Sing consistently flat – \$25
- Sing consistently sharp – \$25
- Sing too softly – \$5
- Just plain **CANNOT SING**, but buys chorus a round of drinks – **No Charge**



PR BEGINS WHERE? continued from Page 5

6. Essentials to Success - E.10 - (paraphrased) Good leadership; director effectiveness; great meeting plans; performance repertoire based on public entertainment value; learning tools; handling of guests.

A Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meeting is what we, ideally, want to experience every Thursday night. Member retention will be great and men outside of the chapter will want a part of that kind of action. That is PR at its best.

Del

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Something to think about

There were two very important questions asked at the beginning of the Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meeting workshop. The answers show the diverse opinions among our membership, and the membership of the two other chapters represented. Here are the questions each followed by our responses.

What do you want to do in Barbershopping that you haven't done yet?

- Sing in a quartet
- Choreography
- Consistently earn an enthusiastic audience response
- Compete in a quartet
- Perform at "A" level consistently
- Octet singing
- Improve vocal skills
- Medal in a quartet
- Everyone take constructive criticism when given and from whomever

What do you want your chapter to become or accomplish long term?

- Higher enjoyment in chapter meetings
- Good enough to win an award
- Raise the entertainment bar for the show - Entertain
- Raise the outlook to be positive
- Combine education and fun in Chapter meeting
- Visual excitement from chorus
- Raise community profile
- Get "Wired" more often
- Retain members
- Bond the generations
- Sing more/talk less
- Attitude of improvement
- More quartet training in chapter meetings
- More involvement in music—visual and singing
- Growth, especially younger
- Leadership development

There were some more of the personal ideas, but somehow there was a page missing from the flip chart. However, you can see that there were several general themes.

On the personal question, it appears as though most of the thoughts were to be better performers than we may be now. There was not one person who expressed the idea of being an adequate performing group. Instead, a higher caliber of singing, individually, seemed to be the biggest idea.

Much the same can be said about the goals for the chapter. However, one thought that seemed to come out was that the members seemed to want more enjoyment in our chapter meetings. That can take many different forms for different people, but the idea came out that working on the music is not the only thing people come to our chapter meetings for.

In boiling this all down, the BOD and the Music team would like your honest feedback from what you the members need in our chapter meetings. It may be based on information we

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Something more to think about

This came in from a friend who is a director and a fine quartet singer. It cause me to think. Hopefully it will you too.

There is a rule of thumb in professional groups that says: "For every one minute of on-stage performance, you need 100 minutes of rehearsal."

If we were to apply that to our chorus performances, it would translate to 300 minutes (approximately) per song or five hours of rehearsal time. Unfortunately, rehearsal time does not include learning time. Rehearsal time is the time spent perfecting what is already learned.

To take it further, if we were to apply it to, say, nine songs for a show, it would translate to 45 hours of rehearsal time, or 22 1/2 sessions of two hours rehearsing each session.

Actually, if you break that down to a 45 minute performance, that means 75 hours of rehearsing, or 1 1/2 hours per week for 52 weeks. Some choruses do that and never get it right. Others get it right much earlier in the process. I think that ratio is probably pretty correct for major players and professionals. The problem comes in the rehearsing.

Unfortunately, there are too many choruses and singers who think adequate is enough. They somehow get the words adequate and excellent mixed up.

It also goes to what each singer expects out of the chapter experience. Are they there primarily for the social aspect? This is what was, as we have all learned in the CACM workshop, and still is for many of our members.

Or are they there for growth and improvement in skills, knowledge, talent, creativity and excellence as individuals as studies indicate?

I heard an interesting though about this just recently which involved the Rolling Stones. They continue to this day to go out and give nothing less than their absolute best to make their audience happy. If it takes 110% or 1,000% of themselves, that's what they are willing to give. The entire thought in their heads is to give the audience more than what they have come to expect or want.

That's what will keep our audiences happy and coming back.

Tuning Issues continued from page 3

they're trying to sing loud, and I can't overstate this—singing loud is just not important compared to singing in tune. It might be fun to do, but we're making music here not power lifting. It's about musicality, not decibels.

Do yourself a favor and develop the habit of singing with a truly relaxed and free tone, and not too loud. You'll hear better, and it's much more likely that your voice will actually go where you ask it to go!

Finally, don't forget that the body is connected to the voice. If you're having trouble finding the tension in your voice, try looking somewhere else—your neck, your shoulders, your stomach. Make sure you keep your body relaxed and mobile as you sing, and it will do wonders for your singing!

A Young Member's Big Barbershop Moment

by Andrew Shackleton
from barbershopHQ.com

I have a great little story to share with you. I was working with the Operations Team a few weekends ago at headquarters in Nashville. It was lunch time and we were just finishing our box lunch and chatting. Apparently Ed Watson was looking out the window and noticed a young couple peering into the front windows. Ed asked Patty Leveille (his executive assistant) to pop down and see if they would like a tour or if she could answer any questions they might have. This was the start of a fantastic barbershop moment for 19-year-old Michael Pugh and his girlfriend, Apryl. They were in town from Evansville, Indiana, and he wanted to show her the home office of the Barbershop Harmony Society, which he joined the summer of 2009.

Patty took them for the grand tour, showing them where all the staff works, some of the neat design in the office layout and meeting rooms, and showed them the Wall of Fame. At this point, Michael was blown away that he and Apryl had been invited in to the office, on a Saturday afternoon when nobody should be around to notice them. Quoting Michael:

"That day was really something for me. As a young barbershopper, still learning and discovering the wonders of what the Society and the art of barbershop itself can present, I was very excited to see the headquarters. I saw it as somewhat of a homecoming. It's where everything is centered for our passion. I didn't expect to actually be able to get to go inside, just being there, and seeing it was enough. But when Patty Leveille opened the doors and offered us a tour I was so excited. It was dream coming true right in front of my eyes. She showed us all over telling us about the past present and future of the Barbershop Harmony Society headquarters. I was amazed.

There was one particular point in the tour that was very touching. She took us to the top of the Champions wall and started to talk about the different quartets, and was pointing out ones I knew and some I didn't. She reached The Gas House Gang and started talking about Rob Henry's passing. Of course, I already knew about it—The Gas House Gang is my favorite quartet. But at that moment, I felt like I wasn't just another barbershopper, I was part of something big. All of those men up on that wall were my brothers, along with every man in the Society and every woman my sister. Barbershop really does bring people together like I've never seen. I'm not ashamed to admit that I did tear up a bit at this point."

Just as they were finishing the tour of Ed's office, Patty brought them into our meeting. She introduced Ed and the Operations Team to them, and at that point you could see that Michael couldn't believe his eyes. He was standing next

to the CEO Ed Watson! Needless to say, Michael was a bit overwhelmed when he noticed not only was Ed Watson standing next to him but Shane Scott, tenor of the funny quartet Lunch Break was also at the table.

Now everyone knows we are a singing organization—RIGHT! So we had to ask Michael if he wanted to sing something. Now, he had a momentary look of panic, fear, nervousness... and said, "Sure." The pipe blew and we started to sing "My Wild Irish Rose." All of the sudden, this young fella stepped up and sang with one of the nicest bass voices you will ever hear. WOW! We all turned slightly to face Apryl and sang to her. Quoting Michael again:

"After that, she took us up to the third floor and I was so excited to see where everyone worked. I was even



more excited to meet the Operations Team. I felt even closer to the Society when I was invited into the conference room. I wasn't expecting to meet such inspiring members of the Society, and though I didn't see it coming, I know I should have. I was never going to leave that place without singing something. So the trip ended with singing "My Wild Irish Rose." Unfortunately I was so excited I might have made some mistakes, but that isn't the important thing.

I was there, and now I know if I didn't know before, my place is in the Society. My girlfriend, Apryl, is not a barbershopper, but I believe that after that trip she finally understood a little better my passion, and maybe one day we can make a barbershopper out of her as well. It also gave me a great yearning to work in that building someday. I'm currently a theatre major at the University of Evansville, but I decided that day to change my path. I hope to be going to school in Nashville soon and making my way to the Society headquarters. I want to help as much as I can to keep our Society growing, and to make it bigger than ever. It was by far the best experience of my life visiting the Barbershop Harmony Society headquarters."

At the end, Apryl was smiling ear to ear and Michael had this huge grin on his face. The others at the table enjoyed it just as much as they did. Patty heard her say on the way out of the building "OMG did you see that... they were all singing to me! That was so cool!"

Now that is a Barbershop Experience!

BOARD SCRIBBLINGS



DAVID L'ESPERANCE
Chapter Secretary



The May 2011 meeting of the Board of Directors for the Mount Rushmore Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society finally convened at the offices of president Jim Olson at 7:03 p.m. on May 17. The Secretary certified the presence of a quorum of the elected members, and the agenda was approved.

The minutes of the April 2011 meeting were approved as presented.

VP and COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Treasurer Ron Evenson presented the data showing the Chapter financially sound through the end of April.

Music and Performance VP John Elving reported the Musical Directors were all very pleased with the performances and the hard-working efforts for the show. The Lincoln Day Dinner performance at Crazy Horse went fairly well, but we sure could have used more Basses! The Attorney General and Governor Daugaard were in attendance. There are many things on the Chorus' plate in the near future. Hart Ranch on June 4 and Harmony Happening in the Hills in August are the next two major endeavors. CACM on Saturday, May 21, has 21 Chapter members signed up, Bismarck-Mandan Chapter is bringing five men, and one-to-three are coming down from Spearfish.

Marketing and PR VP Del Beck reported he was quite pleased with the advertising efforts for the Show. He wants to include some way in next year's event to ask the audience how they heard about us.

Show Chair L'Esperance was blown away and deeply grateful and humbled with the dedication and focus of the members, as they put on one of our best shows ever, in his eyes. He requested short reports from the VPs and ticket and advertising chairs, so he can create a final report. We need a full accounting of the advertising and ticket sales, please. He will also develop a "clarity of taskings" for several areas, to ensure if someone agrees to take on a job that they know everything that is expected for that tasking. John Elving has requested copies of show preparations and timelines from several sources to aid in that development for future show chairs.

Advertising Chair Carroll Korb recommends that for corporations we contact for a Show ad, we contact them in December/January, since that is when they budget for the following year.

OLD BUSINESS:

Harmony Happening in the Hills: the music and learning

tracks are here for *Gonna Build a Mountain* and John will be distributing the materials soon.

We still need a final accounting for Singing Valentines.

NEW BUSINESS:

One of the next two Chapter meetings will be set aside as a celebration and relaxation (decompression ?) party after the Show efforts. John will show the movie "*American Harmony: The Movie.*"

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for June 7, 2011 at President Olson's offices, convening at 7 p.m. Any member in good standing is invited to observe your dedicated Board in action.

ADJOURNMENT:

With nothing more to be offered for the good of the Chapter, President Olson declared the May meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
In Perfect Harmony,

DAVID L'ESPERANCE, Secretary



Boys, I Harley knew ya!



Here's a picture of two lost souls who found some respite along the way. **Pete and Wayne Anderson** (*no recognizable relation*) took time from their motorcycle trip to the four corners of the US to stop in and see Bill and Loretta Anderson. Most of yo will remember Bill from his time singing with us for several years. Wayne sent the photo to me on May 25. Bill, at least, doesn't look any the worse for wear!

Shrine of Democracy Chorus

Mt. Rushmore Chapter, BHS
c/o John Elving, Editor
6806 Peaceful Pines Rd.
Black Hawk, SD 57718

The **Mt. Rushmore Chapter** and the **Shrine of Democracy Chorus** meet every Thursday evening at 7:00 p.m. Meetings and rehearsals are held in the Central High School Choir Room (east side of the building, near the gym – look for the banner), 433 N. Mt. Rushmore Rd. All guests are welcome. All men are welcome to come sing with us. For more information, call (605) 209-3701 or (605) 574-4740.

Visit Us Online At:
www.shrineofdemocracychorus.org

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Hart Ranch Performance Pool Pavilion – 7 p.m.	June 4
Meeting of the Board Jim Olson's Office – 7:00 p.m.	June 7
Music Team Meeting TBA – 6 p.m..	June 20
Harmony Happening in the Hills Hill City, Mt. Rushmore & Keystone	Aug. 19-20

Mission Statement

The Mt. Rushmore Chapter and the Shrine of Democracy Chorus shall promote, encourage and perpetuate barbershop-style singing in both chorus and quartets. We will recruit and welcome interested and motivated men who like to sing four-part a cappella harmony. We shall continually strive to improve our singing and performance skills, through the use of proper resources and opportunities. An attitude of fun, fellowship and teamwork will always guide our activities.



The 25th of
each month