

## WHAT DRAWS THE YOUNGER CROWD INTO OUR BARBERSHOP WORLD?

Compiled from the Harmonet

Many young people are exposed to this wonderful world of barbershop harmony that we all love so well. But what is it that makes them want to stay in the barbershop world, or leave it as so many have? Here are some thoughts from young people themselves.

"The society has gained many young kids due to the songs sung by quartets like OC Times and Vocal Spectrum (*not the old songs*). It seems strange to me that the older guys in this hobby act like the young kids should like exactly what they like and that is how to attract young members. How wrong you are..."

Another:

"I will draw from the old adage that the attraction to barbershop is not as much the lyrics as the infectious ring of the locked chord.

I don't disagree that few say things to their gals like "Heart of my heart, I love you; Life would be naught without you". But as rusty, dusty and archaic those lyrics may be, is "Come fly with me... in lama land there's a one-man band, and he'll toot his flute for you" any less out dated and from another era? I submit to you a resounding "no".

Stuff (*that*) OC Times, Vocal Spectrum, Men in Black, etc. do is stuff from my grand parents era. The "old stuff" is from my great grandparents era. It is all old in its way, but the key is how much life is breathed into it."

And yet another:

"Many of you are right - ringing chords is fun no matter what song it is - and polecats make it more accessible to ring those chords. It's also right that those great musical performances and musical variety of champ arrangements are inspiring.

I honestly don't like singing polecats very much after chapter meetings, etc. because they're usually sung very unmusical. They're often done VERY slowly, with no thought to how the lyrics move the musical line, etc. I find that even many of our better singers fall into this trap with polecats for some reason. When Gotcha! sings a polecat like "Nellie" it's great because it's musical - not because, or in spite of it being a polecat.

Musicality, or lack thereof, makes all the difference to new members - much more so than the actual title of the song that they hear or are singing."

So - how do we come across in our singing? Are we going through the motions, or are we thinking about the musical message? Ringing chords adds to the thrill for anyone. However, conveying the great musical message is what sells it to our prospective members (and, by the way, our audiences).

## Everything Old Is New Again!

Del Beck, VP, PR & Publicity



Get ready for a new and different experience with the 2007 issue of OKTOBERFEST. The old part is the chorus singing our familiar polka show in a public performance. The new part is our role in a concept brought to us by the Convention and Visitors' Bureau of the Rapid City Chamber of Commerce.

The new title of the "Fest" is "**OKTOBERFEST WITH SCARECROWS**".

Businesses, schools and other organizations will be invited to create scarecrows to be exhibited, judged and sold as a fund-raiser for Rapid City's Christmas lights. This festival will begin just before noon on October 20 and continue until about 11:00 pm that night. Our portion, not new, is to perform our polka concert at 7:00 pm and arrange for a polka band to begin its festive music right after we complete our performance. The Civic Center will sell beer, brats, etc. We can concentrate on singing and experiencing der Gemutlichkeit.

Since the emphasis of this article is to be directed toward publicity and marketing, let's get to it. We have a renewed opportunity and responsibility to attract not only our audience of the past but a new audience which brings to us numerous folks who likely have little familiarity with Barbershop Harmony. Our job will be to sell our product so well that they will not only have an enjoyable evening, but buy tickets to our show and invite us to perform for their banquets, conventions and other special events.

Let us review a model offered by an instructor at our District's Chapter Operations Training Seminar (COTS) which is designed as a basic procedure for publicity in our organization. Visualize a target and concentrate on the bull's eye. That center represents "me", or every barber-shopper. Every one of us is at the center of the target. The first circle around "me" represents the guy next to me. If he doesn't show up for rehearsal, call and tell him we missed him. Keep everyone involved. Be a partner. The next circle represents the family and friends. We want those very important people to support us. The next circle in the target represents our audience which has been supporting us right along. Be sure they are invited to the "Fest" or the next show, etc. The following ring stands for the community. This is a really big and perhaps a new group for the '07 event. We hope to attract a large number of folks who aren't familiar with our hobby. It is super important that we truly impress them and get their support for the future. This would include new members. The last circle in the target suggests the attention of the media and the general public such as businesses and, yes, the Chamber of Commerce. With support from all of these areas we can achieve a whole new level of life in the Mt. Rushmore Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

*Del*

## Ramblings of a Rookie (Part Deux)

David L'Esperance



Wednesday, July 4, promised to be the "longest" day of International, for that was the first round of the quartet competition! There were 49 quartets all dreaming of wearing the crowns at the conclusion of Saturday night's final. Session one began at 11 AM, with the first 25 quartets beginning their quest. Oh, by the way, the "mike testers" were a group called **Power Play** (2003 Champs!).

Of special interest to me in this session were our own RMD and April show guest quartet **IGNITION!**, **OC Times** from the Westminster Chorus, **SEP** (Bobby Gray and Allen Gasper of **Saturday Evening Post** fame) and the expected favorites **Max Q**. In addition to those four groups doing well, other eye-openers were **State Line Grocery**, **Reveille**, **Late Show** and **Rounders**.

One of the crowd favorites of the afternoon was the quartet from Great Britain, called **Pitch Invasion**. Dressed in formal British attire, including bowler hats and carrying briefcases as they stiffly marched on to the stage, they soon had the crowd in the palms of their hands and howling with delight with the hilarious parody of *Love's Old Sweet Song*. The song highlighted the problems proper English accents and pronunciations create when performing for judges expecting Americanized words and phrasing. It was a great way to end the afternoon.

The evening round forced me to make another tough decision. The Rockies were playing the Mets next door at Coors Field, and the game was designated *Barbershop Harmony Society Night* with special seating and fireworks following the game, OR round two of the quarterfinals which began at 7 PM. Since this was my first International (hence the Rookie in the title), I wasn't about to miss the chance to see and hear mike testers **Realtime** (2005 Champs), **Wheelhouse**, **Flipside** (Rick Spencer's the tenor), **Men In Black**, and our RMD quartets **Nexus**, **Mojo**, and **Storm Front**.

About midway through the session, however, and after roughly 35 or 36 quartets having performed on that day, and it becomes difficult to remember who was who, you find yourself hoping for a group to blow you out of your seats. A new quartet called **Glory Days**, with Joel T. Ruthford of **Acoustix** fame singing bass, did just that! They started the final grouping of the evening with a bang, and revitalized most of the audience. Also in that final segment were **Men In Black**, **Mojo**, **Flipside** and **Storm Front**, and all did well. I was particularly proud of **Storm Front**, for they had drawn the very last slot of the day, and even though it was well after 11 PM, they came out smokin'!

How the judges made it through that marathon day is beyond me. Talk about dedication and perseverance (and probable overload!!!)

In spite of the late night (and really long day), the quartet semifinal round with the top 20 quartets moving on kicked

off promptly at noon on Thursday. Three of the four RMD quartets made it into this round, and **Mojo** finished 26<sup>th</sup>. The mike tester quartet was another Westminster quartet **The Crush**, which was also competing in the Collegiate contest, where they finished in second place. Keep an eye on those boys!

All three of "our" quartets sang very well, and I thought **IGNITION!** nailed it. I was really surprised (and disappointed) when they didn't make the final 10 (they were 12<sup>th</sup>), and I thought they were better than at least two quartets who did! **MAX Q** was awesome, and did a rendition of *Little Pal* which was the most beautiful presentation of that song I've ever heard. **Nexus** finished in the number 19 slot.

At intermission, our good friend and Harmony Happening guest, Jim DeBusman, was presented with the MENC/Barbershop Harmony Society Award, which is "to the individual who, through his talent and dedication, has made outstanding contributions to the furtherance of music education in the schools and in the promotion of the barbershop style as an American Musical art form." It was one of the few times I've heard Jim D at a loss for words! Very well deserved, good friend.

As I mentioned in part 1, the AIC Show was on Thursday evening, and built around *The Music Man* theme. The theme part of the show was spectacular, and the AIC Chorus was very special as well. **FRED** had the arena in stitches, and gave **Vocal Spectrum** a "special" welcome to the AIC. **Power Play**, **Realtime**, and **GOTCHA!** each performed. **Happiness Emporium's** set was essentially a tribute to groups who had influenced this awesome quartet, and you'd swear the Four Lads, Mills Brothers, Four Freshman and several others were on the stage – that's how perfectly HE duplicated their distinctive styles!

**Classic Collection** hasn't lost their touch either, and the celebration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their gold medal victory in their hometown was extra special. I knew I'd met George Davidson before, but it wasn't until all the old pictures flashed on the big screens that it finally dawned on me how long before that was! We have the old programs of the shows where they were our headliners in our file cabinet!

Finally, the day arrived which was the main reason I came to Denver – the CHORUS CONTEST!!! I wanted to see how the "big dogs" did it, and what an event this was all by itself! Going in, I knew **Westminster** was the talk of the town, having given **The Vocal Majority** such a scare last year, and that **Ambassadors of Harmony** were the defending Champs, having struck gold in 2004. Of course I was cheering for home-town **Sound of the Rockies**, and excited to see and hear **The Northern Lights**, **Voices in Harmony** (directed by Greg Lyne), **Midwest Vocal Express**, **Alexandria Harmonizers**, **The New Tradition Chorus** and Jim Bagby's **Heart of America Chorus**.

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**Ramblings of a Rookie** continued from page 10

The competition was simply unbelievable and far exceeded my expectations. The presentations, stage presence, in some cases costuming and special set pieces, and, of course, the quality of sound have to be seen and heard to be believed. The videos simply cannot compare to the thrill and excitement of being in the hall. The only down side was the inordinate amount of time the logistics of getting one chorus off stage and the next one on and ready to sing took.

As you all know by now, the “kids” from **Westminster** edged out the **Ambassadors of Harmony** by a tie-breaker score of 11 points in the singing category. The Westminster men had been in the house for the Ambassadors’ set, and John Elving overheard them say, as they came out as a group into the concourse at the set’s conclusion “We know what we have to do – game’s on!!!” **Sound of the Rockies** finished third, **The Northern Lights** fourth and **New Tradition** was fifth. **The Vocal Majority**, as is the tradition, “sang away” the trophy. Again, being a “rookie” at International, I wasn’t aware of that tradition, and was thrilled to see and hear the VM in person!

Still another highlight of the Friday evening events was the Society Hall of Fame presentation. Inducted were **Larry Ajer**, **The Confederates Quartet**, **Lloyd Steinkamp** and **Joe Liles**. Mr. Steinkamp was the gentleman who presented the **Mt. Rushmore Chapter** with its Charter, and of course Joe Liles has written or arranged so many great pieces of music, including the fabulous **America the Beautiful Overlay**, which we just performed at Mt. Rushmore. I was thrilled to finally get to meet in person the gentleman who has been so helpful to me during my time as the Chapter Secretary and in my searches for music and arrangements.

In Perfect Harmony,

DAVID

*Inquiring minds want to know, will there be a part Drei? Hopefully there will be more to come, including some other articles from others who went to Denver for the 2007 International Convention. (Hint, hint!) Ed.*



## KENOSHA ~ A LOOK BACK

by Brian Lynch

BHS staff since 1991... and into the future

An era is ending in Kenosha, Wisconsin this week.

After 50 years in this city on the lake, the Barbershop Harmony Society is uprooting itself to make a new home for itself in Nashville, Tennessee.

Around the world, Kenosha has been to Barbershoppers what Cooperstown is to baseball fans: the single place synonymous with their beloved hobby.

And throughout that time, the Society has been faithfully served by scores of employees who also called Kenosha home. Some were Barbershoppers who came to Kenosha to work for the Society; others were Wisconsin natives who took employment at the stable, reliable Society, and gave good measure for reasonable pay for many years.

As it happens, only two of the “natives” have chosen to relocate their lives and families to Nashville. And so, at the close of business Friday, (*August 24*) the retirees will gather their personal items, kiss goodbye, and walk out of the barbershop world – in most cases, forever.

Hundreds of years of accumulated knowledge, experience and good will goes with them. Thousands of cheery hellos; thousands of familiar greetings to volunteers they’ve worked with shoulder-to-shoulder at conventions, Harmony University, Leadership Forums, etc.

Our barbershop world celebrates its barbershop heroes above all, and certainly our staff Barbershoppers give their time and energy unstintingly, publicly, all year long. But the world will little know and little honor the daily contributions to the hobby made by the mail room, the shipping department, the accounting and convention and membership processing and library staff. These are the largely anonymous toilers who have kept the blood circulating for so long.

A few have worked for the Society for more than three decades; some for less than two years. Some will be retiring from the work force. Some are early-career workers who will move up. Some are mature workers who will be taking stock of their next careers. The Society is providing severance packages and job search assistance to ease the transition. But please say a prayer of gratitude and support for each of these good people in the hard months to come.

As you do, take pride in this: In many organizations, workers facing layoff would in the last week of employment be “running out the clock,” until the whistle blows for the last time. Not here. All of our “retiring” staff have been hard at it up to the last minute, sorting out problems, preparing hand-off materials for their successors, serving our customers until the end. It makes me proud to be their co-worker.

So hail to our Kenosha staff. Hail to good work done quietly, faithfully, constantly. Godspeed and good fortune to all.

**Bring a singer to chapter meeting**

## Performance Improvements

Adapted from Mile High Hi-Lites  
Jim Jensen, Editor

*(Do you think that what our director and coaches tell us about singing only applies to us? Are we the only ones with problems like this? Do others have similar problems? Check out what the third place International chorus, "Sound of the Rockies," has to think about so they can improve as a chorus. ED)*

Musically, We are FINALLY capable of singing a more demanding musical plan. I have held off on this until a lot of the singing groundwork was in place. To be honest, it has been the least of my concerns as we have been, building this chorus. But now we need to challenge the guys to make every word meaningful and musical with direction.

Visually we still have MANY guys who don't understand 1) when they check out, 2) what checking out means and 3) how it affects the overall performance. I would love to do some small group and individual work, whether with DVD examples, or recording ourselves and playing back, so that (coach) Cindy (Hansen Ellis) can pull out individual guys who can take the heat, and start with making individual performances better. It could be very educational.

Singing wise, we still need to take a big step! Each section needs to make better choices, and here is what (is) still heard:

**NOISE:** Is there a way to demonstrate this effectively to the guys? And what different types of mistakes sound like? I think it will help the learning process.

**Basses:** Generally too many guys still singing without a forward placement, especially in the extremes of their range! Still occasional bad vowels, and bad choices in mixing in the upper range.

**Baritones:** Huge development in this section in the last 6 months, BUT still heavy in the lower third of their range, lots of late to tune and late to vowel target issues here.

**Leads:** Still have several mistakes in the amount of head voice being used. Everything can be a more musical choice in this section.

**Tenors:** Need to lose all heaviness and all muscle in the section sound.

And finally, there is still some major disagreement in the bass and lead section sound at times. We need to address it. AND, we need to learn how to sing the upper dynamic ranges with more RING and more FREEDOM!

*(Think about what they need to do and apply it to what we need to do to become better singers.)*

### IMPORTANT NOTICE

Anyone having chorus music not in the current repertoire, please turn it in! We need an accurate inventory of what we as a chapter have, music wise.

Please turn in all such music to Argyl Ulestad, librarian, or John Elving, VP-Music & Performance.

## The Barbershop Baritone's Creed

by Earl McGhee

1. I will never forget that I am a Baritone and will never attempt to act normal, lest others forget.
2. I will sing softly, with quality, leaving the bellowing to the Bass.
3. I will sing what works, even if it cannot be described on paper, for I am a Baritone.
4. I will show a little respect for the Tenor, for he also sings softly, though his notes are ordinary.
5. I will sing flawlessly through the two part swipes, creating wonderful sounds, in spite of the Bass.
6. I will never attempt to match volume with the Lead, for I understand that what I must seek is the harmony that only a Baritone can produce.
7. I will, at every opportunity, practice my part alone, for I know it drives others up the wall.
8. I will occasionally tilt my head to one side and smile blissfully, so that everyone will think I'm hearing wonderful harmonies that they can only dream about.
9. I will try to understand that others do not realize that it is really the pitch pipe that is off.
10. I will remember that very high notes, very low notes and the ability to carry a tune are grossly over-rated and that only a Baritone can settle a chord.

## YouTube Viewing Tips

(for the techies in us)

from the Internet

For those of you viewing great barbershop on YouTube, here's a little tip for your viewing pleasure.

You can use Real Player 11 (available free at <http://www.real.com/>) (select "Get real player free"). Install Real Player 11, then when you go back to the website, hover over the video. A tab will appear at the top right that says: "Download this video". This will save it locally and allow you to play it any time you like from your library in the Real Player program.

If you don't like to use Real Player due to invasion concerns, check out VideoDL.org – <http://www.videodl.org/>

VideoDL is a quick AJAX application that allows you to download online video into your computer. It supports top 3 video sites - YouTube, Google Video, and Break.com.

Files download as flash. Very cool! Way Cool!!!

**"If you love to sing, you'll love singing  
even more if you sing better."**

Mike Bell

## ♪ Musical Notes ♪

John Elving, VP, Music & Performance

### Tips for Improved Ensemble Singing

*From "Building A Better Chorus"*

*by Dr. Greg Lyne*

#### Feel, Look and Act like Singers – Involved, improving, bring the best of yourselves

- "Up" position
- Release your weight
- Involve your face
- Weight forward
- Lift to the arms
- Look like the music: bring what is inside

#### Active Face

- Facial enlivenment
- Lift in the forehead, cheeks, eyebrows
- Shaping of the mouth
- Home/Nobody home
- Director's motions are up and lifting

#### Vowels that Look Right

- All up and out, none sideways
- All relaxedly drop the jaw
- Use hands to shape the vowels and bring them into position
- Prepare for the first sound of the vowel
- Prepare the breath and sound in your mind before singing
- Lift the soft palate enough for each vowel
- Make space inside the mouth
- Sing over, not into the music
- Monitor each other in pairs

#### In-line Singing – Focused Singing

- Integrates the above
- All sounds have shaping, height and direction
- Focus the sounds to the director
- Create the sounds inside
- Give sounds carrying power, direction
- Sing with no sound to feel the shape of the sounds

### Tips For Better Singing

*from "Par For The Chorus"*  
Jon Wagner, Editor

#### Telling the story . . .

Many times we have heard to sing conversationally and tell the story.

**Charlie Parker**, the famous jazz saxophonist, is quoted as saying, "If you don't **live it**, it won't come out of your horn."

The same is true with singing!

### Part Responsibilities

#### Lead – Personality

- Dynamic
- Delivering the message
- Use all the tools of focus and shaping

#### Bass – Foundation

- Sustenance
- Smooth, beautiful quality
- Engine

#### Baritone – Dignity

- Consistency
- Depth
- Sing to the Bass part
- Hear the lead line

#### Tenor – Sparkle

- Clarified
- Focused

#### Director

- Feels "on stage," a major part of the product
- Expect and plan for growth and improvement
- Share the weekly plan and the mission
- Stay positive, but demand continuous improvement
- Love the men, and keep asking for more

### Bring the Whole Singer

- All of yourself to the party
- Fun: Singing well, energetically, giving all to the audience
- Everything is channeled with spark and vitality
- "I'm talking to you!" Keep an attitude of constant personal improvement

*From the Beatri-Tone*  
Dan Wiedel, Editor



# **Shrine of Democracy Chorus**

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

First Class  
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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), 433 N. Mt. Rushmore Rd. All guests are welcome. And 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](http://www.shrineofdemocracychorus.org)



## **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.

District Rotary Convention (Crazy Horse)	Sep. 14
Hospice House (Rapid City Hospital)	Sep. 16
RMD Fall Convention (Albuquerque)	Sep. 28-30
Oktoberfest with Scarecrows	Oct. 20
Chorus Retreat (Hill City)	Nov. 10
Concert performance (Newcastle, WY)	Dec. 9