

The Bulletune



Monthly Publication of The Mall City Barbershop Chorus
.. a chapter of SPEBSQSA

Keep the Whole World Singing!

Dan Crampton, Editor The Mall City Chorus meets Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 p.m. at the Wesley Foundation on the WMU Campus

March 2000

AL'S Only March and already there are so many members to thank! So here goes: Thanks
Q Brian Hall for a great Musical start to the year;
U Warren Royer for help at the chapter meetings and planting the seeds of membership to bloom in May;
I John vanWestrienen for keeping a tight lid on our strong box; Con VanTol for volunteering and handling ticket sales. Raleigh Block for a multitude of duties done without being asked (i.e. chairing our
E most successful Singing Valentines yet); without
S John Fair the various retreats and Singing Valentines would not have been as successful; Clair Branch asked what he could do to help the chapter and jumped on ad sales for our annual show; Ron bower for giving a messy music library his utmost attention; Ed Fritzen for grabbing reins of the chorus when necessary; Chris Fenner for fantastic warm-ups; Jan-Ake Westin also for warm-ups and quarteting activities; Larry Flegal, the SALESMAN, (need I say more?); Lee Derksen and Bob Shafer for volunteering as co-show chairman; Frank & Thelma Sebastian for ticket, coupon, and tape sales at shows and contests; Steve Root for bringing Matt & Mike to every meeting; Jon Mollison for volunteering to take over membership duties upon Warren's departure; Herman Dykema for your wisdom and help with ticket and ad sales and Grant work; Dan Crampton for a fantastic job bringing back The Bulletune; and, of course, our director Gene Hanover, who demands that each man sings a little better every week, leading to greater fun and fellowship!

Now I've probably forgotten someone, 'cause it always happens that way. If you don't see your name here, try volunteering for something that will make you outstanding! I'll just continue with the weekly Chapter Update, and urge everyone to read and take to heart the "Let's Harmonize" article written by Darryl Flinn - Permission to resign ... if...

Al Grieser, your chapter President

Notes From the Director

In the past nine years that I have been here in Kalamazoo, I have enjoyed being your Chorus Director and I am looking forward to a few more good ones to come.

In those nine years, we have grown in many ways. The talents both personally and cumulatively have begun to blossom. We have grown in numbers, the quartets are singing and performing better, our administration is doing well; our shows are better every year.

We have won our several plateau awards, we've been ranked second for the past three spring contests, and we are currently ranked third in the fall contest, out scoring *everyone* in the singing category. We won the Most Improved Chorus award and we have received two invitations to the Buckeye Invitational, first in 1995, then again for this summer.

Not bad. Not bad at all. **WE ARE A SUCCESS STORY!** Our past shows us that we are rock solid in our approach and our future holds great things for us all. Speaking of the future, let's take a look at some of the challenges that we are facing in 2000 and beyond.

We have a very aggressive year ahead of us. We are booked pretty solid. (This is another sign of success - everyone likes us) We have the 2000 annual show, the three contests, (spring, Buckeye, and fall) the annual performances in Plainwell, and Allegan. There's the Bronson Park show in August just prior to the Buckeye, and the second annual "What the Dickens" show. We will have a chorus picnic, three contest Sendoff Shows, and 2 contest workshops - as well as begin to put the 2001 annual show together. And there's even talk about another CD in 2001!

"That's a lot of stuff! WOW! How are we going to handle it all?"
(cont. on next page)

Notes From the Director (cont. from page 1)

I'll tell you, "ONE JOB AT A TIME!" As I have heard many times, "Inch By Inch, Anything's A Cinch, Yard By Yard, It's Too Hard." We are going to be very careful about the new music demands that we place on everyone. We will also be depending more on different men to tackle some of the tasks at hand. Things like making sure that when someone is ill, we know about it and can get a card. To help make all the new men learn the ropes of the chapter. Things like: What is your name? Where do I get the music? Where is the restroom? Which part is what on the music? Who do I talk to about joining the chorus? How much does it cost to join? What goes on at conventions? The list is endless.

Most of us have been here so long, we take many things for granted. When it comes to a new man, even a man that has been here for a year or so, we all need to do what ever it takes to help him feel as though he is the only one that matters. If you notice that someone has not been here for a week or two, call him. Even if you only say, "Hi!" it will make him and you feel great because someone, *you*, took the time to care.

Yes, we will make it through this year, maybe a little tired, but we have a chance to have a great time with each other if we do it together. Volunteer to do something. Every man doing something will take great pressures off of the few that seem to do so much.

Gentlemen, I am proud to be here in Kalamazoo and I am humbled every time I'm in front. You see I DO have the best seat in the house. Keep up the good work and I'll see you on Tuesday!

Gene

YEAR 2000 GOALS

- 1. 24+ New Members**
- 2. 100 Singing Valentines**
- 3. 2 Grants**
- 4. 1 Annual Show**
- 5. 7 Various Retreats**
- 6. 1 Christmas Show**
- 7. 1 Very Best of the Fest**
- 8. Member Retention**

Welcome To Barbershopping



**Let's all be sure to extend a
very warm welcome to our
newest member!**

James (Jim) Paul

Teach Your PC To Sing Barbershop

Ever thought to change those boring Microsoft sounds that announce opening and closing of Windows? Well, there is a way of teaching your PC to sing real Barbershop **EACH** time it starts or ends Windows. This is what you need to do.

“Open Windows” and “Close Windows” are two separate programs or “events”, as Microsoft calls them that each initiates opening of sound files.

First you need those 2 files for starting and closing sounds. For lack of any other place I put them on my web page. Go to www.angelfire.com/ab/topcobok and find those 2 files on top of the page. Right click and save them on your computer. Best directory for easier search is c:\windows\media (this is where all other sound files are stored). The two files you need are hello.wav and goodnite.wav.

When you have the files downloaded, start Control Panel. If it's not on your desktop, left-click on Start, Settings --Control Panel. Once in the Control Panel find “Sounds” and click it open. You will see a menu with Events and associated Sounds. Find “Start Windows” event and down in the Name window you will see the file that you need to replace. Hit “Browse” and go to the directory where you store the 2 files (say, it's c:\windows\media), choose hello.wav and click OK. You will see the name of the file appear in the window. You can click on Preview and hear it. Do the same for “Close Windows” event, except that the associated sound file should be “goodnite.wav”.

There is a way to change your wallpaper and add other Barbershop custom feature to your PC. More about it later.

Alexander Boltenko (aboltenko@hotmail.com)

Ah! Sweet Valentines Day

. . . . *What a Blast!*

Where do you start? First of all, we had one of the best Singing Valentine Day's ever. How many you ask? 92 and that doesn't count the 16 delivered on the weekend by Four-Part Digital Surround Sound. Some people were worried because we upped the price from \$30 to \$35. Yet we had people say to us that they felt it was a bargain. Every quartet was busy the whole day. In fact we missed a couple because we were crunched for time. We need more quartets next year. All and all, this year we should have grossed \$3260.00. Our costs were about \$200.00, so we netted around \$3000.00. Of course we had 3 quartets and drivers that donated their time and gas. Larry Flegal was able to get one of the Chevy dealers to donate a van and the gas. Way to go Larry! John Fair provided phone coverage not only on Valentines Day, but leading up to it as well. Anyway our treasury was in tough straights until Valentines Day.

Most of you have heard that the quartets had a very very good time. Al Grieser was struggling with a throat problem, and by the end of the day when he sang a Valentine to his wife Mary, he was just able to croak it out.

One lady got a Singing Valentine from her husband at work in the Kellogg's' headquarters and everyone gathered around. When we were done, she said "I'm just going to love him to bits all night". Of course this brought a lot of whoops and laughs from her co-workers. Some said, "it looks like you already did that." She was obviously pregnant. Well she blushed and we said to her "isn't it great to be loved." She agreed. With out a doubt the whole day was a very positive and uplifting experience!

by Raleigh Bloch

The Johnny Appleseed Barbershop Singers

The *Johnny Appleseed Barbershop Singers* is a 50 man Ohio based chorus formed some 20 odd years ago. It was organized solely for the purpose of sharing the a cappella style of Barbershop Harmony in other nations of the world.

Consistently, the chorus size has averaged 50 men and since its inception has been directed by noted and able directors. All singers are experienced and dedicated voices performing a wide-ranging repertoire of songs in the Barbershop style. Frequently, quartets from within and without the chorus perform to produce a well-rounded program.

JABS has toured many countries including Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, the central Europe nations of Austria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. *The Chorus will tour the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg for 16 days in July and August this year.*

Stu Benedict, Herm Dykema and Jim Sell are members of JABS and commute to Columbus, Ohio for all scheduled rehearsals. Stu joined the group in the mid '80s. Herm joined shortly thereafter and both have been on all tours since joining. Jim joined before the last tour to Europe but will not be with the upcoming tour because of family commitments.

By invitation, JABS performed at the Annual Vienna Music Festival and included a Johann Strauss number sung in German, as part of its repertoire.

By Herm Dykema

SUPPORT THE ADVERTIZERS FOR THE SPRING SHOW!!

In a great show of community support, 136 (about) businesses in the community bought ads for the spring show! Now it's important for these businesses to realize that we appreciate that support. Patronize and support these businesses! When you go in, thank them, and let the owners know that you are there because of the ad that was placed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST (*TO THE NOTE*)

The title has little to do with the British playwright. In fact, it's about American art – Barbershop Singing. When I decided to write this article, I looked back to my 13 months of Barbershopping and I thought of sharing at least with other 12 newcomers of the last year what I think we can do all to move from just amateurs to advanced amateurs and move on. Speaking about the importance of being earnest/honest/enthusiastic about this wonderful hobby, Don Bazely said it right – if only we try each practice to do a bit better than before.

We all heard about fun and popularity of BS singing. But let me note that there is, in my mind, a difference between a BS and Barbershop singing. I do believe that Barbershopper, like every musician, start with singing the right notes. Unfortunately, most of those who like to sing in the shower in most of cases sing so off key that there is no fun listening to them. When we are not sure about the notes we sing, we tend to follow the section leader (or leaders), which is not bad as such, and we all seem to have an ear for music. The problem starts when Gene spread us around the risers, when the song is new and then we have hard time finding the right notes. Well, not all the time, but we can do better – at hit the right notes ALL THE TIME! Can you imagine the difference in sound, the ringing of the right chord, and the thrill of achievement! This is FUN!

I've been singing since my early childhood. My mother's family came from Ukraine and they are known for singing folk songs whenever they come together. When in school I spent 3 years studying music in a special music school (normal occurrence in the then Soviet Union), playing accordion and balalaika, Russian folk 3-string instrument. I know the basics of music notation and it helps, but my ear is not much trained to read the music. I've always been amazed then and I do still now at the ability of certain individuals to look at the musical notation and sing to the notes. We have some in our chorus – Gary Nitz or Kerry Foley are the perfect examples, if we talk about basses, whom I know best. For me it takes time and the help of another instrument other than voice to get to the right notes. I do believe that **RIGHT NOTES is THE BEGINNING** of all meaningful singing experience. Only after the right/correct notes are hit, emotions and other singing skills can be added. Section rehearsals are the best way to sing out correctly, but for some reason they are rare.

Some time back Dave Cole introduced me to NoteWorthy Composer, music notation software that allows not only to write music but also to play it. I've entered most of the songs I've been working on and play them often. Great help! Basses have received last week a sample of the learning tapes that can be done with the NWC. We can do all parts now and I would like some help and advice. I will soon put all the music on the web and who is interested to try it out, just let me know. The software is available on the web as a free trial version (writing and recording) or as a player. The address is www.ntworthy.com.

Alexander Boltenko (aboltenko@hotmail.com)



"We Sing That They Shall Speak" — Heartspring

February – We collected \$59 at our 4 February meetings

From Brian Hall – Music VP

Here is a list of people I've asked to be on the Music Team. Board members are always welcome and *anyone else* in the chorus who is willing to contribute may attend.

Brian Hall -VP Music.
Gene Hanover -Chorus Director
Al Grieser -Chapter Pres.
Ron Bower –Librarian
Raleigh Bloch -Section Leader
Ed Fritzen -Section Leader
Chris Fenner -At Large
Bob Shaver -At Large
Toby Shaver -At Large
Jan-Ake Westin -At Large
Jerry Ditto -At Large

Minutes of Music Team Meeting

– 2/21/2000

In attendance: *Brian Hall, Gene Hanover, Al Grieser, Jan-Ake Westin, Raleigh Bloch*

-Agreed Ed Fritzen will be the official contact person for sing-outs. This information will be disseminated through weekly update, Bulletune, and announcements.

-info shared on 8/13 singout in Bronson Park. 1 1/2 hour show with break. will be opportunity to use material for.....Buckeye Invitational 8/17-8/20 in Columbus OH. 25 guys raised hands to go when last asked. A sign-up sheet was out also.

-Singing Valentines were a big success because of the many hours given by quartets, John Fair and Raleigh. Next year, start earlier, put Raleigh in charge (he agreed), organize the phone order system with more people and a plan, more promotion through ads and use service clubs, have quartet chairman (still looking) to prepare more quartets and get guys to know more than one part to the songs.

-Quartet activities will begin in earnest after the show. A Chairman will be recruited and such programs as barberpole cat will be looked at. Jan-Ake has agreed to participate in leading some activities during the Tuesday Eve mtg.

-A discussion ensued about the annual shows. This years show was discussed with the reminder that we need to find someone who will work closely with Chenery stage people to plan the staging, lighting etc. We might need to give Lee and Bob some support in this.

-Buckeye International was discussed and agreed that Herm Dykema will be the contact person.

-The membership committee will plan a membership drive in May. Agreed that music team needs to support them with a well planned program of music and we need to communicate with Warren, Jon Mollison, and John Stiegemeyer more closely.

-The Contest Retreat will be on April 1 and we will explore having it at the Kellogg center at Gull Lake.

-Future Christmas shows were briefly discussed with several questions raised but not answered. Do we want to use the same script and music as 1999 show? How do we want to use the revenues?

-The Annual 2001 show is already scheduled for March 2001. This will also be the chapter's 60th anniversary. A suggestion was raised that we combine the show with a Reunion and include alumni in a portion of the show. It was noted that other chapters have done this with great success.

-Finally, as we discussed shows, it was agreed that as long as we continue to have an annual show and Christmas show, there must not be any singouts scheduled in the eight weeks leading to the shows.

-The next meeting of the music team will be March 20 at 7:30, at the office at 730 Lake St.

The meeting mercifully ended at nearly 9:30 pm

Respectfully Submitted, Brian Hall

* * * * *

Happy Birthday!

Kirk Wood	3/10
John Gillespie	3/11
Chuck Wilson	3/15
Bob Ramlow	3/17
Leslie Ramlow	3/9
George Dieffenderfer	3/18
Al Grieser	3/27
Dollie Van Tol	3/2
Debra Dolph	3/7
Thelma Sebastian	3/12
Barbro Westin	3/18
Pat DeDoes	3/21
Skip Hamilton	3/28

Happy Anniversary!

Ed and Michele Gritzen	3/20
Scott and Lynn Gardner	3/21
David and Debra Dolph	3/24

A Valentine Day's Tale . . . FOUR PART DIGITAL SURROUND

On Valentines Day, Four Part Digital Surround Sound was able to deliver more than 37 singing valentines and still had the time (and voice) to cap off the evening with a 20 minute show for the Delton Rotary Group.

Every valentine was memorable in its own way; the first singing valentine is one never to forget, I'll always remember The fun of introducing barbershop singing to the school kids when we sang to their teachers, and the several times the quartet made the ladies cry will never be forgotten.

There is one story that should be told, however:

One of the Valentines we delivered was to Ship Pac's bowling team who won a bet with Nuclear Communications. As a result Nuclear sent our quartet to deliver a valentine and a big box of chocolates to Ship Pac. After a hasty brainstorming session we came up with the following lyrics (Sung to Wild Irish Rose):

It's Valentines Day
Nuclear sent us to say
"We bowl like the pits
Can't pick up the splits
That why you blew us away."

It's Valentines Day
Sweet Valentines Day
There's no need to fear
and don't shed a tear
Cause we're gonna get you next year
Yea, we're gonna get you next year
(wait til next year)

This song was very well received by the victors. (Not well enough to share the chocolates with the delivery boys, but you can't win them all!)

By Jon Mollison

Board Meeting Highlights - 2/16/2000

Present: Al Grieser, Brian Hall, Ron Bower, Dan Crampton, John Fair, Warren Royer and John vanWestrienen

The Treasurer reported receipts of \$1077.61 and expenses of \$988.87 with a balance on hand of \$4904.74 of which \$520.38 is unallocated.

It was suggested that for the Singing Valentine Program, any non-quartet member should be qualified to participate.

The next Music Committee Meeting will be Monday, February 21st at 7:30pm at 730 Lake Street.

We have been approached for the chorus to do a sing-out on Sunday, August 13th at 4:00pm to dedicate the new band shell in Bronson Park. They will pay us \$750. Brian hall will clear this date with Ed Fritzen.

More quartet development is needed and one way to do that is to revive the Barberpole Cat Program.

The possibility of hiring a PR firm to do our ad and ticket sales for our annual show was discussed. Matter tabled for further discussion.

May was designated as membership drive month.



Hello Gentlemen!

It's not too soon to be thinking about our special guest month, coming up in May. Be thinking about men you can invite; even men you have invited before with no response. The Membership Committee – Jon Mollison, John

Stiegemeier, and myself, will meet shortly after the spring show (assuming we can all find a time when we're all free) and complete plans. This will give us about a month to prepare, which will include the contest, so the chorus should be in tip-top shape. We'll probably follow closely the plan that we had last year, but the committee will go over them to see if there's anything we want to add or change.

If you will get names to me, I will send personal, handwritten, letters to all of them. BUT you should personally invite them, offer to pick them up, and so on. The letter is simply a courtesy to indicate that the whole chapter is interested in them. Be thinking about it, and get ready to welcome new singers!

Warren Royer, Membership VP