

# 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

September 2000

**AL'S**    Gentlemen, turn in your qualifying tapes!

**Q**    And now a few words about “standards”.

**U**    Most of the Society’s chapters were started with the  
**I**    crazy idea that singing barbershop harmony with  
**T**    other men is lots of fun. This is an obvious but  
**I**    accurate assumption.

**E**    Out of all these chapters, there are a few dozen that  
**S**    have a far-out-radical notion that singing barbershop  
harmony VERY WELL is even more fun. This is also  
an accurate assumption, especially if you are a superior  
performer.

Although these chapters represent opposite ends of the  
“quality” spectrum, most are happy with their chapter  
identity. They seem to function well because they  
understand the reason for their existence.

The real challenge is with chapters that suffer from the  
“daylight in the swamp” syndrome: When a large  
percentage of a chorus’ better singers become aware that  
it really IS more fun to sing better, they become less  
tolerant of those who prefer not to look for personal  
improvement, i.e. “change the old habits”. Those who  
are eager for improvement will welcome new  
“standards”, while the others will really wonder why  
they should have to submit a qualifying tape for “Down  
Our Way” when they have been singing it for 30 years!

Good singers know that over time, EVERY singer falls  
into lazy habits and “spontaneous arranging”. The  
longer the time from the initial learning of a song, the  
more likely the notes, words and performance will vary  
from the original. Even professional singers and voice  
teachers and directors get private coaching regularly to  
(continued on p.2 – see Al Grieser)

## Notes From the Director

*You may have noticed me using some new techniques  
over the past few weeks.* These are techniques that I  
received from **Dr. R. D. Mathey** in my Sound  
Management III class at Harmony College.

The most noticeable one is probably the ‘Shake  
Technique’ used in everything from warm-ups to contest  
material. The object of this technique is to:

1. Align the voice
2. Tune the voice
3. Get the body involved in this thing we call  
singing

At times this seems to be a violent and silly thing to do,  
**BUT IT WORKS!** Not only do we sing better, we sing  
in better tune and we sing with better vowels, energy,  
facial involvement, better hearing... **IT REALLY  
WORKS.**

There are times that this is not enough. We need to do  
something a little more drastic. We move on to the ‘O’  
vowel. You sing the note that you are working on  
through the ‘O’. When it is perfect, you slowly change  
that ‘O’ to the desired vowel changing the ‘SHAPE’ just  
enough to create that vowel.

If the ‘O’ needs a little help, we move to the all time  
ultimate help, the ‘OO’. The exercise is the same as the  
‘O’ but with an ‘OO’ replacing the ‘O’.

Here are the ‘Keys’ needed to give these exercises their  
best chance to create great sounds and excellent singing.

1. Have a ‘Firm’ chest.
2. Sing with the lips in the ‘Church position’.
3. Feel what is happening inside the body and  
mouth.
4. LISTEN

(continued on p.2 – see Director)

(continued from p.1 – Al Grieser)

catch the bad habits that erode our learned skills. Amateurs tend to delude themselves into believing the longer they have done something, the more correct it is.

So the key to improving your sound and thus the chorus sound, and retaining better singers is “standards”. Please bring your recorders and submit a tape when asked to do so. The intent is not to eliminate anyone, but to make your performance more enjoyable for you and the audience.

*Your Chapter President...Al Grieser*

(continued from p.1 – Director)

The firm chest assures that you have your back straight, chest high, and that you can breath deep so you can sing from the diaphragm.

The ‘Church Position’ assures that the lips are in an outward bell shape to maximize the sound.

Feeling what is happening inside the body and the mouth lets you know what you need to feel every time to produce that sound.

And listening, well ...

All in all, I think that I received more information and tips for teaching better singing then I have ever gotten out of any school. So practice these techniques at home and be prepared to use them for a long time to come.

*C YA TUESDAY!*

*Gene*

## Coaching Session – September 16

WOW! Contest is coming up quickly. Seven rehearsals left, and an **all-day coaching session**.

Buckeye was a complete success and I am confident that we are about to have the best convention that we have ever had.

*As most of you know, Dr. R. D. Mathey has agreed to be at our coaching session on September 16.* R.D. is the Society's most sought after singing and music coach. His approach is commonsense and HARD WORK. We are extremely lucky that he will be here. **WE NEED TO HAVE EVERYONE THERE!** We will cover so much ground and will make our first attempt at being the best that we possibly can be. If you or someone else misses this rehearsal, the impact will be determined and we will not be able to catch him or you up. This is the most important coaching session that we have had to date. **Pass the word and help to get the others there.**

The tentative schedule is:

8:30-9:00	Gather and set-up of the hall
9:00	Warm-up (a must for all)
9:30	Opening Session with R.D.
10:15	Break
10:30	Session #2
	Sectionals Bari and Tenor
	Duet rehearsal, Lead/Bass with R. D.
11:30	Session #3 with R. D.
12:00	Lunch
1:00	Session #4 - Full chorus with R.D.
2:00	Break
2:15	Session #5 - Full chorus with R. D.
3:30	Finish
3:45	Music team with R. D. to recap the day and plan for the upcoming weeks. This will be an intense day, but it will come and go rapidly. We are on our way to becoming more then any audience has thought we could be. This is a great time to get new men there to hear and see what we can and will do in the interest of becoming better.

*C. YA There!*

*Gene*

# Bronco Bash 2000

*The Mall City Chorus has been looking for ways to tap into the wealth of male singers at WMU, and it looks like we've finally found a great way to do it.* A small investment by the chorus and a lot of work by Jon Mollison landed us a booth at *Bronco Bash 2000*.

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, this was a successful event for us!

The greatest attracting force for young men (and a few young women) was the CD giveaway. Nearly fifty people filled out cards for the giveaway, and we've already mailed out the prizes. Five lucky gentlemen received an Upstage Sound CD, along with a letter from the chorus and brochures from the chorus and the Society. Warren has taken the effort to contact everyone who filled out a card to make sure that none of these young men slip through our fingers.

At the Bash, we also had a sign that declared "Wanted: men who love to sing." Many men came up to the booth and expressed an interest in singing without even asking about the giveaway. Some men were persuaded by their girlfriends to check out the booth when the girls saw the sign. Guys came up to the booth and said they had enjoyed singing in high school, and a couple of men even told us that they were barbershoppers, so it wasn't hard to convince them to check out the chorus.

Overall, the results of the Bronco Bash have been very encouraging, and we've already started to reap the fruits of our adventure. Special thanks go out to Raleigh, Dave, John Van, Warren, and Alex for helping out with the booth.

Let's put our best foot forward when these men walk into Wesley, and show them why they should be a part of a great chorus that is willing and able to reach out to the students of WMU!

*Chris Fenner*

## **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**

# UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT "SHOWS 'EM HOW TO DO IT!!!"

That's right fellow Barbershoppers. During the fourth day of the week-long Harmony College in Missouri, **UNM got to teach a class.** Don Kahl, the star tenor from the 1986 International Champion quartet *Rural Route 4* invited us to teach his class. The class - composed of men who wanted to be in a quartet - were eager to hear from us. Don asked us to sing an opening song and of course we did our version of Mary Lou. After that we were asked to speak a little about the quartet; i.e. how long have we been together, what were our goals and objectives etc., etc.

Each of us described something that makes the group tick. We spoke of the singouts that we do - some are paid, some are freebies. We talked about participating in contest each year to get a coaching session with the judges afterwards. We talked about uniforms and techniques we use in performances. We also mentioned some of the highlights of past shows.

Don was impressed with the singing and the idea that quarteting is for the fun and enjoyment of the hobby. Not all quartets will be International champs, but can be champs in their own right. We told of each other's jobs and specialties within the group to show these classmates what a group of four special guys can do with some practice and the right attitude. Being members of the Kalamazoo Chorus is a real bonus for us. We told them how important it is for the quartets to support the chapter and set high goals for their respective sections. Imagine if all the chorus members had a quartet, what a stellar chorus that would be!!!!

The class had heard from some of the other quartets who were really into competition and attaining the "gold." Don was relieved to hear that there are quartets who just want to sing barbershop!! We also told them of our 100% support of "Heartspring" and what the support means to us, and the audiences that we entertain. UNM then invited some of the members to sing with them!!! Each man got a chance to ring a chord in a real quartet!! They were thrilled!! It just happened to be the day we were wearing a Bronze medal from Kevin King, he has five medals with BSQ. So guess what??? We allowed them, as we were singing, to feel the thrill and the pride to wear an International medal.

What a day! UNM sang and told them all what a great privilege it is to have three other guys who support and create the music we love. I know we left them all wanting to get home and find those guys within their chapters. Thanks UNM for sharing the fun, skill and knowledge about keeping a quartet active for so long. You guys are wonderful, and I was so proud of the work we did that day for Don and the Kalamazoo Chapter. It is Great to be a Barbershopper!

*by Jerry, Kurt, Bob and John - UNM*

## **Board Meeting Highlights – 8/16/2000**

*Present: Al Grieser, Dan Crampton, Warren Royer, John vanWestrienen, Alex Boltenko, and Brian Hall*

The Treasurer reported receipts of \$478.04, expenses of \$375.88, with a balance on hand of \$10,000.16 of which \$5595.80 is unallocated.

Brian Hall reported that the Music Committee met on August 8<sup>th</sup> with 8 members present. Items discussed were The Bronson Park Sing-out, Buckeye Invitational, Bronco Bash, 100 Man Dash, Guest Nights, Fall Competition and the Christmas Show. Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> has been set for a fall competition retreat at Wesley Foundation. Dr. R.D. Mathey will be here from Bowling Green, Ohio to coach us so it is imperative that we all attend this retreat. Qualification tapes are being required for those members singing at the Fall Convention.

The date for the Christmas Show has been set for December 9<sup>th</sup>. Type of show (Regular or Cabaret) and location to be determined.

Our 2001 Annual Show on March 10 is being chaired by Raleigh Bloch. Ed Fritzen is checking into guest quartets and Herm Dykema has agreed to help on the reunion portion.

A BIG ATTA-BOY to Raleigh Bloch for getting us started on the 100 Man Dash Membership Program. Alex Boltenko and Warren Royer will proceed with the plan.

It was decided that quartets wishing to perform at Chapter Sing-outs need to qualify by singing for the Chorus and getting their approval.

Our annual picnic will be held on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at Coldbrook Park. The \$50.00 registration fee was approved. A \$4.00 per carload fee will be collected at the gate.

President Al Grieser will appoint a nominating committee for officers for next year to be elected in October.

The Visitors Committee consisting of Jon Mollison, Chris Fenner and Warren Royer met on August 16<sup>th</sup> and set up policies and procedures for welcoming potential members.

We need 2 or 3 people to be trained on using our sound system. John Fair has people who will do the training. Alex Boltenko has agreed to be trained.

### **R.D. Mathey is our coach for September 16. . . . . . here's a little about him.**

**Richard D. Mathey (R. D.)** is Professor Emeritus at Bowling Green State University where he currently conducts the BGSU Men's Chorus. Dr. Mathey is a graduate of Capital University located in Columbus, Ohio and Bowling Green State University. His various university choirs have appeared at many state, regional and national conventions. In addition, R. D. has conducted All-State Choruses and more than 300 county and district choral festivals.

On July 4, 1997, he received an award from the Music Educator's National Conference and the Society for his service to music education.

In January of 1999, Dr. Mathey assumed the directorship of the Singing Buckeye Chapter in Columbus, Ohio. He is also the director of music at the First United Methodist Church in Bowling Green, Ohio.

He made his New York singing debut in 1971 with the Opera Orchestra of New York. Since that time, he has performed 17 leading operatic roles and has soloed with symphonies throughout the midwest.

Professor Mathey can be heard on the CD album "Without A Song" with his son and tenor, Shawn Mathey.

# Basic Music Theory-Lesson Two

Ed Fritzen

If you remember from last month's article, I introduced you the system we use to write music. You'll recall that the musical staff is made up of a series of lines and spaces. Each line or space represents one note on the musical scale. At the beginning of each staff we see either a treble clef, **Fig. 1**, or a bass clef, **Fig 2**.



**Figure 1 Treble Clef**



**Figure 2 Bass Clef**

These clefs serve a very important role in music, in that they designate that a particular line will be a certain note. But before we can assign the lines and spaces to various notes, we have to know the terms for the notes. In music, there are really only 7 notes and they have been assigned names in alphabetical order. The names for the notes are as follows: A, B, C, D, E, F, G. That's all there is guys! Only 7 notes!! It's amazing how an infinite variety of music can arise from only 7 notes. In reality, however, there are an infinite number of notes, but we only concern ourselves with naming these seven notes. So how do we assign these names to the lines and spaces of the staff? Well, this is where the clefs are important. The treble clef, sometimes called a "G clef" designates the second line of the staff as being the note "G". The notes are assigned to each line and space then in alphabetical order. Since there is no note "H", the next space above the second line is assigned "A", the next line is "B" and so on. The complete scale is shown in **Fig. 3** below.



**Figure 3**

Notes are continued both above and below the staff, and these are represented by ledger lines. By filling in note names for all the lines and spaces, we now can see that the lines are E,G,B,D,F and the spaces are F,A,C,E. If nothing else, you should memorize these. They will not change in your lifetime!

A similar method can be used to assign the notes to the lines and spaces for a staff starting with a bass clef. The bass clef assigns the note "F" to the fourth line of the staff. Again by filling in the notes alphabetically one can easily see that in the bass clef the lines are G,B,D,F,A and the spaces are A,C,E,G. This is shown below in **Fig. 4**. By combining both the treble and bass clefs in the grand staff we use in barbershop singing, we have the notes assigned to the lines and spaces as shown in **Fig 5**.



**Figure 4**



**Figure 5**

Next month I'll introduce you to scales and to sharps and flats. I bet you can hardly wait! As always, if you have any questions, just ask at a chapter meeting. I might not know all the answers, but I can find out for you. Till next month!

## From the Music Team VP...

A couple of things are on my mind.

First, let me tell you how thrilled I was to have **Four Part Digital Surround Sound** come to my church in Decatur and sing on August 27<sup>th</sup>! They sang Trust and Obey, An Irish Blessing, and The Old Rugged Cross. They did a fantastic job singing sacred music and the folks couldn't help but applaud in appreciation. Then, they stayed after the worship, let down their hair, and put on a show right in the sanctuary! They sang a bunch, including I'm Sittin On Top of the World, and River of No Return. Dave graciously let me sing the lead on Shenendoah. That was a thrill! Thanks, 4-Part for making me a hero on my own turf.

One more thing, I really do think we're singing better than ever, especially considering we are down in numbers. I think the thrill comes mostly from a bunch of guys working together to make something happen that no one of us could create on our own. Thanks, each and every one of you who shows up to practice!

*Brian Hall*



## Happy Birthday!

9/1	Dennis Perry
9/9	T. Murray Smith
9/14	Kenneth Rysenga
9/18	Bill Hamilton
9/24	John Fair
9/27	Con Van Tol

## Happy Anniversary!

9/2	Herman & Dorothy Dykema
9/2	Gary & Colleen Nitz
9/3	John T. & Betty Gillespie
9/24	John M. & Debbie Gillespie

## Calendar

9/9	Picnic
9/16	Fall Contest Retreat
9/29-9/30	Bush League 2000
10/17	Fall Contest Send-Off
10/20-22	Fall Convention & Contest
10/27	Spaghetti Dinner
12/9	Christmas Show

### Buckeye – Found on the Harmonet....

Mall City (PIO) began with "I Want To Be Around", a revenge-is-sweet number with a bouncy swing. "Girl of My Dreams" was soft and plaintive.

Next they put their tux collars up and put on shades in an ultra-cool fashion. In their final number, "Blue Moon," a soloist sang and the chorus was in the background, bopping away. The soloist performed the obligatory bass voiceover in the middle.

#### Also found.....

Kalamazoo placed 9th of 11, scoring 2511 with 25 men. Songs were "I Wanna Be Around to Pick up the Pieces" and "Girl of My Dreams."

Top chorus was Indy, scoring 3073 with 92 men.

Philatoga Township placed 11th of 16, scoring 2617 (17 points out of 10th), with 4 men. Songs were "Got My Thumb Out" and "Tin Roof Blues."

Top quartet was Raise the Roof, with 2852 points.