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MINNEAPOLIS
COMMODORES

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA, CHAPTER
**** A CHAPTER WITH AN ENVIABLE PAST - AN UNBOUNDED FUTURE ****

10,000 LAKES DIVISION - LAND O' LAKES DISTRICT

MARCH 2017- VOL. 73- NO. 3

COMMODORES SHINE in the NORTHERN PINES HARMONY BRIGADE

**'Ya gotta love all 13 of 'em!'*

The fifth-annual *Northern Pines Harmony Brigade* rally convened uneventfully over the weekend of February 24-26 at Plymouth, Minnesota's, Crown Plaza Hotel without the encumbrance of snow, ice or other natural elemental problems.

Eighty-four men from the U.S. and Canada gathered to exhibit their dedication to and their skill at the challenge of *eXtreme Quartetting*. Thirteen of the attendees were proud members of the Minneapolis Chapter and all acquitted themselves quite well during the rally.

Friday morning and afternoon were special for the group as reported by NPHB Board member, **Mark Bloomquist**: *Forty Brigaders, riding together on a bus chartered by Ken*

Wentworth, visited four schools: Armstrong High School in Plymouth; Park Center High School in Brooklyn Park; South High in Minneapolis; and Calvin Christian School in Edina. Stopping for lunch along the way, the forty-man chorus performed several numbers for the enthusiastic audiences that consisted of choral and instrumental-music classes at the schools. Several of us, including Storm Front's Jim Clark, spoke to the students about the history of Barbershop and about how the young men could get

involved with the Barbershop Harmony Society. The young ladies present were made aware of Sweet Adelines International Chapters in the Metropolitan Area.

Also in our entourage were the father and four sons of the Reen Family. The Reen boys quartet performed for all four schools and clearly was a hit with their audiences. All students were invited to come to our Saturday Evening Show, free of charge, and at least four of them accepted the offer, joining us at the show and the Pizza Afterglow at the Crowne Plaza on Saturday night.



Commodore Brigaders (from left to rt.) Front row: Mark Bloomquist, Mark Ortenburger, Andy Richards, Matt Richards. Second row: Dave Casperson, Kevin Huyck, Dick Riemenschneider. Third row: Andy Lapakko, Paul Paddock, Dave Speidel (NPHB President). Fourth row: Ben Wanggaard, Nate Weimer. Not pictured: Ken Wentworth.

The Brigade quartet competition occupied the Friday-evening time slot during which quartets formed by lot, selected one of the ten Brigade numbers, again by lot, to perform in the contest. After practicing together for the first time, for a few minutes, each foursome took the contest stage.

The Commodores did quite well that evening, **Dave Speidel** and **Dick Riemenschneider** earning third places while **Ben Wanggaard** and **Matt Richards** garnered first-place laurels. A great time was had by all.

Go to *Brigade*, Page 2, Column 1



The 2017 Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Chorus



KORDAL KOMBAT



THE REEN FAMILY



JUST ONE MORE



MC DAN TRUE



CLARK*FOY*DOWMA

Brigade from Page 1

In a departure from past NPH Brigades, the format of the Saturday Evening Show was revamped. Since the quartet competition had taken place on Friday, Saturday evening opened with a stirring concert by the 84-man Brigade chorus, each of this year's repertoire being directed by a chorus member or guest conductor. (What a swath this chorus could cut at the LOL District International Prelims and Convention.)

As an aside, it should be noted that the selection *When I Lift Up My Head*, directed by **Dave Speidel**, was sung in memory of Commodore, **Bill Ward**, attendee of all past NPH Brigade Rallies. He had hoped to be singing again with his son, **Conrad**, in the Brigade this year but his vicious 22-month battle with pancreatic can-

cer ended just a few weeks ago. Conrad was in the audience and was so appreciative of all the love and support his fellow Brigaders provided the entire weekend.

Following the chorus performance and before the guests appeared there was time for an "in-Brigade" all-Commodore foursome to perform, none other than *Just One More* with **Matt Richards**, **Ben Wanggaard**, **Tony Lapakko**, and **Nate Weimer**, appropriately setting the stage for guests, **Kordal Kombat**.

In 2013, Kordal Kombat won the LOL District *Gold* as well as the Novice Championship and, in 2014, went on to win the LOL Collegiate Gold Medal. The group continues to improve with each outing and should be a force at International Prelims in May.

Next, it was time for the **Reen Family Singers**, Patriarch **Steve** and his four Brigade sons (above photo L to R), **Stephen II** (18), **Steve**, **Bernie** (15), **Johnny** (12), and **Dominic** (15) to cap the evening's scheduled festivities. They performed masterfully, first as a quintet, and later as a quartet with Steve sitting out. It was a fine event accentuated by **Bernie's** remarkable lead voice. (Although he was up-staged a bit when **Johnny** appeared on stage with **Jim Foy's** gold medal adorning his chest.)

To conclude a wonderful Saturday, Brigaders and guests gathered for the traditional Pizza Afterglow. However, as it was past this reporter's bedtime, his Sweet Adeline wife led him to her car and drove him home to his snug little bed.

All Photos by Staff



Johnny Reen on the risers. Never missing a beat, he participated fully in the chorus and in the Friday evening quartet competition. He may well have his own gold medal in ten or twelve years.

Dominic, Steven II, Bernie, and Johnny did a set without their dad. The highlight was a tongue-in-cheek, boys-will-be-boys rendition of *When There's Love at Home*, complete with restrained shoving, pushing, mugging, and hitting. There are nine siblings in the Reen family (including three girls). Home schooled, all sing, play piano, cello, violin and viola. Mom (Sophie) and Dad are classically-trained pianists and cellists.

With a gold medal on temporary loan from *Happiness Emporium's* Jim Foy, it could be said of Johnny some time in the not too distant future "Ah, yes, I knew Johnny Reen when ..."

**Minneapolis, Minn. Chapter
Land O'Lakes District, BHS
Meetings every Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
House of Prayer Lutheran Church
7625 Chicago Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423**

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- Past Pres.Gordy Aumann 952/935-8869
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- VP Music /Perform.... Carl Pinard 612/927-9363
- VP Membership.....Harvey Weiss 763/439-4447
- Program VP.....Blake Wanger 414/699-4950
- Secretary.....Bill Warp 763/531-2290
- TreasurerJohn Carlotto 952/925-0886

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 - Matt Richards651/983-8021
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- Through 2017-18*

- Andy Cook.....651/688-6459
- Andy Richards.....651/639-9312
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- Assistant Directors: Gary Jacobson, David Speidel

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- Lead Section Leader.**Vacant**
Assistant - Dan Smith
- Bari Section LeadersDave Speidel
Assistant - Matt Richards
- Bass Section Leaders.....Dave Casperson

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- Artist.....Glenn Retter

April Rock – and let's roll!

By Paul Wigley, Director

It's the most wonderful time of the year. This is honestly the most exciting time of the Commodores' musical year! This year's show is going to be unforgettable. Starting with *Main Street*, the most entertaining Barbershop quartet currently active in the world; they will provide incredible singing,



Paul Wigley

- Chorus Performance Managers.....John Lloyd
Bob Ostergaard
- Grants Research.....**Vacant**
- Group Organizer Administrator.....Matt Richards
- Harmony Foundation.....**Vacant**
- HistorianMark Bloomquist
- Learning Tracks.....Dan Smith
- Librarian.....Carl Pinard
- Name TagsDan Slattery
- Nut Sales Chairman.....Dick Riemenschneider
- Northern Pines Brigade President.....Dave Speidel
- Performance Mgr.....Paul Swanson
- Presentation Chairman.....Dan True
- Quartet Promotion.....Gary Jacobson
- Riser Boss.....Dan Cole
(Temp.)
- Roster (pending)Andy Richards
- Singing Valentines.....Neal Mortenson
- SunshineRich Ongna
- Swipe* EditorBill Warp
- Tickets/A-Commodore's President.....Diana Pinard
- Transportation Mgr.....Dick Hartmann
- Uniform Committee Chairman.....**Vacant**
- Uniforms (Dress & Casual).....Dan Williams

super pacing, and lighthearted humor for any and every age.

And then we add the biggest number of quartets and small ensembles...and rock band...that have ever been in any show since I have been with the Commodores! The variety of sounds and styles among these small groups is almost impossible to comprehend; people will truly have to see it to believe it!

Then the main event, the *Minneapolis Commodores!* The music that **Dan Cole** has labored on for over a year and a half is finally coming to fruition. I don't think many of you realize the countless hours Dan has spent researching (and spending lots and lots of his own money!) on looking at arrangements, listening to learning tracks, etc. The result of Dan's work is now in our hands, and we all have a big responsibility to sing our very best on every song. This music has been a joy to rehearse, and every Tuesday night I'm disappointed to see the evening end. I want to just keep singing!

Also, a shout out to our newest assistant director, **David Bechard**, for his energy, super attitude, great musicianship, and willingness to jump into rehearsal situations on very short notice and to lead like a champion!

Go to Rock, Page 4, Column 1

SUNSHINE



HOTLINE

By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: ddongna@usfamily.net

Reports are that long-time Commodore, **Bob Spong**, spent four days in the hospital with flu and a secondary pneumonia. He is now continuing his recovery at home.

Don Bartels had shoulder surgery on February 8th to repair a rotator cuff. Surgery went well and Don sang with us on the 10th at **Bill Ward's** memorial service. He's now faithfully doing the necessary therapy.

Glenn Retter has been diagnosed with laryngeal cancer and is beginning radiation treatments. **Shirley**

Rock from Page 3

David is simply one of the nicest young men I've met (The Lakeville School District is excited to have him as the new fifth-grade band director!), and he also has the skills that we've all been looking for as another person to help **Dave Speidel** and me. I am personally overjoyed to have (yet another!) *Dave* on our team.

The next weeks will be a whirlwind! Divisional contest on March 25 (It's an easy and fun day... out to Grove City and right back home.), tech rehearsal, and the BIG show on April 1. Throw in a few local performances that happened in early March, and we've got a full plate.

Remember, it is MUCH more fun to perform when you are confident. Confidence comes from preparation. Please keep spending time at home solidifying your part and raising your own personal bar. The Minneapolis Commodores continue to sing better every week, every performance. Thanks to all of you for making this happen. It is wonderful to be a Commodore!

says he's doing well under the circumstances but, of course, it tears him up not being able to sing.

Neal Mortensen returned to the risers with us on February 7 after recovering from his prostate surgery.

Dave Wall reported that Commodore **Glenn Aronson**, having spent a short time in the hospital in Cannon Falls as a result of having a difficult time with recent chemotherapy for his colon cancer, was discharged and sent home to hospice care where he died on March 3. His wife, **Barb**, had earlier resigned from her work in order to take care of Glenn full time.

Harvey Weiss tells me that his partner, **Cheryl**, underwent care at Mayo. She has since returned home to continue her recovery.

Shawn Hunter reports that he tore both an ACL and a meniscus dancing on a wet deck while on vacation in the Caribbean (I won't mention that he said something about rum being involved). He's scheduled for surgery on April 13th. He also used the vacation to memorize his music (while driving **Laura** nuts) and is off paper on everything including Bandstand Boogie. Wow, way to go, *Shawn*.

John Hansen was back on the risers with us on February 14th after a lengthy absence.

Remember: Please keep me informed about who is ailing and don't assume that I already know because generally I'm in the dark. Help me brighten the days of our ailing members. Just a short note of encouragement or a brief phone call can make the day of a person who's not feeling well.



February reenlistments.

Kaleb Smith.....7 yrs.

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

From the meeting of February 9

By Bill Warp, Secretary

Membership

• Plans are being made for the June 6 Guest Night.



Bill Warp

• **Andy Cook, Dean Lambert, and Dan Williams** will create a schedule for contacting members missing consecutive rehearsals.

Music & Performance

• Discussion was initiated regarding sending **David Bechard** to the *Harmony University Directors School*.

• *The River City Chorus* (Mason City) may be singing with us at the District Contest in Rochester.

• The 2018 Annual Show is scheduled for April 14, 2018 with Matt Richards serving as chairman.

Marketing

• *Senior Living* and *Standard* mailers were completed for our patron list.

• A proposal for our annual-show promotion for *Sweet Adeline* and other *Barbershop* groups, as well as area art groups, is near completion.

• **Arne Stefferud's** grant proposal for live simulcast of our annual show is stymied by legal problems and will be limited therefore to producing a DVD that may be used along with a quartet or small ensemble at senior centers.

New Business

• A resolution was passed to support the *NP Harmony Brigade* with a check for \$500.

Next meeting March 16, 2017, at Wooddale Lutheran.

A Nostalgic Look Back at the Armed Forces/Barbershop Society Collaboration Program

by

Bob Dykstra, Curmudgeon-at-Large

I was reviewing a boxful of old photographs recently when I encountered one that especially grabbed my attention. The photo was taken at the Int'l Barbershop Convention in the Nation's Capitol, in June of 1954, the first of 52 such conventions I've attended during my 64 years as a dedicated Barbershopper.

I was in Washington as a member of the *Hut Four Quartet*, which if memory serves me correctly, was there as the official Army quartet representative to the convention. Stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, where we had organized in early 1953 and sang, basically as recruiters, until our separation from the Army in late 1954, we had not qualified to compete at the Washington Convention, but were active during the convention singing in hospitality rooms and the *International Woodshed* (similar to today's Barbershop afterglow)

We also were privileged to perform on the Quartet Jamboree, a show featuring quartets which had been eliminated in the first round of competition. I recall that the Air Force also sent an official quartet representative and that the Air Force quartet and we participated in creating a training film that explained and demonstrated Barbershop Quartet singing that was aimed at introducing our form of music to American service men throughout the world and encouraging their participation in our wonderful hobby. (I don't recall any quartets in attendance representing other branches of service, but that certainly doesn't rule out their being there.)



Bob Dykstra

The photo that caught my attention pictured the *Hut Four* (**Herb Fane**, tenor; yours truly [**Bob Dykstra**], lead; **Bob Moksnes**, bari; and **John Hansen**, bass) along with **Dr. Harold (Bud) Arberg**, noted Barbershop arranger, celebrated chorus director, judge, and first chairman of the International Committee on Barbershop Craft. At the time, Arberg held the position of Chief of the Music Unit in the Adjutant General's Office. As such he and his office were responsible for issuing the *Armed Forces Song Folio*, a soldier-singing publication in which he was to publish more than 150 Barbershop arrangements over an eleven-year period.

It should be noted that a major part of the *Hut Four's* Barbershop harmony repertoire consisted of Bud Arberg arrangements. In fact, six months prior to our June 1954 attendance at the International Barbershop Convention in Washington, we had sung Arberg's arrangement of *Wait 'Til the Sun Shines*, *Nellie* to win first place on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scout Show on CBS television, which, that particular evening, featured only the performers who were then on active duty with the military.

The *Hut Four's* appearances on Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts Show and other national TV shows (Talent Patrol and Soldier Parade both hosted by Arlene Francis and the Ed Sullivan Show), as well as our attendance at the Washington, D.C. International Convention of the (then) *Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America* doubtless resulted from the *Armed Forces Collaboration Program* adopted in 1949.

The program, first negotiated between the Army and SPEBSQSA, involved active cooperation including publication and distribution of quartet learning materials and song arrangements by the military and an agreement that the Barbershop Society provide top quality Barbershop

quartets to tour military bases.

While I was in the army during 1953-54, for example, the Adjutant General Department of the Army issued monthly to Departments of the Army, Navy and Air Force, copies of the *Armed Forces Song Folio*, which regularly included a number of song arrangements (including one or more Barbershop arrangements by Dr. Arberg) as well as production notes and suggestions for bases wanting to put together their own Servicemen's Shows. Not surprisingly, a large part of the *Hut Four's* repertoire consisted of arrangements Arberg provided for monthly issues of the *Song Folio*.

I must admit I knew little about the *Collaboration Program* then so I thought I'd do a little research on it now, given that it likely very much influenced how I spent my two years of military service some sixty-four years ago. The program appears to have been spawned in response to a report from a Distinguished Citizens Committee which was appointed by President Harry S. Truman to explore community responsibilities to the men of the armed forces. The report urged widespread action by local communities on behalf of young, impressionable servicemen (half of whom were under 21 years of age) who would "in the next ten years be returning to civilian life by the millions."

Apparently, some forward-thinking men in SPEBSQSA and in the Army (the Navy and Air Force were not on board initially) realized the potential for some sort of collaboration which would introduce Barbershop singing as a morale-building hobby to those in the military with the probable payback that soldiers, once they were released from the Army, would return home to join a chapter of SPEBSQSA, or help organize one if none existed.

The plan called for chapters in communities with army bases nearby to advise Army Special Services Officers in the development of recreational music, specifically Barbershop singing. *Go to Nostalgia, Page 6, Column 1*

Nostalgia from Page 5

ing. Dean Snyder, from the Washington, D.C. chapter, in an early report on the Collaboration Program between the Society and the Army (December 1949 Harmonizer), cautioned, “our primary emphasis will not be on providing entertainment to an audience, but rather on demonstrating what fun it is to sing Barbershop music and how to go about doing so ... thus encouraging Army groups to get started on their own. A whole new generation of practitioners of the Barbershop art can be trained in this manner.”

It's clear that SPEBSQSA's reason for getting involved in the collaborative program went far beyond that of raising morale in the military; many leaders saw this as a way to significantly increase membership in the Society. This aspect of the program became even more important almost immediately.

For some reason the upward trend in Society membership took a sudden downturn in the early 1950s. For example, the number of Barbershoppers grew from 1802 (in 55 chapters) in 1942-43 to 26,901 (in 661 chapters) in 1949-50. Membership then started dropping and by 1953-54 had fallen to 22,609 (in 592 chapters).

So, let's return briefly to my involvement in all this. I arrived at Fort Riley, Kansas in December, 1952. Sometime in early 1953 (my best guess is March) John Hansen, who had been assigned to Special Services, let it be known around the base that he was organizing a Barbershop chorus and that anybody interested should come to an initial meeting that would involve singing and additional information. I can only assume that this invitation was in response to materials and guidance associated with

the Collaboration Program and perhaps as well from **Sam Cohen** and his cohorts from the Barbershop chapter at Junction City, Kansas, which was right next door to Fort Riley.

I had the good sense to attend this preliminary meeting at which time we sang Barbershop and learned a bit about the Society. As I recall, the chorus never got off the ground but John took the opportunity to organize a quartet which he named the Hut Four (in deference to the marching cadence—hut two, three, four)



The Hut Four Quartet in Washington D.C. at the Society's 1954 International Convention pictured here with Dr. Harold Arberg, celebrated arranger, director, and Society judge. From right to left: John Hansen, Bob Moksnes, Arberg, Bob Dykstra, and Herb Fane.

and I was fortunate to be selected as the lead of that foursome. Sixty-four years later I look back to see how the Collaboration Program and my decision to attend that get-together at Fort Riley changed my life.

As mentioned earlier another important part of the Collaboration Program was the Society's making available quartets who entertained servicemen all around the world. Among quartets who volunteered and consequently made morale-boosting appearances at military bases in Europe, Alaska, Japan, Korea, and doubtless other places in the early 50s were the *Harmony Halls*, the **Schmitt Brothers** [1950 International Champions from LOL], the *Buffalo Bills*, the *Cardinals*, and the *Midstates Four*.

A major sticking point arose rather quickly, however. The Army (and

later the Air Force and Navy) picked up expenses for quartets traveling abroad after they left the country. However, quartets themselves were responsible for expenses involved in getting to the point of embarkation. Moreover, the program provided no reimbursement for loss of income by quartet members who had to leave their jobs in order to participate in the entertainment tours.

The Society tried to solicit funds to make up for such loss of income but with little success. So by 1953 this aspect of the Collaboration Program

was suspended, at least as far as overseas tours were concerned, “unless quartets of high calibre (sic) could be found who would not require compensation during their absence from their regular civilian occupations.”

Another reason for the decline (if not elimination) of overseas tours was given by Will Cook in

Melodies for Millions: A Twenty-Five Year History. Cook states that “it appeared the program for overseas tours would have to be discontinued as a fundamental difference existed between the Society's thinking and that of the armed forces.” He goes on to say “that the Society felt it was not only doing a morale-building job for the armed forces but that a secondary function was of a missionary nature.” That is, servicemen should not only be entertained but should be introduced to the Society and the merits of self-entertainment with Barbershop harmony.

Cook argues that the armed forces were not interested in the “missionary” aspects of the program and perceived little difference between Barbershop quartet singing and USO performances. They could not
Go to Nostalgia, Page7, Column 1

Jim Richards Memorial Chord Candy # 10

The *Lifetime* tag arranged by Paul Paddock from Michael Smith



Dr. Jim Richards

Lifetime's Not Too Long

I e-mailed **David Wright** asking for permission to use the tag and he said I have as much right as he does for publishing or taking the tag other places, so the "go ahead" is *Yes*. But it's not his original piece; a Christian rock star **Michael Smith** from the '80s wrote the original tune. David said it won't be a problem if it's in the Chord-Inator! So I deleted the one copy I sent and replaced it with the one attached. *Enjoy!*



Paul Paddock

The image shows a musical score for the song "Lifetime's Not Too Long". It consists of two systems of music. The first system has a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is written in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "That a life-time's not too long it's not too long to live as". The second system continues the melody and bass line, with lyrics: "long to live friends, as friends". The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and accidentals.

Nostalgia from Page 6

understand why the Society refused to have its quartets sponsored by the USO. In Cook's words, top Society officials felt it wouldn't help our organization to be identified with dancing girls and uninhibited comedians.

So, for whatever reasons, the practice of quartets touring military bases as part of the Collaboration Program basically disappeared. I believe other aspects of the program continued for a number of years.

On a personal note, the *Hut Four* (Bob Spong, tenor; still yours truly, lead; Dan Howard, bari; still John Hansen, bass) and a number of other quartets toured military hospitals in the late 1960s and early 1970s entertaining servicemen wounded in Viet Nam. We took two tours ... in the summers of 1968 and 1970 and sang in hospitals in Japan, Okinawa, and the Philippines. And we were spon-

sored by none other than the USO. I probably should add that we did not share any stages with dancing girls and uninhibited comedians.

As wise men have said over and over again, timing is everything. Without question, I could not have asked for a better time for me to be drafted into the armed services than November 1952, which coincided with the implementation of the Armed Forces/Barbershop Society Collaboration Program. Who knows? Without the confluence of events described above I may never have become a Barbershopper. And I can't imagine life without Barbershopping ... especially Barbershop QUARTETTING.

Editor's Note: It is particularly difficult to imagine how different Commodore life would have been without the Hut Four and the likes of Dykstra, Hansen, Spong, et al.

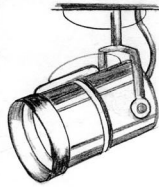
Happy Birthday

03/14 Nancy Cook
 03/17 Ken Jones
 03/17 Dan Krekelberg
 03/17 Tony Mason
 03/17 Carol Smith
 03/18 Judy Johannsen
 03/22 Bob Griffith
 03/23 Dean Lambert
 03/24 Bill Shaw
 03/26 Tony Lapakko
 03/27 Matt Richards (30)
 03/29 Joel Rumsch
 03/30 Rod Vink
 04/04 Judy Olson
 04/04 Jean Spong

Happy Anniversary

04/09 Hardin & Judy Olson

Commodore Spotlight



**Lou
DeMars**

Hey, Hardin! Lou DeMars has been sending me e-mails regarding different vocal groups and I asked him about telling me more of his background. I think this is pretty interesting and could even be fun information to put in the Chord-Inator. (I certainly was not aware of any of this!)

Paul [Wigley]

Editors note: Right you are, Paul. and thanks.

Paul, a little history. My dad was a classically trained baritone who was the father of ten kids (so he was very busy). In the early years, the family

lived in Ascension Church-area of North Minneapolis at 17 Bryant North. Dad was the baritone soloist in the very good Ascension choir. The **Cassidy Brothers** father, **Jim**, was the tenor soloist. There were many good singers in that choir.

Once a year choir members and others would put together what we called St. Patrick's Day Shows which were presented in the school gym usually on three nights. (The Ascension parish had a community building with pool, gymnasium, dance studio, teen club and dining room.)

The pianist for the shows and the rehearsals was **Jeanne Arland Peterson**, mother of **Ricky, Billy, Patty, Linda**, and **Paul Peterson**. Because of Dad's singing and interest in music the Peterson family and our family enjoyed a lot of music together, along with the Cassidy family. Wow! Those were great days.

The director of our shows was **Joan Steinberg**, Jeanne Peterson's sister. We would do scenes from Broadway shows like *Music Man* and one year a little *Gilbert & Sulli-*

van and other musical productions.

Some of the choir members, my Dad, Jim Cassidy, and seven other men from the choir, formed a nonet called the *Upperclassmen*. This group sang for about five or six years at weddings funerals, parties, the St. Patrick's Shows, and for about six months at the *Jimmy Heggs Starlight Club* (we even got paid) in downtown Minneapolis. Of course as the eldest DeMars son I sang with the group and also did some of the arrangements.

At the time I was studying music at the U of M and at the old Minneapolis College of Music, not in voice, but in clarinet and music theory. Years involved about 1954 to 1960. Interestingly, while we were singing at the Starlight Club, **John Hansen's Hut Four** quartet was singing at a different club about one block away. I wish I had known about the Barbershop Harmony Society back then.

There is a lot more to the story but thought you would enjoy the background.

Thanks for all your dedication and inspired leadership to the Commodores. We are singing better!

just finished their smashing *Right From the Start* intro when a woman shouted from the audience, "There they are, the new champions!" With that they burst into *My Lady Loves to Dance*, the first of a magnificent six-chart performance that ended with four gold medals gracing the necks of St. Paul's **Bob Dowma**, and Commodores **Rod Johnson, Bob Spong**, and **Jim Foy**.

Now, harken back to the *Crown Plaza Hotel West* on Saturday evening, February 25, 2017. The Brigade Chorus awaits the downbeat. *Jim Foy* joins the chorus on stage left. The guest director (and *My Lady*-arranger), *Bob Dowma*, fronts the chorus, gives the signal and the strains of *My Lady Loves To Dance* fill the auditorium..

Two gold-medalists and some long-time Barbershoppers relive again the rush of those wonderful indelible memories. Could anything be better?

Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor

One of the most memorable moments for this Editor during the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Saturday-evening show was the performance of *My Lady Loves To Dance* by the Brigade Chorus.

To those of you who were unacquainted with Twin Cities Barbershopping in the summer of 1975, you would find it quite difficult to comprehend the level of excitement and Commodore (and North Star Chorus) -pride when the news that the **Happiness Emporium** quartet had captured the gold medal at the International contest in Indianapolis.

Formed in the fall of 1972 and chris-

tened the "Happiness Emporium" shortly thereafter (as the result of the fortuitous inspiration of good friends, **Dick** and **Sadie Plaisted**), the quartet made their first semi-public appearance at the afterglow following our 1973 annual show.

That spring the Happiness qualified for the 1973 International contest finishing 23rd (never having competed at District). That fall they entered and won the LOL District Championship and in February 1974 made their first appearance on a Minneapolis Chapter show, *Riverland Harmony* (Show Chairman? Yours truly!).

Then it was on to the 1974 International where they finished 9th and the vision of a medal didn't seem so unattainable.

Fast forward to Indianapolis, Indiana, in July of 1975. In their first set on the contest stage, the boys had

Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, *Bookworm Baritone*

Did you get a Valentine this past St.



Jim Erickson

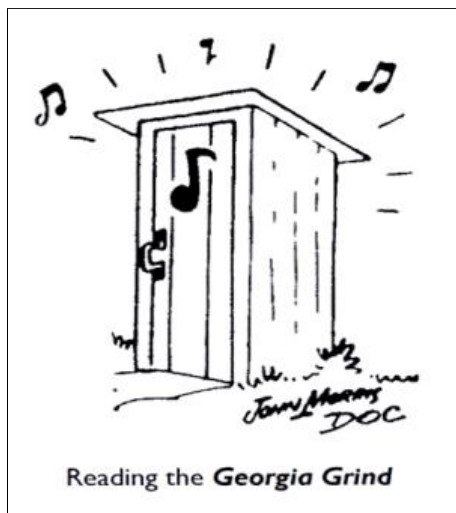
Valentines Day? I got the usual dozens from my friends, family, and the untold number of fans of the **Georgia Grind**. So gratifying! But, on top of all that, I received an unexpected Valentine treat. We were about to leave for **Lake Wissota** in Wisconsin when I happened to peruse an events calendar for the **Heyde Center for the Arts** in Chippewa Falls.

Catching my eye was one I just couldn't miss. For the last few years, there has been a quartet show featuring several local quartets at the Center. Always very well attended, I understand, as the local support is genuine and enthusiastic. This year the show was titled "**Hearts in Harmony 8 (2017)**" and was a benefit for the **Bolton Refuge House** in Eau Claire. Named after a fallen police officer, it advocates for social changes and creates as safe space through programs and services for all impacted by domestic violence and sexual assault. A valuable community resource.

The Heyde Center for the Arts is the crown jewel of the **Chippewa Valley Cultural Association** - an old Catholic high school built in 1907 perched on top of a high bluff overlooking Chippewa Falls. Quite majestic being built of cream-colored stone. It just commands your eyes to lift up to the bluff-top to view the two-story, at least, Roman columns (I assume, or Greek or ? Hey, I'm a columnist, not a "columnist" expert.) [Probably Greek, either Ionic, Doric or Corinthian or combination thereof]. The abandoned school that had fallen into substantial disrepair was made available to the community in 2000 to re-

habilitate into a beautifully restored structure. Daunting tasks faced the many volunteers, some of whom had attended school there in earlier years, truly a labor of love with hours upon hours of downright-hard dirty work.

The inside was completely remodeled into many rooms for community art shows and other events. But the best was the auditorium on the second floor, large, yet a feeling of aged intimacy, with great attention to detail in creating black balcony and other railings artistically designed to match the high, arched auditorium windows. The rest of the interior was lovingly restored too,



Reading the **Georgia Grind**

including the windows, stage, lighting fixtures and all the many things necessary to retransform it into an outstanding entertainment facility. (www.cvca.net) And that is where the Hearts in Harmony 8 show was to be performed.

I was pleased that the show's promotional materials pointedly mentioned the **Barbershop Harmony Society** with a brief description. Also, I enjoyed the cryptic (and I have shortened it a bit) description of what the audience was to hear. *A cappella (without instruments) with the tenor part above the lead (melody). The bass is always the lowest part, while the baritone part wanders above and below the lead part to fill in the chord.*

The Happy Wanderer(s), I guess, is

what we baritones are. Except they left out that baritones are widely known to be the most intelligent, handsome, manly singers in a quartet and have the most difficult, challenging, and outlandishly-scripted quartet responsibility. (But we baritones quietly hold our heads high without whining.)

Anyway, the show was great entertainment. Two quartets appearing were the **Clearwater Connection** and **After Dark**. Another long-time favorite quartet of the **Chippewa Valley** since 1995 was the **CHIPS** quartet with **Jerry O'Brien, Randy Knaak, Steve Hein** and **Tom Arneberg**, members I'm sure many of you know. And a special guest quartet all of you know (or should!) was **St. Croix Crossing**, five-time medalists in the **International Seniors Quartet Contest**. As we have come to expect, their performance was tops and members **Steve Hardy, Dan Heike, Jared Hoke**, and **Randy Lieble**, had everyone on the edge of their seats to take in this excellent presentation of Barbershop Harmony.

One other nice touch was that after all adult quartets had performed, the "quarteters (sic)" joined to form a small chorus. Interesting to hear their songs as a larger Barbershop group while taking in the eclectic variety of the performer's duds. (Their costumes, that is.)

OK, I really want to tell you about, the remainder of the program. So encouraging! It's all about our hobby and how young people are enjoying it. FOUR a cappella groups from the "amazing" music department at **Chi-Hi, (Chippewa High School, Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin)** stood right up there in front of a packed auditorium and boldly showed us what singing fun they were having. And they didn't let us forget the enthusiasm we should have when we Commodores sing. Twenty kids in the quartets of **Double BAIT, Hunting for Hope**, and **Dawson and the Dubberkes**, and the members of

Go to **Grind**, Page 10, Column 1



Weiss Photo



Dick R. Photo

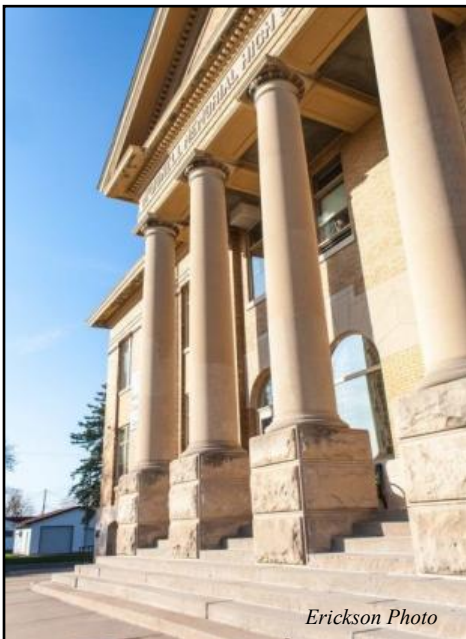
2017



Dick R. Photo

♥♥♥ Saint Valentines Day ♥♥♥

Grind from Page 9



Erickson Photo

The restored Heyde Center

The **Octetts**, had the audience wishing for more. Nicely done, young singers! Well, I have done, done it again. I

spent so many words on Hearts in Harmony 8, that I have room to write only a tiny-few more. Be heartened that I had time after the concert to visit the **Chippewa County History Museum** next door to the Heyde Center.

There, paging through some dusty, fragile pages of tomes from the distant past, I came across some tantalizing anecdotes about the origins of the Georgia Grind. My apologies to those who are not my regular readers, but I am just too lazy to bring you up to date about such origins. If you happen to see me, tell me what a gifted writer I am and then ask for my autograph. Then I'll tell you all about them.

Remember to move ahead on your 2017 Barbershopper Bucket List and hold fast to that which is good. Too, in this day and age, keep your wit and wits about you...

Two Commodore quartets, *Easy Listenin'* (in green blazers), and *Minnesota Go-4s* (in vests) in the upper photo, met serendipitously at the Crystal Café in Crystal, much to the surprise of two delighted patrons.

Easy Listenin' members in the upper and lower right photos are, left to right, Dick Riemenschneider, Rod Vink, Dan Slattery, and John Carlotto.

The boys made their annual appearance at the Wellington Management Company in St. Paul (lower right) for Judy Olson and about 16 or 18 other anxiously-awaiting ladies. Rea Ash in the lower left was obviously surprised when the foursome popped in to serenade her at *The Little Red Wagon Day Care Center in Blaine*.

The *Go-4s* are, left to right, Harvey Weiss, Don Bartles, Ken Glover and John Lloyd.

Three other Commodore quartets participated in this year's *Singing Valentines*.

- *Foreign Legion* with Ken Johnson, Denny Rolloff, Jim Johannsen, and Lance Johnson.

- *Random Sample* with Harlan Mellem, Jerry Larson, Darrell Egertson, and Jim Hedding.

- *River City Quartet* with Bob Dowma, John Chouinard, Rick Anderson, and Jim Foy

A TC Show Chorus quartet, *4 Your Valentine*, with Ruby Ericson, Wendy Hamilton, Barb Harvey, and Kathy Gray also participated with the Commodores on February 12.

Letters

I wanted to let **Rich Ongna** know how important the Sunshine missives are each month.

My husband, **Pat**, passed away on February 21, 2004. Recently I was cleaning closets and organizing photos and scrapbooks and came across the scrapbook of Get Well and then finally, Condolence Cards sent to Patrick by his Commodore and other Barbershop friends. The book is so full that it does not close properly. Many of the singers wrote personal notes telling of their friendship with Pat.

I will never again believe that men are undemonstrative in expressing their feelings. I read many of the cards with tears streaming down my cheeks but finally, there was a smile on my face as I closed the back cover of the scrapbook.

So this is just a small thank you to the Barbershop men and their families who take the time to send an encouraging message to those in need of them. It's great to be a Commodore!
Jeanie Collins ;-)

When I think of Glenn Aronson, I remember his laugh and his amazing voice. Whether singing Gospel or Barbershop, he was someone very special.

I was privileged to be one of the coaches who worked with *Special Edition*, the 1984 LOL District Champions. We spent many hours in my living room working on their contest and show packages. Our Sheltie, *Honey*, was always present at every rehearsal. She would sit in front of the quartet listening and if we worked a phrase too many times she'd turn her back to them and her ears would go back. On many occasions, Craig Hall, the baritone, would bring his big boom box to record the session on "cassette tape" so that they could listen to it on the way home.

One night we were working really



Special Edition, the 1984 LOL District Quartet Champions clockwise from the top: Tenor Craig Hall, Lead Glenn Aronson, Bari Larry Daby, and Bass Jim Barloon, loving friends and worthy champions all.

hard and I realized that Honey was not in her usual spot. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw her approaching the boom box and realized that Craig had put his gum on it. Honey was almost there when we all shouted, "Honey No!" several times.

On their way back to Rochester that night, they were listening to the recording. Bass, **Jim Barloon**, was the driver. Later he told me that the other three had fallen asleep and that he was the only one awake and listening. All of a sudden Jim heard us shouting, "Honey! No!" Jim realized that he had almost fallen asleep and was headed for the ditch. Honey saved them all that night from what could have been serious accident.

Whether singing contest Barbershop, doing shows, or singing Gospel, **Glenn** and the *Special Edition* really were "Somthin' Special."

Judy Olson



Glenn R. Aronson
1934 - 2017
Rest in peace,
Dear Friend

The entire LOL District is saddened by the death of **Glenn Aronson**, long-time member of the Rochester and, later of, the Minneapolis chapters, who passed away peacefully in home hospice on March 3.

Glenn was LOL District President in 1988 and LOL Barbershopper of the Year in 1991. He and his 1984 LOL District Quartet Champion (*Special Edition*) pals were very close to Judy especially, and to me as well.

More recently as a Commodore, Glenn, always with a smile, hauled his grill-trailer to wherever it was needed to roast corn for our Chapter picnics. We will remember!

Del Ryberg advises that a memorial service for Glenn will be held on Saturday, March 11, at the First English Lutheran Church, 511 West Belle St., Cannon Falls, Minnesota, at 11 a.m. with visitation starting at 9 a.m. All Barbershoppers are invited to sing *Precious Lord* and *Nearer My God To Thee* at the service.

Rehearsal beforehand will start at 10 a.m. at the church. Music will be available.

Dr. Hardin Olson, Bulletin Editor
 3020 St. Albans Mill Road #109
 Minnetonka, MN 55305
 952/229-4525
olson118@umn.edu



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 POSTAGE
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All copy and photos herein without a byline, as well as those opinions and commentaries under his byline, are the sole responsibility of the *Chord-Inator* Editor and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Minneapolis Chapter Board or its officers.

Neither shared with the Girl Scouts nor dumped by the Sweet Adelines.

Logo courtesy of Bob Clark

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Chapter Quartets

- BOMP
- Dan Cole.....612/940-4554
- CHORD SMASH
- James Estes.....612/237-3234
- EASY LISTENIN'
- Dan Slattery.....651/747-6384
- HOT COMMODITY
- Dave Speidel.....612/437-4325
- JUST ONE MORE
- Nate Weimer.....316/204-8756
- RING IT ON
- Andy Richards.....651/639-9312
- RIVER CITY QUARTET
- John Chouinard.....651/343-4145
- MINNESOTA GO-4's
- Harvey Weiss.....763/439-4447
- RANDOM SAMPLE
- Darrell Egertson.....952/943-8737
- SWYPE
- Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232
- SOUNDS of RENOWN (VLQ)
- Mark Ortenburger.....952/942-8382
- THE SHOES
- Andy Richards.....651/639-9312

To:

LOOKING AHEAD

- March 9, Thursday, **Coon Rapids Desert/Coffee performance, 7:00 p.m.**
- March 25, Saturday, **Spring Division Contest, Grove City**
- March 30, Thursday, **Tech Rehearsal**
- April 1, Saturday, **Annual Show with special guests, Main Street**
- June 25, Sunday, **Landscape Arboretum, 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.**
- July 18, Tuesday, **Como Park Area Singout, Noon** (Call Time)
- July 27, Thursday, **Hopkins**
- August 2, Wednesday, **St. Louis Park**
- August 20, Sunday, **Twins Singout**
- August 22, Tuesday, **Minnetonka**

2016 Barbershopper Of The Year

Bill Ward

Commodores and others * contributing to this issue.

- Jeanie Collins*
- Lou DeMars
- Bob Dykstra
- Jim Erickson
- Hardin Olson
- Judy Olson*
- Rich Ongna
- Paul Paddock
- Dick Riemenschneider
- Andy Richards
- Dan Slattery
- Bill Warp
- Harvey Weiss

District Level

- May 5-6, **2017 Spring Convention & Int'l Prelims, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.**

International Level

- January 17-22, 2017, **Midwinter Convention, San Antonio, Texas**
- July 2-8, 2017, **International Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada**



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PROBE Hall of Honor
Dr. Hardin Olson
2016

The *Chord-Inator* is available on the Minneapolis Chapter's website minneapoliscommodores.org starting with the January 2006 issue.

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Minneapolis Chapter of SPEBSQSA
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