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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

APRIL 2017- VOL. 73- NO. 4

Commodores Rock!



Wayne Rasmussen Photo

The Minneapolis Commodores 2017 annual show was a wonderful showcase of talent throughout the chorus! The 800 or so attendees at Benson Great Hall at Bethel University on Saturday, April 1, marveled at the range of artistic ability throughout the chorus, especially **Dave Casperson** opening the show with a bang as Elvis, and **Paul Swanson** electrifying the room with his thrilling keyboard rendition of Jerry Lee Lewis' *Great Balls of Fire*. The first half of the show was emceed by Dick Clark (aka **Dan True**) and Kasey Kasem (aka **Blake Wanger**).

Other Commodore talents were on display in the chapter quartets. **BOMP!** delighted the audience with *Come Go With Me* and *Breaking Up Is Hard To Do*, while **EASY LISTENIN'** soothed them with *Goodnight Sweetheart*, *Goodnight*. **SWYPE** filled the auditorium with jungle sounds during *The Lion Sleeps Tonight*, and **HOT COMMODITY** had the audience feeling the music and tapping their feet during their performances of *Up On the Roof* and *Down On The Corner*.

This show also marked the debut performances of two

fine Commodore quartets. **JUST ONE MORE** gave an excellent performance of *Stand By Me* and **THE SHOES** earned enthusiastic applause for *Happy Together*.

Two Very Large Quartets were also featured in the show to the delight of the crowd. **SOUNDS of RENOWN** and **UNDER the HILL** garnered ample praise for *Blue Moon* and *Signed, Sealed, Delivered* respectively. All in all, 28 chapter members performed in quartets or VLQs.

Audiences also raved about the performance of the chorus. Under the leadership of director **Paul Wigley**, assistant director **Dave Speidel**, and new assistant director, **Dave Bechard**, the Commodore chorus rocked the exciting up-tunes, *Bandstand Boogie* (a chart exhibiting Paul Wigley's talents as an arranger), *My Girl*, *Daydream*, *I Get By With A Little Help From My Friends*, and *Crazy Little Thing Called Love*. The chorus also displayed its range and versatility as the members sang two beautiful ballads, *When I Fall in Love* and *The Way You Look Tonight*.

Go to **Rock**, Page 2, Column 1

Rock from Page 1

All stops were pulled out as the *Commodore Chorus* closed the first half of the show with a roof-raising rendition of *YMCA* complete with the costumed *Village People* (**Mark Bloomquist, Ray Ensrud, Gary Cooper, Steve Mangan, Dan Williams, and show chairman, Dan Cole**) who had the entire audience on their feet, gesticulating, singing and dancing with the music. The energy and excitement in the auditorium at the end of *YMCA* was incomparable—a standing ovation, no less!

After the intermission and a stirring performance by our guest quartet, *Main Street*, the Commodores returned to the stage to sing *Smile* and

Shine, finishing the show with the traditional closer, *Keep the Whole World Singing*. The applause and accolades from the audience at the conclusion left no doubt that *Barbershop Rocks* was a smash hit!

From Benson Hall, then, it was on to

the *Mermaid* for the well-earned *Af-terglow*. This year the revelers entered the room to find all the linen-covered tables laden with huge bowls of the freshest salad greens and dressings, tortilla chips and salsa, only to be followed by a near-endless supply of hot-out-of-the-oven pizzas delivered posthaste to each table.

A sound-glitch delayed the start of the entertainment, but all in all, the ambiance and good food provided a most welcome start to a fine evening with good friends and good music. There were some especially fine Barbershop offerings by *Main Street*. (Who can ever forget their closing masterpiece, *Down By the Old Millstream*.)



Our GUEST quartet, MAIN STREET (left to rt.): Bari Mike McGee, Bass Myron Whittlesy, Lead Tony DeRosa, and Tenor Roger Ross

Photos this page by Wayne Rasmussen

The all-Commodore *Rockin'Dores* performing from left to rt. are: Keyboard-Paul Swanson, Drums - Matt Richards, Guitar-Andy Richards, and Bass Guitar-Dan Cole. The group entertained for a time before the opening of the show and then backed up Dave Casperson's terrific rendition of *Blue Suede Shoes* that would have made Elvis proud. Following was a magnificent, frenetic Jerry Lee Lewis-like arrangement of *Great Balls of Fire* with Swanson singing and rocking on the keyboard.



Under the Hill from left to rt.: Nate Weimer, Blake Wanger (partially hidden), Ben Wanggaard, Tony Lapakko, Matt Richards, David Bechard, and Paul Paddock. When formed a year or two ago, rather on the spur of the moment, they selected *35 and Under* as their name. On re-thinking, *Under the Hill* offers an air of subtle mystery that seems fitting.

Sounds of Renown from left to rt.: Dick Riemenschneider, Dan Williams, Andy Tate, Dan Cole, Rob Hartert, Mark Ortenburger and Jim Erickson. The group got its start early this century as an octet, an idea first proposed by the late and loquacious prime mover and *Happy Wanderer*, Joe Houser ("Valderree, valdera ... " in one key or another). Riemenschneider and Erickson may be the only original members currently singing with the group.





BOMP! (left to rt.): Dan Cole, Jim Johannsen, Andy Cook, and Harvey Weiss



SWYPE (left to rt.): Mark Bloomquist, Andy Richards, Conrad Ward, and Ken Wentworth



Dave Casperson rocking with *Blue Suede Shoes*



EASY LISTENIN' (left to rt.): Dick Riemenschneider, Rod Vink, Dan Slattery, and John Carlotto



UNFOURGETTABLE (left to rt.): Payton Camilli, Anna Larson, Kate Fox, and Kalli Sander



Emcee Dan True

Benson Great Hall Rocks to the sounds of a bygone era. April 1, 2017

Front page piece by Blake Wanger

Photos this page by Kirk Douglas Video



Paul Swanson groovin' with *Great Balls of Fire*.



HOT COMMODITY (left to rt.): Paul Swanson, Tony Mason, Ben Wangaard, and Dave Speidel



THE SHOES (left to rt.): Steve Grady, Tony Lapakko, Andy Richards, and Matt Richards

**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**

Chapter Officers

President.....Denny Maas 952/447-8012
Past Pres.....Gordy Aumann 952/935-8869
Marketing/PR VP.....Steve Grady.....952/334-7500
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
Andy Tate.....612/825-1942

Through 2017-18

Andy Cook.....651/688-6459
Andy Richards.....651/639-9312
Arne Stefferud.....651/772-4367

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Assistant Directors: Gary Jacobson (on leave),
Davie Speidel, Dave Bechard

Section Leaders

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

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SunshineRich Ongna
Swipe EditorBill Warp
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Uniforms (Dress & Casual).....Dan Williams

Musing about YMCA

By Denny Maas, President

I have been reflecting on part of the lyrics from *YMCA*, this morning's ear worm. To paraphrase, "Young man what do you want to be; Young man you can make real your dreams." I was wondering how our members would respond in regard to their Barbershop singing.

So I am asking each member, "What is your dream? Would your dream be to be a gold medal singer?" My dream for the chorus would be that we would all sing at the level where we are maximizing the gifts God has given us. If we did this, our music would have an even greater impact on the hearts of our audiences and even greater numbers would come to our performances. This would allow us to have an even greater community outreach.

I was reminded of how important our work is when I read the message in a note of appreciation from **Barbara English**, for whom a small group of Commodores sang at the funeral of her father, **Irving English**. Included with the note was a generous check given in memory of **Bill Ward** who, along with his son, Conrad, sang at the service. Some of our members have told me they are hesitant about asking their friends to buy tickets to our shows. This note confirms what I have learned—people appreciate our music and being invited. Our music is important to them and they look forward to coming to our shows. The note is included below:

Please accept this check in memory and honor of Bill Ward and in appreciation of all the wonderful Minneapolis Commadore members who sang for my dad's celebration of life. My dad loved the Commodores. Mark Bloomquist made a special effort to let us know about your performances so we could attend.



Denny Maas

*A brief glimpse back ...
A longer look forward*

By Paul Wigley, Director

I don't even have the words to express how great I felt after the annual show, *Barbershop Rocks*—it sure does! How much fun it is to talk with people after a show and not have to think about, "Gosh, I wish we could have another chance to sing Song # (FILL IN THE BLANK) again."

At this year's show, every song had the intention that it was supposed to have. The fun stuff felt so good, and the sincere numbers (*When I Fall In Love* and *The Way You Look Tonight*) were genuine and heartfelt. You can't fool an audience, or fool yourselves. When a selection is sung from the heart, it is oh so special. I really felt the Commodores sang with confidence, and with the definite purpose *Go to Wigley, Page 5, Column 1*



Paul Wigley

Mark contacted these wonderful singers to perform at my dad's service (Beautiful, Beautiful Music). We are forever grateful. The congregation loved their presence, songs, and the spirit they brought to this life-memorializing event.

We are so sad to hear about Bill Ward. And so, this donation is in memory of him and his generous heart, so close to his own passing. Your members are the greatest group of guys.

With heartfelt thanks.

Barbara English

So now it is time for me to stop dreaming and get back to the work of Barbershop singing. This means fine tuning my singing for each of our newest numbers. While learning new songs is a lot of hard work, it is necessary since our patrons are looking forward to hearing the new tunes in the Commadore repertoire.

Wigley from Page 4

of sharing music and expression with the audience. Those were truly uplifting moments for me and I thank you all!

You probably have heard the old saying, "Strike while the iron is hot!" It couldn't be more true than right now in this year of the Commodores. We just completed a fantastic show. With many summer performances coming up, there will be old and new, super-fun songs to sing. So! Bring a new singer to a Minneapolis chapter meeting. The next Guest Night will be wonderful, I'm sure, but why wait? If you know somebody who might enjoy singing with us, don't hesitate to get them singing with us right now!

There is always natural attrition in volunteer/community choral groups. Job changes, retirement, and relocation after retirement, are just a few of

the reasons we've had solid singers and musical leaders backing away from their Commodore commitments. Replacing great singers, great leaders, and great people, is a constant challenge, and we all need to work to bring in new singers to keep the Commodores vibrant and exciting. *Each of us should be an Assistant Membership VP!*

I am so excited about our immediate, and yes, our long-term future! This time of year allows us to re-check voices, change the riser order to fit complementary voices more efficiently, introduce new repertoire, and sing lots and lots of songs to keep ourselves ready for upcoming summer shows. It is fun, performance-wise, to be able to work hard, without such a hectic schedule. We will continue to work on voice placement, and also to work on vocal quality and the basics of proper tone production.

It's virtually impossible for me to do that type of work when faced with a crush of contest preparation, Christmas show preparation, fundraiser shows, and the Annual Show preparation. My goal is for every one of you to feel that you have gotten something at every rehearsal that will make YOU a better individual singer.

The only difference between extremely good choruses, very good choruses, average choruses, and mediocre choruses ... is the amount of desire within every individual singer on the risers. Where do you view yourself when we talk about this level of excellence? I clearly know what I want for every one of you, and I invite you to all join me in this quest for even greater excellence! Thanks to all of you for your extra work. You make me proud to be a Commodore.



There may be mandatory Saturday rehearsals for members who wish to compete in the District contest, schedule to be determined.

• **Old Business:** Problems with the truck have engendered a consensus that it be scrapped.

The Ostergaard/Elephant equitable-chorus-contest proposal is now a dead issue.

Gordy Aumann reported interim Food Shelf receipts, \$1023 in cash and 107 pounds of food.

• Next meeting rescheduled for April 20 at Wooddale Lutheran Church.

Happy Birthday

- 04/12 Janet Johnson
- 04/14 Char Carlotto
- 04/15 Janet Huyck
- 04/16 Dan Slattery
- 04/18 Kathy Nelson
- 04/19 Sarah Hartmann
- 04/20 Chuck Gribble
- 04/24 Bob Dillon
- 04/26 Walter Macwicz
- 04/29 Dan Smith

Go to *Birthdays*, Page 6, Column 1

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

From the meeting of March 16

By Andy Richards, Acting Secretary

• **Treasurer's Report:** The chapter is solvent. Show ticket receipts are accumulating.

• **Marketing:** Motion approved to fund color printing in color of front and back covers of the Annual Show program and to use unused and recycled programs as a "Season Yearbook" at future 2017 performances.

• **Membership:** Formal Guest Night is set for June 6. VP Harvey Weiss has resigned his post and must be replaced.

• **Music and Performance:** Flowers will be sent to the significant others of *Main Street* quartet members as has been the case since the earliest annual shows.



March reenlistments

Walter Dawson.....	3 yrs.
James Norman.....	9 yrs.
Dave Bechard.....	11 yrs.
Dave Caspersen.....	14 yrs.
Bob Ostergaard.....	14 yrs.
James Erickson.....	15 yrs.
John Carlotto.....	16 yrs.
Mark Ortenburger.....	16 yrs.
Peter Jarnberg.....	18 yrs.
Harvey Weiss.....	18 yrs.
Terry McClellan.....	21 yrs.
Rodney Vink.....	23 yrs.
Guy St Martin.....	26 yrs.
Jim Windey.....	28 yrs.
Chuck McKown.....	31 yrs.
Dan Smith.....	31 yrs.
Dan True.....	32 yrs.
David Speidel.....	42 yrs.
LeRoy Zimmerman.....	45 yrs.
Gary Jacobson.....	53 yrs.
Robert Griffith.....	54 yrs.
Robert Dykstra.....	65 yrs.

Capital "B" in Barbershop - Why not?

**SUNSHINE
HOTLINE**



By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: ddongna@usfamily.net

WOW! Great annual show guys! Great tempo and wonderfully entertaining but my terrible cold and laryngitis prevented my participation but allowed me the great pleasure of sitting out front and enjoying all that energy, talent, and entertainment. As you know I won't be living here next year but I hope to be back in the audience again.



Rich Ongna

Bev Slattery, Dan's wife had open heart surgery on March 10. The surgeons did a double bypass as well as repairing an aortic valve. The surgery went well and she has since been re-

cuperating at home.

Judy Johannsen, Jim's wife, had back surgery on March 20th to relieve the pain she was experiencing from spinal stenosis. The surgery was successful and she is now recovering at home.

Glenn Retter's radiation treatments for the laryngeal cancer are nearing an end. However, they have made his throat so sore that he's unable to talk or eat. He is in the Veteran's Hospital now for intravenous feeding as well as a feeding tube until sufficient healing takes place. **Shirley** says he can have a few visitors but please don't overdo it.

Doug Klemz had successful cataract surgery on his second eye on March 28th and hopes to be back at chapter meetings with us soon.

Bill Ashley remains in St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester after emergency surgery for a massive brain bleed occurring on March 7. As of April 7, he has been able to sit, with help, on the side of the bed and hold his head

up for several seconds. He has yet to speak but he can smile and "directs his gaze" to those speaking to him. Bill has been trying to stick out his tongue on command, but although he is obviously trying hard, he has yet to succeed. **Connie** (his wife) is doing a wonderful job through Caring Bridge with frequent detailed updates on Bill's condition. She has been a rock for Bill and is so appreciative of all your thoughts and prayers. Cards may be sent to Bill Ashley c/o St. Mary's Hospital, 1216 Second Street. SW, Rochester, MN 55902. All will be most welcome.

The Commodores extend their sympathies to **Doris Belsaas** and family, for the passing of her husband and Commodore alumnus, **Gerald (Jerry)**, on March 6.

Remember: Please keep me informed about who is ill and don't assume that I know. 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.

Birthdays from Page 5

- 05/04 Dale Lynch
- 05/05 Roger Meyer
- 05/06 Rich Ongna
- 05/09 Jim Windey
- 05/11 Gordy Aumann
- 05/11 Lance Johnson
- 05/13 Ardis Von Fischer
- 05/14 Doris Hall
- 05/16 John Carlotto
- 05/21 Steve Mangan
- 05/24 Pat Griffith
- 05/27 Pete Mitchelson
- 05/28 James Erickson
- 05/28 Marge Riemenschneider

Happy Anniversary

- 04/11 Chuck & Kelly McKown
- 04/12 Gene & Karene Heupel
- 04/22 Jim & Judy Johannsen
- 04/27 Dick & Sarah Hartmann
- 04/30 Matt & Allison Richards
- 05/11 Lou & Nan DeMars
- 05/18 Gordy & Barbara Aumann
- 05/21 Mark & Jeanne Bloomquist

Welcome aboard!

Jim Norman lives in Richfield and works now as a semi-retired substitute teacher. Born in Mankato, Jim graduated from Lake Crystal High School with **Paul Wigley** who had been his classmate from grade school on.



After high school, Jim moved on to the University of Minnesota-Mankato, earning bachelor and graduate degrees preparing for a career in Public Administration at

the city/county managerial level.

Marathon-running became his passion with 76 marathons on four continents entered into his personal logbook.

Although experienced in church choir and a host of school and community theater productions, he was a late-comer to Barbershop, joining the *West Central Connection Chorus* in Willmar, Minnesota, from 1993-98 and later with GNU in 1998-9. During his tenure with Willmar, Jim sang in the *Black Oak Boys Quartet* with members from the Montevideo chapter.

Jim will add his mellifluous tones to the vaunted Lead Section.

06/06 Andy & Karen Richards

PLEASE NOTE: If your birthday or anniversary dates are missing from this list, please notify the Editor to update your records so you won't be missed next time.

- 05/24 Mike & Candice Hojan
- 05/27 Rod & Bonnie Vink
- 06/02 Jim & Kay Foy
- 06/02 Mark & Cathy Ortenburger
- 06/02 Dan & Kathy Williams
- 06/06 John & Caryl Hansen
- 06/02 Dan & Kathy Williams
- 06/06 John & Caryl Hansen

**GOOD DAY, LADIES,
YOU ARE INVITED ...**

to the *2017 Ladies Appreciation Night & BOTY Celebration*.

We are well into the planning process for our special evening. We wanted to give you as much advance notice as possible so you can get this not-to-be-missed event on your calendar. The Details:

Date: **Sunday, June 4**

Time: **5 - 8:00 p.m.**

Location: **Mancini's in St. Paul**

For those of you who are new to the Commodores or have not had a chance to attend in the past, this annual event is an important opportunity for us to celebrate two special things that make our world go 'round. The first is the Ladies Appreciation portion of the evening. Most of us are privileged to enjoy the wonderful experience we have as Commodores

because of the support we have from our spouse or significant other. Without that support, the opportunity we have to make and share music with a bunch of our very good friends, would be significantly diminished. This is our chance to say thanks to our ladies for all their contributions.

The second, and no less important, part of the evening, is the Barber-shopper of the Year (BOTY) presentation. Each year the Commodores select one individual, never an easy task given all the contributions that come from so many of our members, to receive the Barber-shopper of the Year honor.

To be eligible for the award an individual must have been a member of the Minneapolis Chapter for at least five years and must have contributed his time and expertise in furthering the goals and welfare of the chapter.

This can occur in a number of different ways such as: serving as a chapter officer or Board member; providing musical leadership as a director or section leader; writing grants and fund raising; participating in and promoting organized quartets, or chairing an annual show. There are so many other unheralded jobs vital to a well-run, successful chapter.

The upcoming celebration will consist of dinner and entertainment along with recognition activities for both the Ladies and our new BOTY. We're currently working on some very exciting entertainment as a part of what should be a great evening. Please put the date on your calendar and plan to join the rest of your friends as we honor the special people in our lives.

Cathy and I will see you there!

Mark Ortenburger

Jim Richards Memorial Chord Candy # 11

Just the Way You Are tag arranged by Paul Paddock from Billy Joel



Dr. Jim Richards

I love You Just the Way You Are

I wrote this in five-voice, but there was too much doubling up, so I "trimmed" it. The two notes I had a hard time deciding were for the first "you" to be G for baritones instead of A, and B for basses instead of C on the second "you". I felt unifying As on the first "you" resembled the constant feeling of two souls saying "I love you," versus the latter choice that might suggest uncertain "fluttery" feelings. And the second "you" suggestion could be just cool!



Paul Paddock

Just the Way You Are

Billy Joel
arr. Paul Paddock

Score

Piano

Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor



Hardin Olson

If you had been perusing the Obituary Page of the Sunday, March 19, issue of the Minneapolis Star-Tribune you might have come across the announcement of the passing of **Omar Branstad Anderson** ... World War II veteran ... 43-year resident of the Minnesota Veterans Home, and ... "member of the Minneapolis Barbershop Male Chorus ..."

There are only a few of our currently active Commodores (**Dan Slattery** and **Your Editor** for sure, and perhaps **Neal Mortenson**) who really knew and remember Omar and who are still climbing (some not as high) up on the Commodore risers today.

At his funeral service on Friday, March 24, at the Veterans Home, a niece, **Barb Starr**, gave a moving eulogy full of so many heretofore unknown (to me and virtually to all Commodores) snippets of Omar's life.

Born in 1924, Omar was one of four siblings, two older and one younger sister. The family were active members of the Bethlehem Lutheran Church on Lyndale Avenue where Omar sang in the choir.

Sometime after graduation from Central High School in 1942, he enlisted in the Army and was serving in Germany (after the surrender?) when he developed disturbing signs of *Friedreich's Ataxia*, a hereditary condition manifested by the progressive loss of coordinated motion of the extremities and also speech problems, often, however, sparing the ability to sing. (A younger sister was afflicted with the same disease.)

Granted an honorable medical discharge, Omar returned home, re-

sumed singing with the church choir, found employment, rode a bus to work, played a little golf, and not too long after, became a member of the Minneapolis Commodores where he sang BARITONE. In other words living a fairly normal life (except for the *baritone* part).

In retrospect, Barbershop had to have been wonderful therapy for Omar. He was immediately accepted and carrying his part, he traveled and performed with the Commodores and according to his niece, was on stage when the Commodores earned a 5th-place medal at the 1962 competition in Kansas City.



Omar B. Anderson
1924 - 2017

However as time passed, Omar's condition deteriorated requiring more assistance from his chorus mates. **Loren Berthilson**, early on, had started chauffeuring Omar to and from chapter meetings while other Commodores like **Dan Lundeen** would squire him at our sing-outs. Dan was always kidding Omar in a good-natured way, even at times about his infirmity, but always keeping Omar laughing.

By 1974, Omar's worsening condition precluded his attendance at chapter meetings and his family found it regretfully necessary to arrange admission for Omar to the Minnesota Veterans Home where he thrived and was loved by virtually

all during his 43 years as a resident.

At the Home, Omar joined the choir and even had a part-time job in the pharmacy. When walking became too difficult, he was provided with a sort of scooter with which, according to Barb, he propelled himself around the grounds "at times much too fast ... to the chagrin of the staff *and* residents."

Omar refused to burden his friends, always wanting to prove his independence whenever possible. A prime example was at mealtimes. Apparently one of the newer buildings had a long but gentle ramp leading to the dining area. Omar, refusing assistance, insisted on pulling himself, in his wheel chair, hand over hand using the adjacent railing.

On all-too-rare occasions during the later 70s and early 80s, the Commodores would gather for a concert at the Home for Omar and his friends. He would often introduce us and if not joining the chorus would offer his practiced baritone in a pickup quartet much to the delight of the attending vets.

The funeral at the Home was really a joyously-moving occasion conducted beautifully by Vets Home Pastor, **Jim Leith**. There were 50 or more in attendance, many relatives and many staff, including a men's quartet from Bethlehem Lutheran who actually did sing a little bit of Barbershop.

The foursome calling themselves *Forgivin'*, opened the service with the *National Anthem*, following it with a moving parody of *Loch Lomond*. Ironically, the father of one of the men was **Jim Anderson**, a Commodore of Omar's vintage whom I vaguely remember, as it wasn't until 1971 that I joined the chapter.

To fill out the day, enough stories were related and recollections revived to fill a book, all to memorialize a remarkable human being and undaunted Minneapolis Commodore.

However, as I was leaving the well-kept grounds I was overcome by *Go to Omar, Page 9, Column 1*

The Minneapolis Commodores invite you to...

3rd Annual Comedy Quartet Event

(Formerly a Bloomington Chapter Event)

Tuesday, May 9, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

Mpls./Richfield American Legion Post 435

6501 – Portland Av S, Richfield MN

(Cash bar and food/snacks provided)

(Free will offering accepted to cover expenses for food)

This is an Inter-Chapter event with invites to members of Bloomington, Faribault, Frank Thorne, Greater St. Paul, Hilltop GNU, Mankato, Minnetonka, St. Croix & Minneapolis

Contest Rules: 1) Try to be Funny, Funnier, or Funniest. 2) No more than (2 members) of an organized quartet may perform in the same quartet. 3) Try to ring a chord or at least come close.

The performance will be judged and awards may be presented.

(Organized Quartets are welcome to perform (1 Song) for the fun of it)

Register your quartet(s) with Dan Cole at danjcole02@gmail.com
For more information call Dan at #612-940-4554



Omar from Page 8

a wave of sadness and remorse about the many times in the recent past I had thought that the Commodores ought to trek over to the Vets Home and sing for Omar. I never pursued the thoughts and will always regret not doing so. Considering his throngs of good friends, Omar probably

A contingent of Commodores under the direction of Dave Bechard (far right), sang for the ICA Food Shelf at Faith Church in Minnetonka on March 4. At right are attendees Cassie and Jackson Bechard. Interim food donations have totaled 107 lbs. with \$1027 in cash.

wouldn't have needed our visits but he surely would have been proud to have been so recognized. (I think there is a moral in there somewhere.)



Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, *Befuddled Baritone*



Jim Erickson

To quote our esteemed director, **Paul Wigley**, “WOW!” And I will add, “What a concert.” Now I have performed in a dozen or so annual Commodore concerts and we have had some great ones, but this one takes the prize for the fastest moving, direct connection with the audience. I don’t think we left them reeling, so much as “reeling them in.” The songs were from eras everyone, I believe, recognized [Some didn’t pay any attention.]. Even the younger listeners responded, as this kind of music has continued to grab hearts for decades beyond their origins. Are the songs “warmer?” Or do they appeal more simply to a romantic and more fun time?

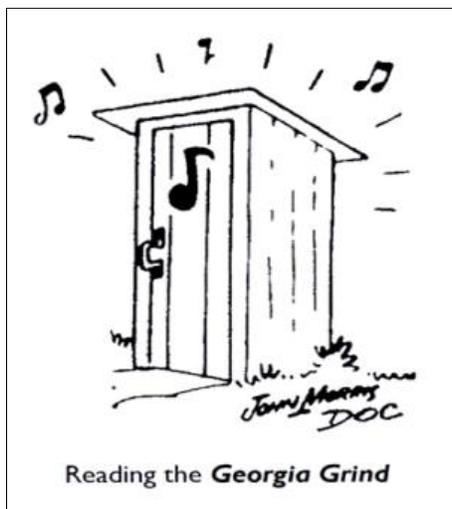
I know when I hear these songs, I am taken right back to what I experienced in high school, college, early married years, and the like. A time when some songs really rocked and others, just like looking through a misty, cheesecloth, romantic dance setting with a young girl and boy dancing closely to quiet lyrics on a smoothly-polished gymnasium floor. Only to break out to the next tune to “Shake, Rattle and Roll.”

Recently, my wife, **Mary**, and I were at my daughter’s home for a fun party. Of course there was music playing some the old tunes, but no one was dancing. These later generations somehow got cool by dancing well apart and flinging their arms and bodies wildly about if at all. But the music this party night was too good to pass up, and finally my wife and I got out in the middle of things and started to do the Lindy and whatever else we used to call those animated dances. It somehow seemed brand new to the younger partygoers and they ap-

peared hesitant to attempt this style. Ahh ... what they are missing!

Another time at a party, we cut a similar rug and were later told, by a young woman, that we were “cute” (our dancing, at least). Can you remember some of those feelings and that exhilaration? They do bring up other memories.

In high school, our basketball “pep” band (which actually was practically everyone in the band) played by memory, *Mr. Sandman* and Lollipop, Lollipop. It just seemed like the thing to do. And when those four young ladies took the stage at *Barbershop Rocks*, stood right in front



Reading the *Georgia Grind*

of me facing the audience and sang those two songs so very well as the “**Chordettes**,” some pretty great memories came flooding back.

Probably the same as for the rest of the audience. And hearing their comments afterwards, I would venture that this concert was the most fun for listeners and performers that we have had for some years. There was, however, a little confusion behind the scenes.

It was to be **Rich Ongna**’s last concert with the Commodores before heading to **Oostburg, Wisconsin** where he will soon live. Oh, he lives now, but will soon really “live” in that rockin’ town of the Oosts. I think their croquet team’s slogan is “Boost the Oosts.” I’m not sure. An-

yway, he crossed paths with some flu bug to his loss, and couldn’t boost a note. So he bought a ticket as the least he could do. You wonder where this is going, don’t you!

Well, because he was out, the right side of the chorus was missing some baritone balance. So, being a certified judge and master of all things balanced, Paul Wigley asked if I would move from the left side. To the right side. Oh, big deal! Well it was sort of. I had a new position next to our leader, **Denny Maas**. That worked fine for the first half of the concert. But for the second half, Denny had some microphone responsibilities at the time we were to take the stage. And being new to my position, I had neglected to see whom Denny was standing next to so I could join the line in a proper, Denny-missing position. No one else seemed to know where I should go, either.

A baritone does not know the meaning of the word, panic. Or a lot of other words for that matter. But a **MacGyver** solution was called for. Surveying the situation for solutions, I decided upon waiting behind the curtains on the Denny side and just when the moment screamed for solution, I would enter the stage and sneak up into the Denny place. As it played out, no one even noticed, or so I thought. Who did? Well, my wife, of course, who wondered if I had taken a not-well-planned timing-wise bathroom break. Not outside the realm of possibilities, my friend. But not this time.

Anything else that was Rich’s fault? Yes. At the very end of the wildly popular, crowd-involved singing of **YMCA**, four sections of the chorus were to form the letters, left to right. “Y” Then, “M” and awww, you can figure it out. Well, before Rich’s absence, I had been on the “Y” side. I had that down! Now I had to learn, on a moment’s notice, the choreography for the “A” on the right side of the chorus. With no help from others, I nailed it making a sort of teepee of
Go to Grind, Page 11, Column 1

Letters

Hi Hardin,

I enjoyed the article discussing the Heyde Center in Chippewa Falls by Jim Erickson. [Chord-Inator, Vol. 73, # 3 March 2017] It is an excellent addition to the community and is used extensively by many arts organizations. I've played with the Northwinds Brass Band from Rice Lake, Wisconsin, for the past 15 years, and every year we put on one or two concerts at the center at Christmas and in the spring. They are always well appreciated and the hall has excellent acoustics. There are several arts centers in the Western Wisconsin area that have been rebuilt by local residents interested in keeping the arts alive in communities outside of the metro area.

I always enjoy the Chord-Inator with its mix of BBS Harmony history and current events. Thanks go to you for doing the work to make it happen.

Jim McCarville

Les Gurr said he got his Chord-Inator so I'm not sure if Paul

Grind from Page 10

my hands. Baritones are resilient, among their many other admirable traits.

All's well that ends well so they say. And this concert, that tickled so many, was truly one for the books.

Just a note to wish the Ongna's the very best in Oostburg and that we will really miss them. Until you come to visit us then,.....

Spring is here and that means it is almost time to start learning new music for next year. And polish some of the others for summer fare. In the meantime, hold fast to that which is good as you dig out your **Speedo** for the ice out. And I can't wait to begin the warm weather explorations into origins of the Georgia Grind. Pay attention to what is happening around you ... until next month.



Although the RIVER CITY QUARTET is only a couple years old, its individual members are far from newcomers to the entertainment scene. Bob, John, Jim and Rick have sung in quartets and choruses on local stages plus many other shows beyond our state's boundaries.

Aside from the typical entertainment venues, they have been busy providing gospel quartet music for worship and praise at many metro churches.

Participating in local theater productions of THE MUSIC MAN by Meredith Willson has been one of the quartet's most enjoyable endeavors over the years.

We look forward to entertaining your group soon: From left to right: Bob Dowma—tenor, John Chouinard—lead, Jim Foy—bass, and Rick Anderson—baritone.

[Paddock] was the only one who had a problem with the March issue. Isn't dealing with technology fun? By the way another great issue. I only hope that people read everything you produce since there's always a lot of great information and stories. Glad to see Dr. [Bob] Dykstra is back on his horse and pulling dispatches from his saddle bags to share around the campfire. Wonderful stuff!

Mark [Ortenburger]

TFLBTMOT
 continues
The Jim Richards
Matching Funds
Challenge
 at the
10th Annual
BHS Open
Monday,
August 7, 2017
Elk River Country Club
Scramble Format
 to benefit
Harmony Foundation's
Youth Festival
 For further information
 log on to
bhsopen.com

As of this date the \$50,000 Jim Richards Challenge has nearly been met by the generosity of the LOL District's members and friends and we are about to embark on a similar second challenge.

August 7 will be a most special day of golf and 19th hole entertainment thanks to Jim Clark and his Storm Front mates. The early registration has been good but expect it to speed up as the day draws near so don't hesitate to sign up and pick a starting hole although you may have yet to fill out your foursome.

Be aware that the Lunch Bunch is soliciting individual and corporate sponsorships; a hole may be sponsored for as little as \$100. The Commodores are a tax-exempt organization under IRC section 501(c)(3) so all sponsorships and other donations are tax-free for the donors.

So please pick up your pens and mark your calendars for August 7, polish up your clubs, lay in a supply of sunscreen (fair weather is guaranteed), and prepare yourself for a wonderful day!

Dr. Hardin Olson, Bulletin Editor
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 952/229-4525
olson118@umn.edu



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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
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 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
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 Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232
 SOUNDS of RENOWN (VLQ)
 Mark Ortenburger.....952/942-8382
 THE SHOES
 Andy Richards.....651/639-9312

To:

LOOKING AHEAD

- April 20, Thursday, **Board Meeting**
- May 9, Tuesday, **Comedy Quartet Night, 7:00 p.m., Richfield American Legion**
- June 4, Sunday, **Recognition/BOTY Night, Mancini's Char House, St. Paul**
- June 6, Tuesday, **Annual Visitors Night**
- 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, 6:00 p.m.**
- August 2, Wednesday, **St. Louis Park, 6:00 p.m.**
- August 20, Sunday, **Twins Singout, noon**
- August 22, Tuesday, **Minnetonka, 5:30 p.m.**

2016 Barbershopper Of The Year

Bill Ward

Commodores and others * contributing to this issue.

- Jim Erickson
- Denny Maas
- Jim McCarville
- Hardin Olson
- Rich Ongna
- Mark Ortenburger
- Paul Paddock
- Andy Richards
- River City Quartet
- Blake Wanger
- Paul Wigley

CHORD-INATOR
1st Place
2013 PROBE HARD-COPY INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN CONTEST

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.

District Level

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

International Level

- July 2-8, **International Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada**



CHORD-INATOR
MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES
Minneapolis Chapter of SPEBSQSA
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House of Prayer Lutheran Church
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