

KEEPING THE  
WHOLE WORLD SINGING

# CHORD-INATOR

BARBERSHOP  
HARMONY  
SOCIETY



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

NOVEMBER 2014 - VOL.70 - NO. 10

## Commodore quartets score in Rochester

*(But MVE from Greendale is going to Pittsburgh.)*

When the Commodore chorus bounced off the contest stage in the Mayo Civic Center Auditorium on Saturday afternoon, October 25th, virtually to a man they were certain that they must be very close to that elusive score that begins with an "8". **Paul Wigley** was all smiles, still reacting to the raucous audience reaction at the close of our *The Smile Medley*.

Then it was just a matter of viewing the performances of the last five contestants and awaiting the announcements of the final standings. Greendale was next, singing a solid but not overly dynamic set but without the unique costumes and clever staging of past years. *Fox Valley* (Appleton) sang well as did the *Croix Chordsmen* (St. Croix Valley) and *Winnebagoland* (Appleton) all finishing in the top ten.

At last came the results: Most Improved Chorus, *Capitol Chordsmen* (Madison); Plateau A Champion, *West Central Connection* (Willmar); Plateau AA Champion, *Fox Valley* (Appleton); Plateau AAA Champion and 2014 LOL District Chorus Champion, *Midwest Vocal Express* (Greendale).

A funny thing happened on the way to Pittsburgh! The Commodores finished in second Place with 44 points

(3.6%) behind Greendale. (The Commodores were one of a half-dozen choruses that received lower scores than at the District contest in 2013.)

So now, readers, let's take a look at the brighter side. It had been years since two Minneapolis Chapter quartets graced the LOL District contest stage and perhaps even longer that two chapter quartets performed so well at that venue.

**Hot Commodity** with **Paul Swanson, Tony Mason, Ben Wanggaard, and Dave Speidel** in their first major contest, finished in sixth place with 1631 points (68%).

**Swype**, with **Bill Ward, Ken Wentworth, Conrad Ward, and Mark Bloomquist**, also at District for the first time and having been together since February at the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade, placed eleventh and consequently were the mike testers for the contest finals. They were only two points out of tenth place but quite pleased to be out front at the outset of the finals

competition.

Needless to say the Commodores are extremely proud of *Hot Commodity* and *Swype* and look forward with encouragement and support to their continued success.

*Midnight Croon* from the Greendale Chapter won the *Go to Contest*, Page 3, Column 2



*Hot Commodity: Paul, Tony, Ben, and Dave* Staff photo



*Swype: Bill, Ken, Conrad, and Mark* Staff Photo

**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. .... Dan Cole 612/376-0779  
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Co-Marketing/PR V P ..... Russ Born 406/670-2098  
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Program V P ..... Peter Jarnberg 651/765-9580  
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*Through 2015*

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Bari Section Leaders ..... Dave Speidel  
Assistant - Pete Villwock  
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# JUDGES

*By Dan Williams, President*

While at the recent District Convention in Rochester, I had the opportunity to watch the panel of judges. Sitting just four rows back and just off the center aisle, I had a fairly clear view of their activities during each competition.



At one point, I faded off to my college years to a similar, but very different competition, in which I competed as a judge of dairy products. Teams of three competitors (judges) scored 10 samples each of milk, butter, cottage cheese, cheddar cheese and vanilla ice cream. Each score was then compared to an official score, the fewest deviations from the official score were the winners. I found ice cream to be the most difficult. Consider three flavor components – dairy (milk & cream), sweeteners (sugar, corn syrup, fructose) and the vanilla (pure, artificial). Then there's the texture – icy, gummy, weak, etc. Finally, the color is considered. In each case, we were comparing the samples to a "gold standard." We spent hours prior to the competition memorizing what was good, which defects to look for, which defects were considered minor and which severe.

It has occurred to me, of the five senses, two, hearing and taste/smell require a certain level of education to become acute. We learn what's good, better or best. I've been blessed with a refined sense of smell and have had the opportunity to learn how things should smell or taste. My sense of hearing, on the other hand, is not nearly as educated. Our directors and the competition judges have a refined sense of hearing. I'm in awe of people who can pick out a certain part that is not in tune or a wrong note that was sung. To me evaluating or

## *A remembrance...1941*

On a delightful early-December Sunday, a soon-to-be eight-year-old lad is wending his way home from Sunday school. Upon entering the family's apartment his eyes pop wide as he hears his soldier father exclaim as he rushes to put on his uniform, **"The Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor!"**

So begins a seemingly endless chronicle of blackouts, air-raid drills, unfounded rumors of Japanese spies and submarines, scrap drives, bond drives, travel restrictions, and rationing. The strains of *Remember Pearl Harbor*, *Good Bye Mama, I'm Off to Yokohama*, and *There's a Star Spangled Banner Waving Somewhere* fill the airways.

The war news is grim; landings in the Philippines, Hong Kong falls, Wake Island surrenders, Americans withdraw to Bataan, Singapore surrenders, Java and Sumatra are occupied. The Western Pacific becomes a Japanese ocean.

:St. Patrick's Day, 1942, the 41st Infantry Division entrains for San Francisco to board troop ships for ports unknown in the Pacific. The eight-year-old boy and his mother bid a tearful farewell to their soldier father/husband.

Four Christmases will pass before the soldier will return home to stay. Over 162,000 American soldiers, sailors, and marines, fathers, sons, and brothers, will never return from the Pacific battlegrounds. Lest **you** ever forget their sacrifices, **Remember Pearl Harbor!**

judging Barbershop Harmony music is a lot like evaluating vanilla ice cream. Both require the judge to be highly educated in discerning the complexities of the final product.

Next time you disagree with a judge's score, consider the difficult task to fairly and consistently determine the deviations from the "Gold Standard." How well do you think you would do judging vanilla ice cream?

SUNSHINE  
HOTLINE



Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

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Rich Ongna

**Sharyn Maas**, Denny's wife, is doing great with her new knees. She is doing so well that she came with Denny to our competition in Rochester. Gradually she is doing

more walking without mechanical assistance.

**Jim Windey** is doing well again and is moving back toward his normal routine. He keeps the oxygen available but hasn't used it in a couple of weeks. He went back to chorus practice the last week of October and hopes to sing in at least one of the Christmas programs. He sings in two choruses: **Colorado Chord Company** and **Sound of the Rockies**. The doctors still think it was pneumonia that he dealt with but aren't absolutely certain. They're still doing some testing.

**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.

## 2015 Officers and Board

The following slate of officers was approved at the Chapter meeting of October 28.

President: Gordie Aumann

Executive-VP: Denny Maas

Immed. Past-Pres: Dan Williams

Secretary: Bill Warp

Treasurer: John Carlotto

Music VP: Carl Pinard

Membership VP: Harvey Weiss

## Happy Birthday

- 11/10 Bob Ostergaard
- 11/15 Don Bartels
- 11/19 Susan Krekelberg
- 11/23 Barbara Aumann
- 11/23 Bonnie Dahlen
- 11/24 Russ Born
- 11/26 Jim Johannsen
- 11/26 Diana Pinard
- 11/27 Kelly McKown
- 11/28 Pete Villwock
- 11/29 Jim Foy
- 12/02 Sheila Cole
- 12/02 Linda Speidel
- 12/03 Jeanne Bloomquist
- 12/05 Judy Knutson
- 12/06 Ben Wanggaard

## Happy Anniversary

- 11/15 Dan & Bev Slattery (45)
- 11/19 Ken & Karen Wentworth
- 11/27 Lawrence & Martha Smalley\*  
\*Commodore South

### Contest from Page 1

contest going away, with 1876 points (78.2%) following a solid performance.

Hearty congratulations go to **Todd Mattison** and the *West Central Connection (Willmar) Chorus*. Not only did his chorus of only 22 stout-hearted singers finish in third place a mere 31 points behind the Commodores but his quartet, *Sound Image*, finished in fifth place well ahead of *Hot Commodity*.

Special thanks must go to the Rochester Chapter for running another most successful fall convention.

Marketing VPs: Russ Born  
Peter Jarnberg

Program VP: Dan Cole

Board-at-large:

Through 2015: Jerry Koch  
Vince Trovato  
Ben Hancock

Through 2016: Andy Cook  
Blake Wanger  
Nate Weimer

## BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

By Bill Warp, Secretary

### From the meeting of October 16

- Membership: Tony Labakko accepted.
- **Music:** Mason City planning to join us for 2017 competitions. Possible attendance requirement discussed.
- \$500 budget approved for the 70th anniversary celebration at Bloomington K of C on Sunday, November 16, 2-5 p.m.



Bill Warp

- New version of Groupanizer arriving Nov. 1. Problems anticipated.
- Truck replacement continues to be discussed awaiting more details from Guy St. Martin.
- Nametags with new chapter logo are now available at \$5 each (hangers \$2). New members will not be charged.
- Next meeting Thursday, November 20, at Wooddale Lutheran.



### September Reenlistments

Walter Macewitz.....	2 yrs.
Bill Ward.....	5 yrs.
Conrad Ward.....	5 yrs.
Jim MacCarville.....	6 yrs.
Paul Swanson.....	7 yrs.
Rich Ongna.....	11 yrs.
Tom Dahlen.....	15 yrs.
Dale Lynch.....	17 yrs.
Jim Jonannsen.....	19 yrs.
Jim Lee.....	28 yrs.
David Wall.....	31 yrs.
Neal Mortenson.....	36yrs.
Darrell Egertson.....	39 yrs.
Bill Ashley.....	40 yrs.
Rollie Neve.....	47 yrs.
John Hansen.....	63 yrs.

### October Reenlistments

Jack Beaver.....	49 yrs.
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# ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL

.....  
*Alan Matchinski shares a memorable pilgrimage.*

On October 21<sup>st</sup>, a beautiful Tuesday evening, the Minneapolis Commodores welcomed a visiting guest of ours, Mademoiselle **Stephanie Pepin** of Avranches, Normandy, France. Karen and I first met Stephanie through her amazing work honoring those brave and dashing American soldiers, airmen, and sailors who sacrificed so much during the liberation of France in 1944. Stephanie is associated and works with *Les femmes Durant la WW II*, an organization, website, and Facebook entity, honoring and remembering the courageous French women who fought in the underground during the war.

She also works with other veterans' groups dedicated to the memory and history of the US and British D-Day landing forces, especially US Airborne Divisions, on and around the Omaha and Utah beaches on June 6, 1944. Stephanie has "adopted" several grave sites of Americans buried in the Brittany and Normandy US cemeteries and she has connected with those brave soldiers' families, and has provided valuable historical information to each family as well as to the cemeteries.

That is exactly how the Matchinsky family came to meet, and become dear friends with, this special young lady. Stephanie had frequently decorated the grave of my uncle, Tech 5 James W. Matchinsky, 21st Division, 91st Regiment, killed in action August 12, 1944, near St Lo, and buried at Brittany American Cemetery, St. James, France. (And also many other American graves. Bless her heart.) I had posted particulars to the newly-commissioned ABMC (American Battle Monuments and Cemeteries) Facebook page regarding my Uncle Jim's sacrifice fighting the Germans during the Allies breakout at St Lo, and later in July and August, 1944, during the bloody struggle in the hedgerow country.

About 18 months later, planning a November 2013 visit to Normandy, I posted to the Brittany American Cemetery

that Karen and I would be visiting the cemetery within the week. A reply from Stephanie announced, "I will be there!" And so she was, and a great friendship formed. This became the very first glimpse of Tech 5 James W. Matchinsky's grave by any family member. Our visit to that grave was to us, life changing, tremendously moving, and so very humbling.

Though still a young lady, Mlle Pepin has six years of military service in the French army to her credit. She now works in the hospitality industry - in the Alps in the winter and in Avranches in the summer. She may be found on the Internet in Facebook and Twitter. If you had family in the D-Day-and-beyond fighting in France, she would be most happy to help you trace their movements in those days, and if buried or memorialized (Missing in Action) at one of the 26 ABMC cemeteries worldwide, she will assist you in finding their grave sites or memorials.

*Merci ma chère, Stephanie. Welcome to Minneapolis and the Commodores.*

*Editor's Note: As Veterans Day 2014 approaches, every American should take a few moments to remember and say a quiet prayer for those who have given their lives and limbs that we can enjoy the fruits of the freedom for which they so unselfishly sacrificed. And we certainly must not forget those who are continuing the battle to ensure*

*that those at home may continue to live, safe and secure, in this wonderful country of ours.*

*Most certainly we must not forget the remarkable efforts of Stephanie Pepin and the countless others like her in countries around the world who continue to care for our fallen. Some of these older caretakers, a dwindling number, lived through the horrors of the war and the occupation and have an extra-special reason to honor those who gave their lives for a free and peaceful world.*

*Thanks, Stephanie, for helping us remember.*



Tech 5 James W. Matchinsky and his gravesite in St. James, France.

*Matchinsky Photo*



Stephanie Pepin (left) with Karen and Alan Matchinsky.

*Matchinsky Photo*

## On Yewer Behalf

By Dan Cole, Immediate Past President

The year is 1944 and Franklin D.



Dan Cole

Roosevelt is running for his 4<sup>th</sup> term as President. World War II is warring on, but it is about to take a turn in the Allies favor, as the Normandy invasion is planned.

- Federal spending is \$91.3 billion and the Federal debt is \$204.1 billion.

- Unemployment is 1.2%.

- The G I Bill of Rights is passed.

- The International Monetary Fund and World Bank are created.

- The U.S., Britain and USSR propose establishing the United Nations.

- The Academy Awards Best Picture goes to Casablanca.

- The first instance of network censorship occurs and sound is cut off when Eddie Cantor and Nora Martin duet, "We're Having a Baby, My Baby and Me."

- Meanwhile, in Minneapolis, a group of men of good character were completing plans to register as a new Chapter of S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A – known as the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America.

According to our roster history, **Ken Goit** was the first Chapter President in 1944, followed by **Joe Williams** in 1945 and then **Tom Hastings** 1945-1946.

Tom Hastings name is also associat-

mors of our origins as a SPEBSQSA—Minneapolis Chapter.

It is now 70 years later and this is our Anniversary year. Seven decades of making Barbershop-harmony history. How should we celebrate? How would those fellows of good character in 1944 have celebrated this anniversary if they were still alive today.

Can you say PARTY? Could there be singing? Will there be beverages and libations? Certainly there will be cake, don't you think? Plenty of room for guests, come one come all. Call it a Pre-glow or an After-glow. Don't miss this event because it's all about you and Minneapolis Commodores pride. It's a milestone not to be missed. So, put it on your calendars and spread the word. Don't miss it! Some of your best friends will be

there and other guests will be warmly welcomed.

P.S. If you would like to showcase your musical or other talents, there will be an open mic opportunity. Singles, quartets, VLQs, choruses and instruments are welcome.

Let's get the next 70 years off to a great start.

**MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES**  
**70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PARTY**  
**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16<sup>TH</sup>, 2014, 2-5 PM**  
**Richfield American Legion Club**  
**6501 Portland Ave South**

ed with the Minneapolis Aquatennial, where he was President 1940-1941 and Commodore 1942, 1944-1945.

Hmmm? I wonder if Mr. Hastings had any influence in the naming of our Chapter. Perhaps **Loren Bertillon**, **Bob Dykstra**, **John Hansen**, or **Jim Richards** can recall some ru-

## Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor

Some observations from the Rochester Convention:



Hardin Olson

- It has been too long in coming to see Commodore quartets (plural) again on the LOL District contest stage...and to have them perform so well. Not only is

it a reflection of their talent and ability but it must be acknowledged that all members of *Skype* and *Hot Com-*

*modity* have been attendees of one or more *Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Conventions*.

The Brigade programs requiring participants to master ten difficult arrangements and be ready to perform one or more of them in an in-house competition, would seem to me to make a district contest seem rather tame.

No question but that the Brigade experience definitely enhances the quality of the Commodore Chorus.

- It should be made abundantly clear to the helpers and monitors at the outset of each contest session whether non-flash pictures may or may not be taken. My wife, Judy, was rudely told by an usher at the chorus

contest that no pictures were allowed to be taken. At the Quartet Finals Emcee **Tony Blackwood** did say, "No flash pictures."

- It was wonderful to see **Joe** and **Kay Liles** looking the picture of good health at the convention. Judy and I had a most pleasant conversation with them along with **Jim** and **Ebie Richards** while waiting for the Quartet Finals to start Saturday evening. All four are special people and the get-together was most certainly a convention highlight for Judy and me.

- It finally became apparent to this editor during the contests how **Rudy Zarling** really feels about *Old Saint Louie*.



*Hot Commodity* on stage Saturday night capping their 6th Place finish (left to rt.); Paul Swanson, Tony Mason, Ben Wanggaard, and Dave Speidel.



Bill Ward, bass of *Swype*, shows off their Novice trophy while (left to rt.), Ken Wentworth, Conrad Ward, and Mark Bloomquist look on.



Gary Jacobson looks on as his wife, Marilyn, pins on his 50-Year Society membership button. Congratulations, Gary!



A wave to the audience.

# *LOL District Convention*

## *Rochester, Minnesota*

### *October 24-26, 2014*



*SUPPORT  
HARMONY  
FOUNDATION!*



The Youth In Harmony Chorus under the direction of Larry Monson (Marty's father).



Harold Casselman receiving his 65-Year Society membership button from Internat'l Board Member Gerry Borden.



The Association of District Champions Chorus here under the direction of Jim Hall, at the Friday-night ADC show.



Spending Time on I-29 from Greater Grand Forks and Fargo-Moorhead.



Sound Image from Willmar with former Commodore, Tenor Todd Mattison (at the far rt.) singing tenor.

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Vocal Point Quartet from Winnipeg with Harold Casselman (2nd from rt.) laying in an ultra-smooth baritone.



Prime Time, the 1994 District champions, (left to rt.) Jim Halvorson, Larry Halvorson (both former Commodores), Steve MacDonald, and Dave Roesler.



Note'orious from Greater St. Paul.



Cranial Cabbage from the great Northern Union. Roger Stanfield and Jim Emery (from left) are former Commodores. Chuck McKown, (far rt.) is an inactive dual member.

## Youth must be served!

By Harvey Weiss, YIH Chairman

The Barbershop Harmony Society has a new vision, and that is to reach out and collaborate with as many like-minded musical genres and their organizations as possible, and to expand love for the Barbershop style around the rest of the world.

At Mid-Winter Convention last year in Long Beach, California, I ran across a booth staffed by members of my former college music fraternity, *Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia*. They had just recently agreed on working together

and were there to spread the good word, that Phi Mu and Barbershop will be striving to complement each other.

So, I contacted my alma mater, St. Mary's University in Winona, and after months of e-mails and phone calls, we got the four young men in the picture with *Vocality*, to come to Rochester for the Youth In Harmony Festival.

We have plans to continue our collaboration with St. Mary's Phi Mu and the world of Barbershop

Stay tuned!

**Northern Pines**  
**Harmony Brigade**  
 An eXtreme  
 quartetting experience.  
**February 20-22, 2015**  
**Crowne Plaza Hotel**  
**Plymouth, Minnesota**  
**Register Now!**  
[www.nphb.org](http://www.nphb.org)



Pictured here in blue T shirts are the four YIH Festival attendees from St. Mary's sponsored by Harvey Weiss. Interspersed with them are three members of *Vocality*; Jay Althof, David Boyd (from left), and Tom Matchinski (2nd from rt.). The four students were (in alphabetical order) Nick Bronk, Jake Eslinger, James Feltes, and Jared Ferk.

Photo courtesy of James Feltes

## Chord Candy #127

By Dr. Jim Richards, Der Tagmeister

This four-measure tag should look familiar if you don't go past the first note in Measure 2. The Society's published arrangement calls for a Tenor post at Measure 35 and 36 that resolved to the tonic with a familiar harmonic pattern. *Gotcha's* influence inspired a Bass post instead with a rearranged resolution. Early on, popular practice modified the published arrangement by putting a quarter-note rest in the harmony parts at the start of the post at the beginning of Measure 35, requiring that remaining note values in Measure 35 be shortened to avoid a form violation. It seems that everybody wants to contribute an "improvement."



Jim Richards

I confess that I, too, want to make an improvement. From Measure 2 on, everything has changed, except, of course, for the last chord. The usual chord resolution in a tag tends to follow the familiar pattern "downward" whereas this one goes the opposite direction. It's fun to sing, so enjoy!

JDR 10/29/14

Wild I - rish Rose.

The bloom from my Wild I - rish, Rose  
Wild I - rish Rose.

# Quartet Quaffs

## Four Seasons

Each year the Barbershop Harmony Society crowns an International Champion Quartet and Chorus. They are the best in the world as they demonstrate superior excellence in the Barbershop sound. In the world of real estate, similar competitions occur, one of which is the TOBY award that recognizes superior building quality and excellence in office-building management.

This year the world champion in office buildings of one-half to 1 million square feet is the U.S. Bancorp Center at 800 Nicollet Mall in Minneapolis. Just think of it, an international winner in Minneapolis, the home of the Minneapolis Commodores. A commemorative celebration of this award was held at the Bancorp Center on October 9, and the *Four Seasons Quartet* had the privilege of entertaining the hundreds of people in attendance.

On the lobby level in the large atrium, the ringing sounds of Barbershop har-

mony added to the festivities. We strolled through the crowd singing to a few here and a few there, much to their delight. Until our singing was complete we had to refrain from consuming any of the Dairy Queen treats that were freely available for the festive guests. (The cold of ice cream on the vocal folds often is not conducive to good sound production.) Singing in that large atrium was a challenge because it was like singing outside with virtually no feedback. All went well, however, and a good time was enjoyed by all.

We are now heading into the holiday season with Thanksgiving and Christmas fast approaching. A full schedule of chorus and quartet appearances is on the docket, and spreading harmony throughout the community will add to the excitement of the season. It's a great time of the year. Dear hearts, the research project dealing with the overtone analysis in the ongoing saga of **Gentleman Jim Erickson** goes on.

In the last issue [October] of the *Chord-Inator*, we had a trilogy from our beloved baritone. From the *Grind* to *Sounds of Renown* to the *challenge* in Bloomer, Wisconsin, the overtone question eluded us. No doubt Jim's woodshedding experience in Bloomer bares his expertise

in filling in on the fly to snare the correct note (which could affect the overtone series). But alas, no clue was found to rock the research. It might be noted that in the deep recesses of history, it is shown that there was a bloomer factory in Bloomer, and that Jim was a former employee. It is further reported that he did quite well there, pulling down 50,000 a year. Who knows how this would impact the overtone research project, but every little piece of knowledge and experience can be an important piece of the puzzle.

Baritones beget the leftover part of the chord, and frequently jump from one extreme to another to make a fit. This, you can understand, complicates the research and creates many avenues of investigation. Take comfort in the fact that this generates the creative juices and will ultimately lead to the solution.

Don't forget that gentle Jim has an inside track to *Baritonia*, and if all else fails, we can look to this connection for supernatural solutions. Don't get the idea that Jim is supernatural, because even as a baritone, and a bloomer baron, that's quite a stretch. Till next time be patient and know that in this investigation, no tone will be left untuned.

### Rollie for Dan, Rich, and Tom

## Letters

Hello, Jim [Erickson]

I think my brain is finally starting to recover from yesterday's in-depth reading of the *Chordison-Ericksonator*. I'm a little disappointed that Editor Hardin didn't give you the front page as well, including a screaming headline proclaiming that he had found a new Editor at last, one who was fully capable of writing the entire bulletin by himself. I can only imagine the intensity of the negotiations that have been going on for the last few months. Maybe this issue was the teaser before next month's fully-realized (*King James*) version.

On bended knee, I lay my full con-

gratulations at your feet as you launch your new endeavor. Well done!

Hopeful *First-Groveler* at the Scribes Court.

Mark [Ortenburger]  
\*\*\*\*\*

To the *Commodores* (and especially the *Sounds of Renown*):

I am firmly ensconced in Phoenix, Arizona, at the home of my long-time friend, **Gary Steinkamp**. I have already judged a District contest (FWD in Fresno, California), attended two *Spirit of Phoenix* chorus rehearsals, and gotten in a coaching session with a Baltimore-bound SAI quartet, *Lustre*. So my Barbershop-ping career is continuing full force!

I miss my many good friends in Minneapolis, and sure appreciated the warm send-off prior to your rehearsal on Sep 23 and **Jim Erickson's** 3-part missive in the **Chord-Inator**. To say I'm glad to be on the electronic mailing list is an understatement, for sure.

By now you will have competed in Rochester and turned in a fantastic performance. I hope to be visiting the Twin Cities sometime in early 2015, and I'll make it a point to drop by your chapter meeting to say, "Hey." Until we meet again, keep the whole world singing!

In Harmony,  
Brent [Graham]



# Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, Barometric Baritone



Jim Erickson

Don't know if that reference to a barometer is quite accurate, but it seems like the District competition results for the Commodores have kind of settled in the mild-weather range. No rain predicted, but no clear or sunny weather either...just mild. Can't change the weather, I know, but we can change the score achieved by our chorus. Seasoned Barbershoppers will tell you that as you get higher and higher on the scoring scale, whole-point increases are difficult to achieve and judges are even more stingy on a tenth of a point nearer the top.

As we have experienced, a tenth can make a difference between first, second or third place. But this is not a harangue against judging. Earlier I complained about some judges whose scores were inexplicably well outside the range of the other judges, and there were no means of modification and justification. Endeavors to correct this now seem to be in progress, to the betterment of us all.

No, this is an urging to members of our chorus to set our goals a bit higher. I don't want to take away from all of the camaraderie, community outreach, openness to new members, and all the rest. But, maybe, just maybe, if each of us thought about honing our performances just a bit over the next year, we could nudge that score a little higher. Learn the songs earlier and better, get the choreo down earlier, pay attention to details of better than half-hearted gestures and motions. Hey, even smile!

**Gary Jacobson** has been after us for years to start smiling. When is everyone going to buy into that? I know some think, "If I just have a pleasant expression on my face, that is good enough." Well, not from be-

yond ten feet or so. That lit-up face has to be almost clownishly happy and exaggerated to reach the audience, and, of course, the judges. Maybe it's not enough for Gary to endlessly tell us to sparkle our faces. Maybe we need a "Smile Czar" who would seek out those smilingly-challenged members and help them develop that charismatic performance face.

So, I am proposing your working to boost our score goal by a "Plus Two" or simply, "+2" in the next year. Just pay attention to doing a usual score +2 more points in all aspects of the performance. Not much to ask, but maybe enough to



Reading the *Georgia Grind*

break the stuck barometer. All right, enough of the preaching. We have a great chorus that does so many things obviously well. +2 ain't asking much, is it?

Shifting gears, I ran into **Judy Olson**, wife of our most-treasured Editor and a person of great stature in her own right, at the District Contest. I extracted a confession from her that she is the one who has been harassing Doc to make me reveal the *Georgia Grind* essence. I thought I had already promised her that I would be making the big reveal soon. You know when I make a promise, I don't have to be reminded every six months that I haven't fulfilled it yet. I will, I will. And that's exactly what I will do. You can begin counting the days. My word on it!

Oh, I wish everyone were like I am

when it comes to their word. Not that most aren't usually dependable, but adding the mind can color whatever a person says and stands for. I mean just look at what an innocent thing like **Jell-O™** (generically, "jello") can do to someone's sense of hearing, thinking and understanding when it's combined with alcohol. Oh, there is some excuse for the uninitiated first-timer, when partaking of such an innocent pleasure vehicle as lime-flavored jello with which he grew up with. (See *Erickson's Practical Use of Grammar*, if doubting the foregoing) The combination with distilled fluids, however, can lead to sorry consequences.

And celebration of **Vikings** football scores by accepting free handouts of the stuff, particularly by adversary-team supporters and even more particularly, **Packers** supporters, should conjure up several red flags flapping in a hurricane of warning. But sometimes, the naiveté of the virginal imbiber and ingestor of the lime divine, wiggly, (not **Wigley**) concocted bliss from a box, mixed with something barely a step above moonshine, leads one down the primrose path. Or in this case, of all things, down the path to a pontoon boat to journey to a church event.

I pause here to suggest that if the above paragraph has you a bit short of understanding, please refer to last month's **Quartet Quaffs** in the October Chord-Inator for some of the pertinent background. Now I will not stoop to insulting the intelligence of the imbiber, because I am certain, after overcoming the influence of jello and distilled spirits that even he does not truly believe what he has written so eloquently. I know this man to be an upstanding citizen (when not jello-ly afflicted) and not one to mince words. I have lost the reference to the source of the next sentence that was about someone else of the same stature, but it describes the Quartet Quaffer person to a "T." (Oh mercy, I just realized that the word Quaffer is not only a refer-

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*Grind from Page 10*

ence to a singing column, but also has a sad connection to the subject at hand) Anyway, here's the sentence. "His answers are unfiltered and to-the-point, often poignant but always unsentimental, not rude but refusing to infest the garden of honest human communication with the Victorian-seeded, American-sprouted weed of pointless politeness." That is, when jello is not quaffed...

And just for clarification of another thing mentioned in that earlier article, when **Wisconsinites** are asked about "**Jim**," the response is always perplexing to even those not jello-impaired. Now I can only modestly submit that I don't expect many to respond a certain way to questions about "Jim" if they aren't, as mentioned in that earlier article, from Wisconsin. But, historically, a French fur trader, in the early days well be-

fore Wisconsin became a state, was widely known and respected for his integrity and derring-do in all things. His formal name was **James LeHue**. For the backcountry places to which he ventured, that was just too fancy for Native Americans, settlers, and explorers alike. So his name became Jim Lahoo and over time, just Jim Hoo.

To this day, whenever the name Jim is mentioned, out of their great respect and admiration for that icon of a man, **Sconies** (those good folks from Wisconsin) reverently ask the question, "Jim Hoo?" To an outsider, this is frequently misunderstood and not appreciated. But Wisconsinites are an understanding lot and don't let a gelatinously addled mind alter their forthright friendliness. Just don't say "Vikings" or wear

purple and gold in their presence during the fall. Or anytime for that matter.

Judy Olson, I apologize. It was at the top of my full agenda to deal with your enlightenment about the Georgia Grind origins. Where is **Carrie Amelia Moore Nation** when you need her? I promise that in the next article, I will begin the elucidation by delving into the depths of musical history to bring it to the light of consciousness. (OK, Erickson has crept closer to the edge of never-never land. Will he go over before making the Big Reveal? Stay tuned!) In the meantime, remember to celebrate this being the decade of the baritone, keep on recruiting, make that **Barbershop Bucket List** for the coming New Year. Oh, and especially hold fast to that which is good!

*A Cappella Rocks the Holidays*  
 With  
 The Minneapolis Commodores and  
 The Twin Cities Show Chorus  
 Kennedy High School, Bloomington, MN  
**December 7, 2014**  
**3:00 pm**

Come join two of the premiere choruses in the Twin Cities for a winter wonderland of soaring four-part and eight-part a cappella harmonies. If that's not enough to lift your holiday spirits, you'll also be entertained by a variety of quartets performing family-friendly holiday music for this special time of year. Our program will include:

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*Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree*  
*Believe*  
*Joy to the World*  
*Baby It's Cold Outside*  
*You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch*  
*All the Way Home For Christmas*

For Ticket Information contact:  
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*Neither shared with the Girl Scouts nor dumped by the Sweet Adelines.*

*Logo courtesy of Bob Clark*

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**To:**

**LOOKING AHEAD**

**Chapter Level**

- November 2, Sunday, 2:30 p.m., **Lakeville Senior Resource Coalition, St. John's Luth. Church, 20165 Heath Ave. (Hwy 50)**
- November 9, Sunday, **Food Share performance, Lakeville**
- November 16, Sunday, **2-5 p.m. 70th Anniversary Party, Bloomington K of C**
- November 18, Tuesday, **Joint rehearsal with TC Show Chorus at HOP**
- December 2, Tuesday, **Joint rehearsal with TCSC at United Methodist Church, Edina, 64th and Xerxes**
- December 7, Sunday, **Christmas Show with TCSC**

**District Level**

**International Level**

- January 6-10, 2015, **Midwinter Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana**

**2014 Barbershopper Of The Year  
 Rod Vink**

**Commodores and others \*  
 contributing to this issue.**

- Dan Cole
- Jim Erickson
- Brent Graham\*
- Rollie Neve
- Hardin Olson
- Rich Ongna
- Mark Ortenburger
- Jim Richards
- Bill Warp
- Harvey Weiss
- Dan Williams



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