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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 2014 - VOL. 70 - NO. 3

Commodores on stage in Nicollet, Minnesota



Diana Pinard Photo

The Commodores strike the final pose of "I Can't Give You Anything But Love" 10,000 Lakes Division Contest, May 29, 2014

Saturday, March 29, 2014, dawned sunny-bright but rather cool. The drive to Nicollet was pleasant and other than for quiet conversation, was without incident. The impending contest was, of course, the main topic of discussion, but a close second was the anticipation of an after-battle visit to Nicollet's paragon of untold gustatory perfection, **Schmidt's Meat Market**, home of the succulent rib-eye and the incomparable filet. (What was I writing about? Oh, of course, the contest!)

Starting at 10:15 a.m. six choruses from 10,000 Lakes squared off with three from the Southwest Division and when the smoke had cleared all nine had scored over 720 points thereby qualifying for the District contest in Rochester in October.

The Commodores managed a total victory with a score of 916 points just barely eeking out **Todd Mattison's** pesky, 2nd-place **Wilmar** minions (19 men on stage) by a mere eight points. Our neighbors to the east, the **Croix Chordsmen** (Stillwater) and the **North Star Chorus** (St. Paul) finished 4th with 798 points and 6th with 784 points respectively.

Much to the consternation of the Commodores, that ever-pesky Todd Mattison continued his winning ways by leading (or should I say "tenoring") his quartet, **Sound Image**, to a 30 point victory over the Commodores' 2nd-place **Hot Commodity** (**Paul Swanson, Tony Mason, Dave Speidel, Ben Wanggaard**) who themselves scored a respectable 822 points.

A most pleasant surprise for the Commodores was the inaugural on-stage appearance of **Swype** (**Ken Wentworth, Conrad Ward, Mark Bloomquist, Bill Ward**) who finished third with a score of 808 points.

It must be noted here that of the eight Commodore quartet men listed above all but two of them (Dave Speidel and Paul Swanson) were veritable neophytes; neophytes, however, all of whom have been active participants in the *Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Conventions* and as a result are also contributing mightily to the ever-improving musicality of the Commodore Chorus.

And finally, kudos to the **Mankato Riverblenders** for conducting such a well-run *Spring Contest & Festival*.

**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

PresidentDan Williams 952/974-0026
 Past Pres.....Dan Cole 612/376-0779
 Exec. VP.....Gordy Aumann 952/935-8869
 Co-Marketing/PR V P Russ Born 406/670-2098
 Bill Ward 763/413-9273
 V P Music /Perform....Carl Pinard 612-927-9363
 V P Membership.....Harvey Weiss 763/439-4447
 Program V PPeter Jarnberg 651/765-9580
 Secretary.....Bill Warp 763/531-2290
 TreasurerJohn Carlotto 952-925-0886

Board Members

Through 2014

Chuck Gribble.....612/377-5140
 Mike Hojan.....952/435-6647
 Dan Slattery.....651-747-6384

Through 2015

Ken Jones.....612/790-1013
 Denny Maas.....952/447-8012
 Vince Trovato.....952/937-8824

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 Assistant Directors
 James Souhan
 Gary Jacobson
 David Speidel

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 Lead Section Leader.....Gary Jacobson
 Assistant - Dan Smith
 Bari Section LeadersDave Speidel
 Assistant-Pete Villwock
 Bass Section Leaders.....Jim Richards
 Assistant-Dave Casperson

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“JUST SAYIN’ THANKS...”

By Dan Williams, President



Dan Williams

This past month has been a very busy month for the Commodores and I feel compelled to say THANK YOU!

First of all, last week I presented a check to our treasurer, John Carlotto, from the Harmony Foundation in the amount of \$487.09. These funds were given to us because some generous members in our chapter have donated to Harmony Foundation and through the Donor Choice program asked the foundation to send some back to our chapter. So, THANK YOU, **John Carlotto, Dan Cole, Gary Jacobson, Peter Jarnberg, Bryan Langren, Mark Ortenburger, Jim Richards, Dick Riemenschneider, Dan Slattery, Dave Speidel, Guy St Martin, Paul Swanson, and Ken Wentworth** for your donations.

I have received several comments from friends and family on how great the annual show was. “It was one of the best shows we’ve seen!” came from my family and we have had some great shows in the past dozen years. So, THANK YOU to all of the members that worked so hard and played a special role in making this show such a success. (I started to list the names and realized that would give Doc print for more than one issue.)

Finally, last Tuesday night I had the opportunity to chat with **Neil Schell**, our guest from Vermont. [See LETTERS, Pg. 13] Traveling around the country as a salesman, he makes a point to visit other Barbershop chapters when he can. He remarked how most of the chapters fall into two categories – really good chapters totally focused on competition or chapters that are struggling and are average, at best. The chapters that fall in be-

“Honing our horizons!”

By Paul Wigley, Director



Paul Wigley

As we enter an exciting future era of Barbershop singing, there are so many new, creative, breathtaking performances taking place! We are hearing songs from every genre of the music world, and we are able to celebrate the creativity of our newest arrangers. With the area of “Modernize music; arrange and publish more popular music recognized by today’s audiences and singers” being one of five areas of focus from the Society Leadership Forum, we are going to continue to see performances that will push the boundaries of our style.

With all of these potential new arrangements and style challenges, I feel we still need to maintain a balance between *celebration* and *style preservation*. The Music category description is a massive document that clearly spells out stylistic components of Barbershop. But, it is also a bit daunting to digest, and I want to get back to the most very basic tenets of Barbershop style. These should be the building blocks that form the foundation of our distinctive sound.

Go to Horizons, Page 3, Colimn 1

tween are few, but in his opinion, are the most desirable. These chapters consist of a good solid group of men that have fun singing Barbershop and are good at it. The Commodores is one of these chapters. I believe Neil thoroughly enjoyed the evening, including the afterglow, and will certainly return, if his travels permit. So, THANK YOU Commodores, each and everyone, for being who we are and what we represent!

I AM PROUD TO BE A COMMO-DORE !

Horizons from Page 2

Following are the basic characteristics of Barbershop harmony:

- Four unaccompanied voices.
- Melody predominantly in the second voice down (lead, or second tenor)
- Consonant four-part chords on all notes of the melody, almost completely in root position and second inversion. (chord voicings that promote lock and ring/overtones)
- Use of embellishments of many kinds, such as swipes, key changes, echoes, bell chords, etc. to enhance the lyric material of the song. (Predominantly homophonic—all four voices moving with the same rhythm.)

• A predominance of dominant seventh (Barbershop seventh) chords, revolving around the circle of fifths.

Think of Jimmy Fallon’s quartet—the Ragtime Gals, and the millions and millions of people that have heard their rendition of rapper R. Kelly’s “Ignition”—the barbershop sound is distinctive! (If you haven’t seen this, look it up on YouTube.) I’m not saying that I really look forward to a lot of rap being sung on our contest stages, but I would like to use this to point out these very basic tenets that are being followed to make this song sound ‘barbershop’. There is a very basic ‘sound’ that makes this seem like a true barbershop quartet song to the average late-night television viewer. We need to be prepared to accept an

entirely new generation of songs....that still fit into our style, and our distinctive ‘sound.’ We have an extremely exciting musical future ahead of us!

I intend to keep sharing my ‘Music category’ thoughts with the Commodores, because I hope you all will feel free to give ME feedback regarding the barbershop style, the future of the barbershop style, the importance of maintaining the fundamental tenets that are basic to barbershop, and how to balance realistically all of these issues. It’s great to be a Commodore- and these past weeks of the annual show and Division contest prove it!



March Re-enlistments

- Bob Dillon.....3 yrs.
- Tony Mason.....3 yrs.
- Kaleb Smith.....5 yrs.
- Gerald Koch.....9 yrs.
- Harvey Weiss.....15 yrs.
- Dan Smith.....27 yrs.
- Pete Villwock.....40 yrs.
- Roger Meyer.....42 yrs.
- Doug Miller.....56 yrs.
- Bob Spong.....58 yrs.
- Jim Richards.....61 yrs.

In Memorium

Long-time Commodore and friend, **Orv Skordahl**, passed away on Monday, March 10 at age 92.

Orv was active with the Commodores in the 50s and 60s. Thereafter he had a connection with the General Motors Training Center at which site he arranged for many chapter rehearsals when our regular venues were unavailable.

Orv became friends to virtually all he met; a quality attested to by innumerable attendees at his remarkable funeral service.

Happy Birthday

- 04/10 Wes Hatlestad
- 04/12 Janet Johnson
- 04/14 Char Carlotto
- 04/15 Barb Aronson
- 04/15 Janet Huyck
- 04/16 Dan Slattery
- 04/18 Kathy Nelson
- 04/19 Marc Duran (15)
- 04/19 Sarah Hartmann
- 04/20 Chuck Gribble
- 04/20 Romana Jorgensen
- 04/22 Jamy Casperson
- 04/24 Bob Dillon (70)
- 04/26 Walter Macewicz (60)
- 04/26 Becky Wigley
- 04/29 Dan Smith
- 05/04 Dale Lynch (85)
- 05/05 Roger Meyer (75)
- 05/06 Kay Foy
- 05/06 Rich Ongna
- 05/07 Vince Trovato
- 05/09 Jim Windey

Happy Anniversary

- 04/11 Chuck & Kelly McKown
- 04/12 Gene & Karene Heupel
- 04/22 Jim & Judy Johannsen
- 04/27 Dick & Sarah Hartmann



**SUNSHINE
HOTLINE**



By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: ddongna@usfamily.net



Rich Ongna

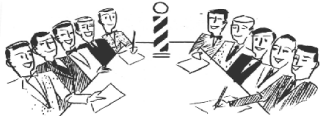
Commodores extend their sympathies to **Dave Casperson** and his family in the passing of his father, Carl, on March 30th.

Dave also lost a grandmother a little more than a week earlier.

The Commodores extend their sympathies to **Fritz Herring** whose wife Hazel passed away on March 6th. Fritz was a member of the Commodores and is currently a member of Frank Thorne.

Remember: Please keep me informed about those ailing and don’t assume that I am aware because generally I’m in the dark. Help me brighten the days of our ailing members. A short note of encouragement or phone call can make the day of a person who is not feeling well.

Board Highlights



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings

By Bill Warp, Secretary

From the meeting of March 13

• **Treasurer:** The budget for the 2014 Ladies Night/BOTY Celebration was presented by **Dick Riemenschneider** and accepted.

All future events of that nature will require advanced budget approval and a final chairman's sign-off on the timely post-event report.

• **Membership:** **Nate Weimer** was accepted for membership. Nate is a most welcome tenor and already is has become a dedicated quartetter.

• New/potential members will soon have a newly-revised *Introduction to Barbershop* folder.

A *Barberpole Cat* program will be integrated periodically as part of the program segment at chapter meetings.

• **Marketing:** Group sales for our past year's shows were down. The chapter needs a viable group-sales team.

The *Groupon* sales were a pleasant surprise; over 200 tickets were requested.

• **Music:** Total Annual Show tick-

et sales totaled 1000 plus 200 discounted Groupon tickets. Consideration will be given to increasing show ticket prices.

Thus far 64 members have committed to the LOL District Contest in Rochester in October.

Mark Ortenburger will be the chairman of the 2014 Christmas Show with the Twin Cities Show Chorus in December.

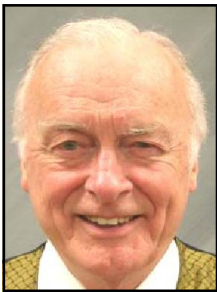
James Souhan has found a young candidate who has an interest in helping the Commodores polish their choreography.

The next Board meeting will be this Thursday, April 17 at Wooddale Lutheran Church.



Chord Candy #120

by Dr. Jim Richards, Der Tagmeister



Jim Richards

I'm sure that all of us are getting pretty tired of all of the snow we have had this winter. This last batch that was about a foot deep where I live was a real "downer." This is April. We are now supposed to be having that stuff that does not need to be shoveled. Even rain, if it is too persistent, can be come tiresome. But this tag (#80 in David Wright's famous collection) can lift your spirits. We are urged not to be blue when raindrops come along. There are a lot of notes in this tag, but many of them are the same. I suggest that you first read the lyrics rhythmically to see how the tag is constructed. Then, hang some notes on those word sounds and ring some nice barbershop chords. Enjoy!

80. Don't Be Blue When Raindrops Come Along

a - long. _____

Don't be blue when rain - drops come a - lis - ten to the pat - ter 'cause it

real - ly does - n't mat - ter when the rain - drops come a - long. _____

“Getting Your Game Face On!”

By David Speidel, Ass't Director

First of all, I want to give everyone a big ‘congratulations’ on improving your visual performance at division contest. The scores seemed to reflect that there was more total involvement and enjoyment going on by every individual. That’s a great success. You may recall that I made a comment during our warm-ups that I hope resonated with all of you. I said, “Every man is important.”



Dave Speidel

It’s easy to assume that once you get buried on one of the back risers no one is going to see you and that you are less important than, let’s say, someone in the front row or on the periphery. I really liked the analogy we heard at one of our evaluations a few years ago in that very same Nicollet Gymnasium. Each person is like a light bulb up on the Theater Marquee. If even one light bulb is out, your vision is drawn to the *missing* bulb. Imagine a bulb that is flickering in and out. Wow, it becomes even more noticeable. That’s why it is important to be “On!” all of the time.

One other comment that I took to heart was regarding our own front row, and the need to “shore things up.” I couldn’t agree more. We have two challenges in that regard.

1. A *depleted* front row during regular meetings. It becomes exceedingly difficult if we can’t get all of our front row there on a routine basis.
2. Allotting *time* for front row rehearsals. This will be much easier to schedule if we can “UP our game” when it comes to learning music.

I simply ask that we all take more time to get off the paper sooner, and then we can spend a little more time to focus on the artistry of our music

“Under the Big Top!”

A glimpse of next year

By Gary Jacobson, 2015 Show Chair

I am sure most of you have experienced the excitement of a circus and the fun of entering the “Big Top” tent to take in all the amazing acts. On April 11, 2015, we are going to give our audience a chance to relive some of those experiences.



Gary Jacobson

The main characters in our story are A **Young Man** who wants to follow in his uncle’s steps and join the Circus.

The **Uncle**, a circus old-timer who has spent his life under the Big Top in virtually every imaginable role.

The **Ringmaster**

and of our visual performance.

I also want to thank all of you for cooperating with our makeup request for both the show and the Division Contest. This is all part of upping our game and level of professionalism. We have a paying audience that expects a first-rate show and performance from the Commodores. Let’s continue to give them what they deserve. And just wait until you see what we have in store for you in next year’s show!

By the way, I highly recommend that all of you get out and see some other Barbershop and Sweet Adeline shows. Besides listening, take a look at their *game faces*. This past weekend I went to the City of Lakes Show and they had a stellar performance from beginning to end. Simply Solid! The energy level by everyone on the risers was great. And how about those *Love Notes*! The newest Queens of Harmony put on a singing clinic and they are all in their early 20s! (Oh, to be young again.)

The **Clowns** (lots of Clowns)

The **Fortune Teller** who gives the Young Man guidance through his journey

The **Animal Tamer**

The **Strong Man**

The **Aerialists**

The **Jugglers**

The **Tall Man** (Rod Vink)

The **Circus Band** (Dixiedores)

The **Gorilla** who escapes during the show, appearing and reappearing often and unexpectedly.

Are you getting the picture? The set will be great! (Who knows, maybe **Blake Wanger** and **Mark Ortenburger** will come up with another sensational script.)

Songs will be selected from: *Circus Day in Dixie*, *Smile Medley*, *Laugh Clown Laugh*, *Side By Side*, *Clown Medley*, *Ab-Ba Dab-Ba Honeymoon*, *Man on the Flying Trapeze*, and *Strike Up the Band*. Other charts for the final act may include *There’s a Meetin’ Here Tonight/Old Time Religion* among others.

Skits may include:

Clown Car

Spot Light Act

Learning How to Juggle

Strong Man Routine

Animal Tamer (tries to recapture the Gorilla)

Putting on Clown Make Up

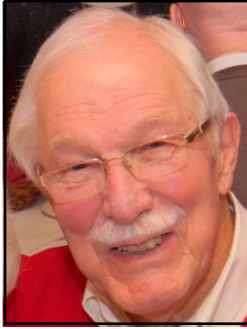
All Quartets and small groups will appear on “Center Ring” (Thrust stage)

Our Special Guests this year will be from around here...Cost should be limited. Have you heard of “Kordal Kombat” or “Now and Then Singers”?

I have ordered music and the Music Team will be discussing this show during the next few months to finalize plans. Should we have one show or two? Can we sell out two shows? Can we market this show? Will our members get excited about

Go to **Big Top**, Page 6, Column 1

The First 70 Years



**THE
MINNEAPOLIS CHAPTER:
"THE EARLY DAYS"
BY DR. BOB DYKSTRA**

As I mentioned last month the first meetings of the fledgling Minneapolis Chapter were held in the homes of **Ken Goit** and **Joe Williams**. By the third meeting a larger space was needed and the group moved to the Fifth District American Legion Hall at 607 Second Ave. South. Because in the words of Joe Williams, "the bar was too good there," the chapter then started meeting in the mayor's reception room at city hall.

Not long thereafter, the group went back to the Legion Hall for a bit, then entered into a long partnership with the Elk's Club on Fifth St. just off Hennepin Avenue where the

Big Top, from Page 5

this show and sell ads, sponsorships and tickets?

Now with all my ideas, we have a three-hour show! We must bring this down to about two hours.

Our challenge will be to learn our songs quickly. Quartets and small groups must select songs which can fit into this model. I hope we can select our 2016 District Competition Package with costumes and circus "schtick" from this show.

I hope you will get on board and ride this Circus Train with me this next year!! I can't wait! "Send in the Clowns!"

chapter held its meetings for approximately the next twenty years. When that became unavailable we met for a time at the Moose Lodge in Northeast Minneapolis and then spent a short time at the new Elks Club before settling in for extended periods at the Jewish Community Center and the current meeting place, House of Prayer Lutheran Church, in Richfield.

The young chapter first met on a monthly basis, but by 1947 was meeting twice monthly. I'm not sure exactly when weekly meetings commenced but that was the schedule when I came upon the scene in 1955. And I'm quite sure that the meeting night has been Tuesday during all of the years of my membership. Annual dues were three dollars initially, then increased to five dollars in 1945. At about the same time a one-time assessment of three dollars was "laid on" new members.

During the early years business meetings were held during the regular chapter meetings. There was no Board of Directors. One can imagine how much time was devoted to organizational matters. Joe Williams reported at the time that many of the better singers started skipping meetings because of what they viewed as excessive time devoted to business, leaving too little time for singing. It appears that a Board of Directors was established to carry on the affairs of the chapter in the late 1940s and a Chapter Constitution was adopted at about the same time.

Our Chapter Constitution and By-laws were approved by the International Society in December 1949. Purposes of the chapter were listed as follows:

- To keep Barbershop quartet sing-

ing in its rightful place as a highly traditional form of American folk music;

- To give every member an opportunity to sing in a permanently-organized quartet and to encourage and assist in forming as many good quartets as possible;
- To promote the best possible chorus singing of songs arranged in Barbershop style;
- To foster maximum altruistic participation of SPEBSQSA units in worthwhile community, state, and national projects.

You will note the emphasis given *quartet-singing* in the purposes of the chapter. The Barbershop Society was still three-and-one-half years away from its first International chorus competition which was to be held in Detroit in 1953. National and International quartet contests, on the other hand, had been a staple of the Society since its inception. After all, the Society was known as the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop *Quartet* Singing in America. Moreover, chapter shows at the time were almost always called *Parades of Quartets* with the chapter chorus singing only a few numbers.

As an example, let's look at the 1952 Minneapolis Chapter show, the second annual show to be held at Northrop Auditorium on the University of Minnesota campus as a concert affiliated with the University's Artist Series. The chorus sang a couple of numbers to open and close the show. In between, seven chapter quartets performed as did the famous Chordettes; 1951 International Barbershop Quartet Champs, the Schmitt Brothers; the Four Corners, *Go to History, Page 7, Column 1*

Thoughts from Big Sky Country!

By Russ Born, Marketing Co-VP

What a GREAT show; great script, characters and singing by chorus and quartets! All should be proud of their efforts to entertain our patrons. I trust you enjoyed the day as much as I did! There are THANK-YOUs that each of you should be aware of: to **Jearlyn Steele** and



Russ Born

History from Page 6

a comedy quartet from Eau Claire; the *For Mor*, a popular show quartet from Madison; and the Four Teens, who four months later were crowned International Quartet Champions in Kansas City. That's twelve quartets on one show.....quite a parade.

As an aside....how many people would you guess attended that show? Ticket sales totaled 4,638; in addition 30 standing room tickets were sold and 313 passes were given out. Ticket prices ranged from \$1.50 to \$2.50.

The emphasis given quartetting in the Minneapolis Chapter was also illustrated in the March 1952 issue of the Society's magazine, *The Harmonizer*, which featured photographs of the chapter's twelve registered quartets: *Atomic Bums*, *Gay 90s*, *Zuhrah Shrine Quartet*, *Hut Four*, *Northmen*, *Golden Gophers*, *Lake Aires*, *Ewald Golden Guernseys*, *Harmonians*, *Aqua Tones*, *Four Errors*, and *Yachtsmen*.

Next month we'll take a look backwards at how we as a chapter became affiliated with the University of Minnesota and its prestigious Artist's Series.

WCCO Radio for the promotional airtime on March 16 and to **Jeffrey DeMars** (and his [our] **Uncle Lou**) for arranging for the nice show promo that **KARE 11** aired on the Saturday morning of our show!

- Thank you to **Shannon Hunter** at CTV15 in Roseville for producing, and airing the promo-video I appeared in so often the week before our show!

- Thank-you to each of our **Patch.com volunteers** for always updating the local Patch.com websites!

- Thank you to all the media that provided space to promote our show!

- Thank-you to **Carol Smith** for all her efforts leading up to the show to make sure that herding the cats was such an easy task this year. I appreciate the confidence she had in me to handle show-things in her absence! All her preplanning and foresight made my job a piece of cake!

- Thank you to **Judy Olson** for her help in keeping me under control when trying to fill Carol's very big shoes.

- Thank-you to the **entire chorus** for their efforts to make my first attempt as Stage Manager so uncomplicated.

Thank-you to **each of you** for efforts to sell tickets, to **all those** who sold ads for our program, and to **Diana Pinard** for keeping things organized.

And, an extra-special THANK YOU to each of our sponsors and advertisers who so generously contributed toward our efforts this year. And, **COMMODORES**...please support our advertisers at every opportunity and be sure to let them know how they are appreciated.

I enjoyed every minute of our show and I hope you did as well! On a personal note, thank you for all of your condolences on the passing of Jeni's Dad. They are greatly appreciated!

It's GREAT to be a COMMODORE!

Life with Romana

Submitted by Jim Jorgensen, *Indefatigable Baritone*

- Romana used to kiss our dog on the lips, but wouldn't drink from my glass!

- Romana has a relative that is so ugly, they used her in the Michigan prisons to cure voyeurs.



Jim Jorgensen

- This same gal stuck her head out the car window one time and got arrested for mooning.

- Her husband carries around the woman's picture that came with the wallet.

- Romana's uncle's dying wish was to have me sit on his lap. He was in the electric chair at the time.

- I am the cook. Romana has taken to saying our meal prayer after the meal!

- Romana claims that I am so ugly that my mother had morning sickness...after I was born.

- One time Romana and I were accidentally split up in downtown Minneapolis on Nicollet Ave. I saw a policeman and asked him to help me find her. After searching for a while I said, "Do you think we'll ever find her?" He said, "I don't know Mister, there are so many places she could hide."

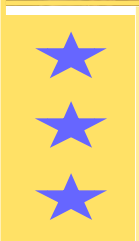
- I didn't feel good. I told Romana, "Every morning when I get up and look in the mirror, I throw up. What do you think is wrong with me?" She said, "I don't know, but your eyesight is perfect".

- One time I thought that I had taken a bunch of sleeping pills instead of my regular medicine. I asked Romana what I should do. She said, "Have a couple of shots of whiskey and take a nap."



“What a Wonderful World!”





Benson Hall: Bethel University
March 22, 2014



Photos by
 Kirk Douglas
 Home Video



Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, *Brain Boosted(?)*
Baritone



Jim Erickson

Despite what many—let’s make that “most”—of you think, I believe my brain has been boosted considerably in the last couple of months. And some of you think that if I start at zero, who can notice any initial difference? Just not enough improvement! “Like a whisper in a tornado,” I can hear the most cynical of you say. But even my good wife has said that I’m not acting as stupidly as I have in the past. Hey, I’m desperate. I’ll take even that little bit as a positive statement on my progress. But how did this growth come about, you ask?

Well, I was watching a rerun of Dr. Oz when he had Majid Fotuhi, MD, PhD, as a guest. His subject was “Boost Your Brain” by growing your hippocampus. (The hippocampus of your brain is named after its resemblance to the seahorse, from the Greek *hippos* meaning horse and *kampos* meaning sea monster.)

[Doc Hardin, you can step in here at any time to assist me through this topic but with my boosted brain, I doubt I’ll need your help even though you have endless years of medical practice, research, and “hands-on” application of your knowledge.]

Fotuhi suggested that you should challenge and vitalize your hippocampus by getting out of your comfort zone. Try some things like switching to your opposite hand for your hair dryer, wristwatch, writing, using tools and the like. Or, try this. On a clean sheet of paper, draw a line down the middle. On one side of the line, print your name as usual. On the other, print that name in mirror image. For instance, “Jim/miJ.” (can’t show it, but mirror “J” should be reversed)

Then write it in mirror image. Not too hard, right? OK, NOW try both with your other hand. You have just challenged your hippocampus to grow a bit!

Take my word for it, I don’t write about many things like this without actually trying them. (like the whole Gummy Bears successful experiment). So, always being at your service, I tried some of the growth ideas.

Don’t judge my first experiment by the paltry amount of materials (my ever disappearing hair) I had to use.



Reading the *Georgia Grind*

Instead of drying my hair with my right hand, I went cold turkey and switched to my left. First, I couldn’t find the doggone “On” switch and when I did, in my fumbling, I also had flipped on the Ultra High Heat switch. The first blast scorched my follicles, bright-reddened my scalp, and urged me to utter, “Ayyeeeeeee!”

Nearly dropping the confounded device in the toilet possibly causing a power outage in greater Minnetonka, I was fortunate enough to have it miss and bounce off the shower door instead. No damage to the door, but the nozzle now had a unique chip that directed some hot air straight ahead, but most up to the mirror. This was handy for clearing the fog off the mirror after my steamy show-

er, but not too efficient at bringing Sahara to my pate.

That problem was solved in a matter of minutes as I dropped the wily wind-machine four more times on the tiled floor. My shopping list now has an additional item of one new, combat-strength hair dryer.

Next try at hippocampus growth caused me to be late for a dental appointment, pedicure, and an MRI. You see, switching my watch to my right wrist, but failing to reverse it so it would be right side up, meant that even though the second hand still clicked in a clock-wise motion, the dial was upside down and the time the opposite or whatever, of the left hand time. So, “9” was “3” and “3” was “9” upside down. And you thought the change to Daylight Saving Time was disorienting! The result was considerable growth that I had hoped to achieve for the hippocampus, but instead it was growth in frustration that I, quite frankly, could do without.

I didn’t begin to try any of my tools, even the most simple screwdriver. Or my 10-inch, laser-focused, powerful miter saw. I may be slow to learn, but I do learn. (Mote tu my slef – Ahhhh!) I guess switching hands for typing doesn’t work so well either. Anyway, I am writing in a Barbershop publication with a Chief Editor [Hardin] who is ruthless about staying on the Barbershop topic in all articles, so I need to say something Barbershopy. Here it comes.

Just listening to music, even Barbershop-esque tunes, grows your hippocampus by stimulating a greater appreciation of music. Just think of what listening to and singing music must do. Growth Supreme! Now if you combine singing with dancing, WOW—The *Sounds of Renown* recently sang *The Longest Time* at the Commodores’ Annual Show. A fun song to sing, but then you add Dancing! Admittedly, the choreo
Go to Grind, Page 11, Column 1

Grind from Page 10

Dancing! Admittedly, the choreo took hours of coaching (Thank-you, **Judy O**) and practice, but was there a benefit to the performer's hippocampus? The *Georgia Grind* didn't have the funding to thoroughly research the results, so I'll just have to go with what Dr. Fotuhi had to say. Wait for it. Wait for it!

He said, "Dancing cross-trains many areas of your brain at the same time." Like, the sequence of steps requires attention, concentration and something else which was—Oh, yeah. *Memory*. And the balance in tripping the light fantastic (words from a John Milton poem) helps with your equilibrium. Combine that with singing while at the same time smiling, breathing correctly, not falling off the stage and more. Can you begin to fathom the myriad benefits with which we are gifted each time we open our mouths and take a step?

And the good Doctor (Fotuhi, not Hardin) also claims that singing and dancing reduce stress, improve your mood, and help get you in shape. Most importantly, these three things are at the top of the list in growing your very own hippocampus to be bigger and stronger. Sounds like a Chick Magnet to me. Try it and see, then let me know how much admiration and envy you experienced.

You can see that all this medical lore has led me astray from my quest for knowledge about the origins of the *Georgia Grind*. Sorry about that, but I will get back at it next time. Oh, and I just discovered something that I should have guessed a long time ago. You may remember my learning about **Rollie Neve's** early childhood and his job at the buggy whip factory. How that contributed to his becoming incurably addicted to alliteration (for leads, basically the use of several, proximally-located words all beginning with the same letter) and his incredible ability to remember every joke he has ever heard accompanied by the compulsion to tell them all.

Well now I have learned from one end of the horse, that another childhood task included the hand-labor of moving bovine fecal matter into a horse-drawn wagon with a flipper-like gizmo at the back, and then using his own handmade buggy whip to urge the horses up and down row upon row of the farm field to add nutrients to the famished soil ensuring the success of the next harvest season. (See how I cleverly worked the subject, Greek *hippos*, meaning horse, from earlier in this article, to one more subject on horses here) As

~~~~~  
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[www.loldistrict.org](http://www.loldistrict.org)  
 ~~~~~

you can guess, old habits die hard and Rollie is still replaying his childhood tasks in his everyday communications with his community. In the hopes of something beautiful blossoming from his incessant delivery, I can only say, "Spread on, Rollie, spread on!"

Never forget, though, that under the Law of Probable Dispersal, whatever hits the fan will not be evenly distributed; or what hits the spreader, for that matter. With this in mind, keep growing that hippocampus, adding to your Barbershop Bucket List, recruiting like crazy and holding fast to that which is good.



Quartet Quaffs

Four Seasons

Yes, as the theme of our annual show proclaimed, "It's a Wonderful World." As we sang about skies of blue and clouds of white the view of a wonderful world became even more wonderful with the beautiful



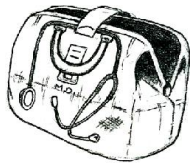
Rollie Neve

ringing chords that accompanied the lyrics. Adding a special flavor were those beautiful high tenor notes that enhanced a heavenly feeling to those skies of blue. One can't help feeling that Gentleman **Jim Erickson** gets that sort of tinge when he's in Baritonia. Of course tenors are not allowed in Baritonia, but bless the baritones, because bound in their brains are those beautiful tenor notes that bathe them in their Baritonia ecstasy. You know, that gives me a much more positive image of Baritonia.

The *Four Seasons* big event for the month was the annual show, and we were ready to impress the audience with the power of positive thinking by Accentuating the Positive, Eliminating the Negative, and not messing with Mr. In-Between. The problem is that something came in between. **Dan Smith's** mother in Florida took a turn for the worse, and Dan and Carol made an unscheduled plane trip to be there with Dan's mother and family.

You can't schedule these things, so the possibility of Dan's absence in the show was real. We may have a wonderful physical world, but how about the wonderful world of Barbershopping? The prospect of canceling our appearance on the show was not an option, however, and to exercise that option, **Gary Jacobson**, on very short notice, stepped up and Go to *Quaffs* Page 12, Column 1

Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor

My wife, **Judy**, spent a recent weekend in Fargo coaching the local Sweet Adelines chorus, *The Acappella Express*.



Hardin Olson

Arriving Friday and having no coaching responsibilities that evening, Judy was pleased to accept an invitation to attend a concert by *Great Plains Harmony*, Fargo's Barbershop chorus (under the direction of the late **Ed Peterka's** niece, **Sheila Childs**)

The program was titled *Deliver Us!* and as you might surmise, was generally a gospel production. The chorus sang very precisely and carefully with relatively little bodily expression contrary to what might be expected at the usual Society offering. That aside, Judy reports that she was quite pleased with the high quality of the performance and had a most en-

joyable evening.

One can assume that *Deliver Us!* was an artistic offering meant to demonstrate vocal prowess at its purest without the embellishments of the more traditional Barbershop.

However, perusing the show program Judy brought home, gave me some cause to cogitate. At the top of the front page is a large "Great Plains Harmony." Just below in much smaller type is "Men's chorus presents." It is only on Page 3 towards the bottom that there is reference to our Society as follows... *The chorus competes on a regular basis as members of the International Barbershop Harmony Society...* On Page 4, at the top, above the chorus roster is "Great Plains Harmony Choir." (printer's misjudgment?) Nowhere to be seen is any facsimile of a Society logo, new (Ick!) or old.

Cynic that I am, I cannot help but believe that no-name publicity like this does little to enhance the public awareness of our Society's mission to bring *a cappella* vocal music to our country's youth and to tout the

other good works, musical and otherwise, so many of our chapters are supporting literally worldwide.

Granted, the mission of virtually all Barbershop choruses is to entertain their audiences with good singing being the Number One priority. That goal can be met with any number of genres as long as the sound is good and the performers internalize the music. A chorus should take pride in mastering a diverse repertoire but should also take greater pride in being a dedicated member of a Society that has a treasured past and a bright future with a *Youth In Harmony* program that is bringing *a cappella* music to literally thousands of young people throughout the world.

What is really sad is that our International staff seems to turn a blind eye away from the all-too-many of the Society's premier chapters that promote Barbershop only at contest time, but continue to distribute PR materials like that of the aforementioned program and then to market themselves as *a cappella men's choruses* most often without a hint of their Barbershop heritage.

Quaffs from Page 11

filled in for Dan. A slight variation featuring "Preacher" Gary carried the day and was well received. Amen, brother! Thanks, Gary, for your talent and creativity (dare I say imagination?). And our prayers and sympathy go to Dan and Carol as Dan's mother is now in heaven in the presence of the Lord.

Without a doubt, our "Wonderful World" show was the bright warm spot in a very cold March. So cheer up, dear hearts, we've lit a candle that will melt the snow, flower the fields and usher in the warmth of a spring that is about to engulf us. It's just another reason why:

It's Great to be a Barbershopping Commodore.

Rollie Neve for **Dan, Rich, Tom, (and Gary)**



"Crooning with Calley!"

Saturday afternoon, April 19, found a cadre of about 25 Commodores at **Cheapo Records** on West Lake Street in Minneapolis where they congregated to join a Paul Wigley protégée, **Calley Bliss**, as back-up for two numbers. Calley, a graduate of Lakeville North High School, has returned at least temporarily to the Twin Cities to continue her career. She has a run with Cheapo Records and also may be seen and heard at several venues in the area.

[There was an afterglow at *Famous Dave's* but his temperance precluded your editor's attendance.]

LETTERS

Hi, Guys.

Just a quick note to say thanks again for the great time I had with you last week [April 1] during your Tuesday-night rehearsal. Everyone made me feel right at home, the singing was great and fun, and I also enjoyed the hospitality during the afterglow.

I travel quite a bit and have visited many, many choruses. I don't know of one that has the combination of high-caliber singing and a relaxed, fun atmosphere that the Commodores have. Well done!

Cheers,
Neil Schell
President
Green Mountain Chorus
Burlington, Vermont

Editor's Note: After taking several pictures of Neil that evening I was chagrined to find that I had a faulty photo card in my camera and no spare with me.. Duh!

From your Editor -

Still reveling in the heady elation of the Chord-Inator's 1st-Place finish in PROBE's 2013 International Bulletin Contest and in anticipation of another race for the gold in 2014, I forwarded the issues, from those eligible for submission, to **Lowell Shank**, the contest administrator, well before the April 15 deadline.

Without a doubt they were the usual fine examples of my editorial prowess and certainly destined for another great finish.

Wrong! By return e-mail Lowell informed me that having won last year's contest I am ineligible to re-enter until 2016. Apparently that goes for the electronic bulletin contests also as I had sent entry forms for both the electronic and hard-copy competitions.

However, for octogenarians two years is a very long time and to avoid age-discrimination problems I think we definitely deserve a pass.

*Editor's Note: In the box below is an excerpt from the SLPS Arts Series flyer submitted by **Bob Ostergaard**. Wow, the Commodores appearing on a **world-class** play list! With advance billing like this we have to make sure we are prepared to take this opportunity to put our best foot forward on June 14 (Shouldn't we always?). That means extra at-home-time polishing our repertoire that we may without question demonstrate that we deserve the **world-class** approbation. **Let's do it!***

SPRING LAKE PARK SCHOOLS

2013-14 North Metro Performing Arts Series

The Minneapolis Commodores

Saturday, June 14, 2014, 7:30 p.m.

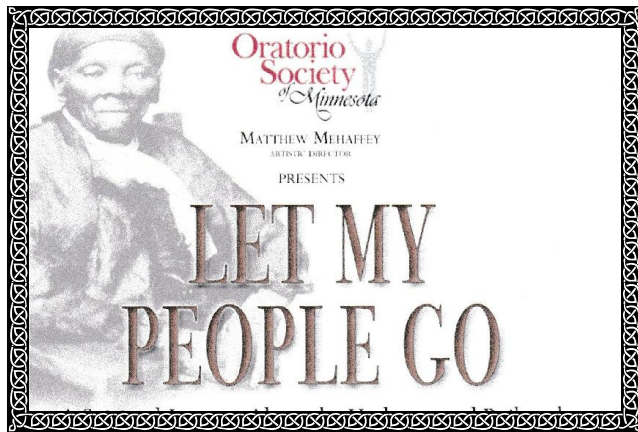
We have secured an add-on ticket to the NMPAS season for just an additional \$12! The Minneapolis Commodores are an *a cappella* chorus specializing in Barbershop harmony. Their big full-quality sound combined with colorful costumes and entertaining stage-play is sure to make it a truly memorable experience

Tickets are only \$12 with a portion of the proceeds going directly back to the SLP Schools' Fine Arts Center.

www.springlakeschools.org/our-community/community-education/ticket-office

Become a Friend of NMPAS

NMPAS needs your help to continue providing excellence in the fine arts!



Dear Commodores

The Oratorio Society of Minnesota is presenting a remarkable work this spring, Donald McCullough's *Let My People Go: A Spiritual Journey Along the Underground Railroad*, a moving remembrance and lively celebration of brave souls who risked their lives for freedom. It will be performed at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 10, at [Hamline United Methodist Church](#) in St. Paul. I hope you will be able to be part of this special experience. As an OSM member I can sell you tickets at a 20% discount off the regular prices of \$20 for adults and \$10 for students!

Your Commodore friend,
Gene Heupel

CHORD-INATOR
MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES
 Minneapolis Chapter of SPEBSQSA

*POSTAL RETURNS ONLY TO
 THIS ADDRESS, PLEASE!*

Dr. Hardin Olson, Bulletin Editor
 3020 St. Albans Mill Road #109
 Minnetonka, MN 55305

MEETING EVERY TUES –7:00 p.m.
 House of Prayer Lutheran Church
 7625 Chicago Ave. S.
 Richfield, MN 55423



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

Logo courtesy of Bob Clark

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- NOTESWORTHY
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- TRIPLE Q.....VLQ
 Dave Speidel.....952/941-7153
- TURNING POINT
 Judd Orff.....651/439-3108

To:

LOOKING AHEAD
Chapter Level

- June 8, Sunday, Ladies Night/BOTY, Crystal Lake Golf Club, 5:00 p.m.
- June 14, Saturday Performing Arts Series Spring Lake Park
- June 26, Thursday, Coon Rapids Dam Summer Series, Coon Rapids
- July 16, Wednesday, Summer Concert Series, St. Louis Park
- July 20, Sunday, Lake Harriet with TC Show Chorus
- August 4, Monday, Centennial Lakes
- August 12, Tuesday, Como Park
- October 24-25, Fall Convention, Rochester
- November 2, Lakeville
- December 7, Sunday, Christmas Show with TCSC

Barbershopper Of The Year
John Carlotto

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

- Russ Born
- Bob Dykstra
- Jim Erickson
- Gary Jacobson
- Jim Jorgensen
- Gene Heupel
- Rollie Neve
- Hardin Olson
- Rich Ongna
- Bob Ostergaard
- Jim Richards
- Neil Schell*
- Dave Speidel
- Dan Williams



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



District Level

- May 2-4, Spring Convention, Stevens Point, Wisconsin Spring Convention,

International Level

- June 29-July 6, International Convention, Las Vegas, Nevada,

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