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# 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

October 2015 - VOL.71 - NO. 9

## What the ... is TFLBTMOT?

The Friday Lunch Bunch That Meets On Thursday (TFLBTMOT) traces its origins back to the early-60s when the likes of **Bruce Churchill**, **Bob Dykstra**, **Olaf Lee** and others conceived the idea of a weekly luncheon for Twin City-area Barbershoppers. The idea was to establish a sort of clearing house where area chapters could promote their shows and other activities while enjoying the camaraderie of other Barbershop singers and the gustatory and *libational* dividends therewith.

Friday noons were chosen as the assembly times and frequently served as preludes to the weekends when more often than not there were Barbershop events occurring somewhere in the metropolitan area.

The germ of the idea evolved when some of the previously-mentioned Commodores began meeting for Friday lunches at the old Elks Club in downtown Minneapolis. At one of these get-togethers someone apparently suggested that an invitation to members of other chapters could promote fellowship in the Twin Cities-area Barbershop community. It would allow attendees to share chapter news and to promote chapter productions, hopefully avoiding future scheduling conflicts for said shows.

The idea caught on and over time morphed into *The Friday Lunch Bunch*. Soon the regular attendees included

men from the *Minnetonka*, *Anoka*, *Bloomington* chapters and later on members of the *St. Croix Valley* and *Hilltop* chapters.

Bruce Churchill was one of the first attendees to emcee the meetings. It was the emcee's job to conduct the meetings and among other duties call for chapter reports of past and future events. (Bob Dykstra eventually assumed the duty and served many years until more recently when Thursday golf triumphed and **Dan Cole** took over the reins.)



Jim Richards (left) is shown at the October 1 TFLBTMOT meeting with guest, Raymond Schwarzkopf, a certified Society Music judge, and friend of many TFLBTMOT attendees who know him through their association with the *Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association (BQPA/Pioneers)*.

As the membership grew the challenge arose to find venues that could provide private rooms large enough to handle the increasing numbers, while also providing sufficient privacy to allow singing without disturbing other patrons. (Yes, singing and even woodshedding were allowed at these functions—heaven knows why.)

Thus began a peripatetic search for acceptable and accepting restaurants that would meet our needs. Your

Editor was first exposed to the group in the mid-70s at the since-demolished *Moose Lodge* in “Northeast” Minneapolis. The lodge then was the latest of a large number of locations. Past venues among others included the Midway Motel, an Italian and a Chinese restaurant in downtown Minneapolis, and even a motel (across the street Go to *TFLBTMOT*, Page 2, Column 1

**TFLBTMOT** from Page 1

from the *Minneapolis Institute of Arts*) that hearsayers claimed rented their rooms by the hour.

There were a number of characters at the Moose including a quirky waitress who invariably served Bob Dykstra at the very last second and a crotchety, vulgar, tipling reprobate of a cook who made the best-ever clam chowder and Juicy Lucys. When asked, "How are you feeling, Dennis,?" his answer was invariably, "Horsexxxxx!"

Sometime, as I recall, in the early to mid-'80s, the Moose building was sold for demolition and the group was forced to fold up its tent and move on. It was our good fortune to find the *Legends Bar and Grill* on East Hennepin Avenue. I don't remember who led the search but we spent several good years there enjoying the *Meatball Dips* and the fine soups and salads.

And then came that happy-wandering ("Valderi! Valdera!"), ultra-loquacious Italian sales-rep and gourmand, **Joe Houser**, a dedicated Commodore and ever-faithful habitu  of the group.

Indeed it was Joe who, with his own style of manually-assisted verbosity when giving the Minneapolis reports, inspired the introduction of the "Dollars-to-keep-Joe-Houser-Quiet Campaign." This has become a Lunch Bunch tradition resulting in

Bunch became *The Friday Lunch Bunch That Meets On Thursday*.

However, after a while it became apparent that we were wearing out our welcome at the *Legends*, a major complaint being that we were taking up too much parking space. In addition there was an interne-cine shakeup in the Legends management with Joe Houser siding with one particular faction that split and moved into the *Moose on Monroe*. At Joe's irresistible urging the move was made to the Moose and The Friday Lunch Bunch That Meets On Thursday has been there ever since. Ironically Friday noons are not available there either.



July 9 guests: new GNU director, Doug Carnes, and his mother, Ila, with (left to rt.) Lance Johnson, Steve Zorn, Bob Dowma, and Jim Richards.

The group numbers about twenty regulars and always is on the lookout for new members as well as guests of all genders. Barbershoppers from anywhere in the world who happen to be in Minneapolis on a Thursday are invited to join us. So give the Lunch Bunch a try, Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Good soups and salads, good fellowship and perhaps, just perhaps, some singing—but no great Juicy Lucys.

annual donations to *Harmony Foundation* of monies collected to prevent voicing the Minneapolis Chapter reports at the weekly lunches.

About this time the managers of the Legends notified the Lunch Bunch that the Friday meeting room would no longer be available and asked if the group would consider moving to Thursdays. Not wishing to move, the group agreed and the Friday Lunch

**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 .....Gordy Aumann 952/935-8869
- Past Pres.....Dan Williams 952/974-0026
- Exec. VP.....Denny Maas 952/447-8012
- Co-Marketing/PR VPs.... Russ Born 406/670-2098  
Pete Jarnberg 651/765-9580
- VP Music /Perform.....Carl Pinard 612/927-9363
- VP Membership.....Harvey Weiss 763/439-4447
- Program VP.....Dan Cole 612/376-0779
- Secretary.....Bill Warp 763/531-2290
- Treasurer .....John Carlotto 952/925-0886

**Board Members**

- Jerry Koch.....952/929-5069
- Andy Richards.....651/639-9312
- Through 2016*
- Andy Cook.....651/688-6459
- Blake Wanger.....414/699-4950
- Nate Weimer.....316/204-8756

**Directors**

- Director.....Paul Wigley
- Assistant Directors: Gary Jacobson, David Speidel, James Souhan

**Section Leaders**

- Tenor Section Leader .....Rollie Neve
- Lead Section Leader. ....Gary Jacobson  
Assistant - Dan Smith
- Bari Section Leaders .....Dave Speidel  
Assistant - Matt Richards
- Bass Section Leaders.....Jim Richards  
Assistant -.Dave Casperson

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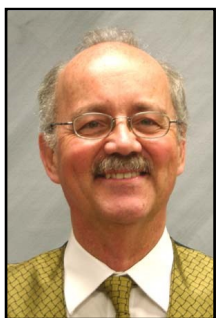
- Altruistic Programs Chairman.....Denny Maas
- Audio/Visual Mgr.....Kirk Douglas
- 2015 Show Chairman.....Gary Jacobson
- 2016 Show Chairman.....Dave Speidel
- Afterglow Chairman.....Travis Wuttke
- Attendance/Sgt.-at-Arms.....Vacant
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- Editor .....Dr. Hardin Olson
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- Chorus Performance Managers.....John Lloyd  
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- Grants Research.....Nate Weimer
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- Harmony Foundation.....Jack Beaver
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- Learning Tracks.....Dan Smith
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- Quartet Promotion.....Gary Jacobson
- Riser Boss.....Dan Cole (Temp.)
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- Singing Valentines.....Neal Mortenson
- Sunshine .....Rich Ongna
- Swipe* Editor .....Bill Warp
- Tickets/A-Commodore President.....Diana Pinard
- Transportation Mgr.....Dick Hartmann
- Uniform Committee Chairman.....Vacant
- Uniforms (Dress & Casual).....Dan Williams



## To Contest?...or not to Contest?

By Paul Wigley, Director



Paul Wigley

District contest is fast upon us, and I am as excited as I ever have been! We are blessed to have an incredible amount of musical talent to lead us, and we are blessed to have singers who are passionate about making the very best music they can, and we are blessed to be able to share this every Tuesday night with not only wonderful singers...but great friends.

So, why in the world is a District contest so important? Why do we even need to bother to go? What's the big deal, and why do we have to spend so much time on basically two songs? What if I can't go? Does that make me an outcast? Is this a *thing* that is expected from all Barbershop choruses because I know a lot of groups that are not going?

Here's the deal. This time of year is exciting to me personally because it's a chance to work at the very highest level possible. Fine-tuning chords, raising the stakes on presentation, making musical phrases artistic and expressive, are just a few of the reasons I love working toward contest.

Don't get me wrong. When we are rehearsing for summer performances, Christmas show, and annual show, we are still striving to do all the things I just mentioned. But, be honest. Isn't the motivation a LOT higher when you know that you are going to be compared to other Barbershop choruses—not just in the LOL district, but in the *entire world*? Competition brings us all to a higher level of focus and concentration. Knowing that our performance is going to be quantified to a certain level of success raises all of our games.

We are so fortunate to have such a deep music team. **David Speidel** has been performing for many years, and his experience in visuals is brilliant. (Add **Dan True** to that team also, because of his great work filling in when Dave is away on business.) **James Souhan** has a vision for this chorus that includes clearer understanding of vocal technique, better education about Barbershop craft, and individual feedback for all of you as singers.

And now we have one more incredible addition to our coaching team with **James Estes** coming into our ranks and giving his knowledge and passion to all of us. His training as a certified Singing judge gives us a much higher level of understanding about what great choral ensemble singing should be.

So, okay, to answer a few of the other questions I thought of earlier, we spend a fair amount of time on two songs, but still try to balance rehearsals with other repertoire (see "Christmas music"). And if you think we spend a lot of time on two songs, just go ahead and talk to a singer in one of our International medalist choruses. You'll feel like we're on vacation!

Commodores have a basic understanding that we all have a "life!" Family, jobs, etc., all will take precedence over this hobby but your participation in the chapter will always be welcome and NEEDED! So, if you've taken a minor break (during contest prep), please come back with your minds refreshed and be ready for more great singing.

All Barbershop choruses do not participate in contests, and that is a shame. The more participation means more camaraderie and more fun. Not to mention that the financial feasibility of contests is getting tougher and tougher with each passing year and lower attendance doesn't help. As Music Category Specialist, there is enormous pressure to assign contest judges that are

## From the Prez ...

By Gordy Aumann, President

As I'm writing this, it's a beautiful



Gordy Aumann

fall day with bright sunshine and clear blue skies. I just finished 18 holes of golf with a couple of co-workers on a beautiful course. Now it's off to my daughter's house to dig up some plants to transplant to our house.

Yes, it's a fantastic time of the year in Minnesota, probably my favorite time with the leaves beginning to turn to bright yellows and reds, brings to mind the fall contest in Oshkosh.

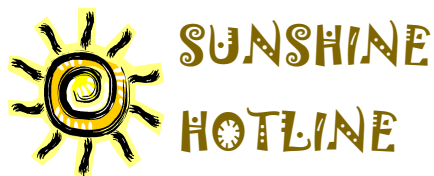
I'm very excited about this year's contest as I think we've really stepped up our performance level, with our new riser placement plus the fantastic coaching from **Sarah Wigley Johnson** and **James Estes**, I think we're going to blow the judges away! Keep on working hard guys—it's going to pay off!

not far away, to help keep expenses down. This is a challenge that is very difficult to deal with.

So, I just wanted to thank all of you who are making the enormous effort to sing with the Minneapolis Commodores at the Fall LOL District Contest in Oshkosh! It is NOT a small effort on your part, and I can't express my gratitude enough. You guys are great, so let's get out on that contest stage and show our audience just how good we are!

## Happy Anniversary

- 10/10 Stephen & Sally Daniel
- 10/14 Dean & Kristen Lambert
- 10/16 Tony & Natalie Lapakko (5)
- 10/16 James & Ebie Richards
- 10/29 Kirk & Teresa Douglas
- 10/30 David & Catherine Wall



By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: [ddongna@usfamily.net](mailto:ddongna@usfamily.net)

The Commodores extend their sympathies to **Steve Mangan** whose dad passed away on August 28. The funeral was on September 8 in Plain-view, Minnesota.



**Rich Ongna**

On October 1, **Glenn Retter** awoke with stroke symptoms. A quick call to 911 got him to Mercy Hospital where IV treatment with TPA literally dissolved the problem. He was back on the risers October 6.

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

### YouthLink...what's that?

By Harvey Weiss

*YouthLink* is a resource for young people 16 to 23 who are homeless or at risk for homelessness. It provides access to safety from the streets, shelter, food, health care, educational opportunities, job training, and even legal advice.

After much research by **Denny Maas** and thorough discussion, the Chapter Board voted to name *YouthLink* as the Chapter's altruistic purpose. On September 17 **Katelyn Warburton** from *YouthLink* made an interesting and informative presentation to the Board about how our contributions are utilized. A check for profits from our Annual Show and another from the Riemenschneider ladies (who catered the June *Ladies/BOTY Night celebration*) were graciously accepted by Katelyn. The Board plans to schedule Katelyn to attend a Chapter meeting to give her presentation for all our members in the near future.

By wholeheartedly seizing this opportunity the Commodores can make a real difference in our community. *Believe it!*

### BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

#### From the meeting of Sept. 17

- The HOP Contract with the weekly rental increased to \$150 was accepted and signed.
- **James Estes** and **James Hunter** were accepted for membership.
- The Music Committee is working on a date and venue for a memorial performance for Loren Berthilson.
- New vests and ties will be worn at

### Happy Birthday

- 10/14 Ralph Nordquist
- 10/16 Andy Richards
- 10/17 Nan DeMars
- 10/17 Blake Wanger
- 10/20 Glenn Aronson
- 10/20 Sandy Bergersen
- 10/20 Sam LaRoque
- 10/20 Travis Wuttke
- 10/22 Dan True
- 10/26 LeRoy Zimmerman
- 10/29 Andy Cook
- 10/30 Sally Daniel
- 10/30 Karene Heupel
- 10/31 Nancy Dillon
- 11/01 Tom Dahlen
- 11/05 Mark Ortenburger
- 11/08 Marilyn Jacobson
- 11/09 Ken Wentworth

the District contest.

- The tentative date for the 2016 Annual Show is April 16.
- A motion to donate \$100 to the *National Multiple Sclerosis Society* in **Bob Matchinsky's** name was passed.
- A second motion was passed to purchase the sound-system components, speakers and microphone from the *Four Seasons Quartet* for \$1500.
- Flowers and a thank-you letter have been sent to **Sarah Wigley Johnson** for her remarkable coaching session.
- Next meeting October 15 at Wooddale Lutheran.



#### September Reenlistments

Walter Macewicz.....	3 yrs.
Bill Ward.....	6 yrs.
Conrad Ward.....	6 yrs.
James McCarville.....	7 yrs.
Paul Swanson.....	8 yrs.
Richard Ongna.....	12 yrs.
James Estes.....	16 yrs.
Dale Lynch.....	18 yrs.
Jim Johannsen.....	20 yrs.
David Wall.....	32 yrs.
Darrell Egertson.....	40 yrs.
Bill Ashley.....	41 yrs.
Rollie Neve.....	48 yrs.
John Hansen.....	64 yrs.



Katelyn Warburton happily accepts checks totaling \$2181 from Treasurer, John Carlotto (left) and from President, Gordy Aumann (rt.); \$181 from the Riemenschneider family, \$2000 from the Commodores. *Board photo*

# Welcome Aboard!

**James Estes** lives in Inver Grove Heights. He was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and later moved to Minnesota where he graduated from North St. Paul High School.



A choral-music major at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin, now he works as a voice-network engineer.

A Barbershopper for 16 years, he is an active Society judge in the Singing category. He worked as a music educator at International Headquarters in Nashville for a time also teaching voice. His resume` includes an innumerable list of school- and community-theater productions.

Other interests include photography, cooking, and audio production. Interestingly, James claims that it was the chord on “soft” in the *Irish Blessing* that attracted him to Barbershop.

James will bolster the lead section (and woodshed the baritone).

**James Hunter** lives with his wife, **Hannah**, in West St. Paul. A native Minnesotan, he graduated from Eagan High School and went on to college in Winona and Eau Claire. He is a Benefit System Administrator.



James has a limited musical background, never singing in public until joining the Commodores.

Among his interests he counts cooking and pickling, movies, and video games. In fact, it was hearing a Barbershop number, *God Only Knows*, in the *Bioshock Infinite* video game that turned him on to our hobby, and it was the “outstanding,” anxiety-eliminating, Commodore welcome that convinced him to join our group. (Of course his dad, Shawn, a recent Commodore inductee, may have had something to do with it.)

James enhances the unparalleled Bass section.

**Ron Neuyahr** lives with his wife, **Yvonne**, in Roseville. He is a native Minnesotan born in Saint Paul and a graduate of St. Paul’s Murray High school. Ron is a retired carpenter.

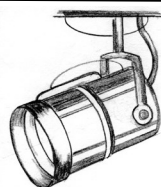


He and Yvonne have a yen for travel and he has always had a love for singing. Ironically, however, his only singing up until about 12 years ago had been in the shower and probably while puttering around at home or swinging a hammer at work.

In the ‘70s and ‘80s Ron attended and immensely enjoyed many of the St. Paul Chapter’s annual shows. But it was only after he retired 12 years ago that he took the bull by the horns and joined the *North Star Chorus*. He, at last, became a Barbershop singer.

Recently Ron visited the Commodores and, liking what he saw and heard, decided to explore a change of Barbershop venues. He will strive to complement the lead section.

## Commodore Spotlight



**Bob Matchinsky is that ...**

former Commodore who with his dad, **Bob Sr.**, since deceased, were Minneapolis chapter members in the late ‘70s and early ‘80s. Bob Sr. was totally dedicated to the Commodores. Working nights, he took vacation time each Tuesday to attend chapter meetings rarely missing a one.

Bob Jr. showed his mettle, too, when he rode the buddy seat on Jerry Gould’s motorcycle all the way to the 1980 International Society Conven-

tion and Contests in Salt Lake City. (Some sympathetic Commodores financed his plane ticket home—of course after our 4th place medalist finish.) The lady of their house, was **Meg**, wife and mother, a grand lady and a stalwart in the then-active Commodore auxiliary, *The A-Commodears*. She now lives in Melrose, Minnesota.

In his mid-30s Bob Jr. contracted

multiple sclerosis leaving him virtually wheel-chair bound ever since. But refusing to let that handicap keep him down, he has become an active supporter of the *Multiple Sclerosis Society*. He is active in fundraising for the organization and has his own blog where you can read about his work for MS.

Accompanied by Commodore **Al Matchinsky**, Bob attended our September 15 chapter meeting giving a recap of his journey with *MS* and asking our support for an upcoming *MS Challenge Walk*.

Check out his website and you will find that he surpassed his goal for that walk raising over \$1,000 dollars, in part with a donation of \$100 from The Minneapolis Chapter.



Bob Jr. (rt.) with Uncle Al at the September 15 Minneapolis Chapter meeting. *Staff photo*

<http://main.nationalmssociety.org/goto/Bob-M>

## 2016 Harmony Brigade Update

By David Speidel, NPHB President



Dave Speidel

Those of you who are new to the Commodores probably have heard rumblings about the *Harmony Brigade*. I won't go into great detail, but the *Association of Extreme Quartet Harmony Brigades* is an affiliated organization of the Barbershop Harmony Society. You can read more about this at [www.harmonybrigade.org](http://www.harmonybrigade.org). An affiliated Upper Midwest chapter was organized four years ago. We hold one Rally each year in our region and invite avid quartet-singers who want to be more involved in quartetting. Ten challenging songs are selected that everyone must learn and be prepared to sing in a huge quartet-jam session at the weekend Rally. Read more about our *Northern Pines Harmony Brigade* by going to [www.nphb.org](http://www.nphb.org).

**Who can attend?** The weekend is a challenging singing event and not for everyone. For those who have never participated, we have an application process in which we look for music experience and/or references to determine if a candidate is qualified and can master the challenges of learning and then singing his part in a quartet.

*(If you have an interest you can talk with me, Mark Bloomquist, Ken Wentworth or Paul Swanson.)*

**What's New?** This year we will be bringing in a renowned Society personality to be our guest MC and to also serve on the quartet judging panel. **Ev Nau**, a highly respected Presentation judge from Iowa will be making the trip as our special guest and will surely entertain the show audience with his skillful delivery.

I hope I'm not speaking out of turn, but **Paul Wigley** has also given me a verbal commitment for his participa-



tion, adding to the talent pool of our team of directors. Our traditional and popular *Pizza Afterglow* is included in the registration fee this year and we will be providing *gluten free* options. The Crowne Plaza chefs also provide gluten-free pasta options for our Friday night dinner along with the regular choices.

### 2016 SONGS (samples available on website)

- *It's a Most Unusual Day* (Suntones)
- *Daydream* (Lovin' Spoonful)
- *For All We Know* (OC Times)

- *Oh! Look At Me Now* (OC Times)
- *You're Sixteen, You're Beautiful and You're Mine* (Rounders)
- *A Sunday Kind of Love* (Rounders)
- *You Took Advantage of Me* (The Crush)
- *The Way We Were* (OC Times)
- *I Will Go Sailing No More* (OC Times)
- *When I Lift Up My Head* (Nightlife)

**Registration Status.** We already have 45 men registered for the Brigade. We want to exceed our attendance from last year that had 76 singers from all over the US and Canada. Our registration deadline is November 30. The advantage to registering early is obvious. You get the music and have more time to learn your part!

**Don't want to register but would like to get a taste of what it's about?** Every Brigade Rally has a Saturday evening show—*open to the public*—that features the top ten quartets from the Friday session plus a massed chorus of all the registrants singing several of the featured numbers. The sound from this group is amazing when you consider that we only get one combined rehearsal early in the day.

This show also features one of the LOL District's most entertaining quartets—*St. Croix Crossing*. If you come you will experience an inexpensive and most enjoyable evening of entertainment.



Jim Windey (ctr.) Flanked by Pres. Gordy Aumann (left) and Lance Johnson at the October 6 chapter meeting. *Staff photo*

**Jim Windey** was a long-time Commodore, Chapter president in 1993, and BOTY in 1999. He, and his wife, **Judy**, were in Minnesota to celebrate their 50th anniversary with family and friends. They now live in Colorado where he sings with **Mark Hale's** medal-winning *Sound of the Rockies* chorus.

**Don Bartels** sings bass with the Commodores. On October 3, he played in the annual Kenyon Barbershop Open/Steak Fry where he won this most prepossessing door prize.



No silver cup but a nice addition for the Bartels kitchen. *Staff photo*

# Chord Candy #137

by Dr. Jim Richards, Der Tagmeister

**Raymond Schwarzkopf**, Certified Singing Judge and good friend, was a guest at TFLBTMOT on October 1. (That's *The Friday Lunch Bunch That Meets On Thursday*.) Earlier he had sent me a tag to one of our Barberpole Cat favorites, *Story of the Rose (Heart of My Heart)* that he had fortuitously found in a piano bench. I recognized it as one I already had in my collection, written in the mid '50s by a talented arranger named John Hill. **Jim Angell**, one of TFLBTMOT regulars, remembers having sung this tag with John way back then. Good stuff lasts!



Jim Richards

*Heart of My Heart*, from the first *Barberpole Cat Songbook*, is a complete 16 measure song, the last line of which is fancy enough to sound a bit like a tag, but it is simply the last line of the song. This issue of Chord Candy is John Hill's tag that should be added after measure 16. If the result sounds a bit like a song with two tags sing it anyway and enjoy all the good chords.

1 Say you'll be mine for ev - er and ev - er,

2

3

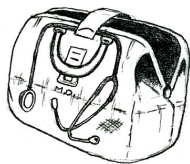
4

5 I love no - one but you.

6

7

## Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor

The Commodores got a welcome boost in their preparation for the LOL District contest later this month at the September 29 chapter meeting when new member, **James Estes**, was asked by Director Paul Wigley if he would provide the chorus with a sample of his coaching prowess.

With that, James proceeded to engage the troops in a virtual-drumming exercise designed to promote (successfully, I might add) a significant im-

provement in the execution of our legato singing, a difference that with our new *shotgun* configuration was pleasantly obvious to the singers and most warmly welcomed by our director. Hopefully the lesson will stick with the chorus.

It is fortunate that James has come to the Commodores and that he can share his musical gifts with us.

\*\*\*\*\*

Isn't it great to have **Bill Ward** back with us for the District contest. Like I said last month, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going!"... and Bill is nothing but tough. "Welcome, Bill!"

\*\*\*\*\*

I was saddened when Paul Wigley announced at the

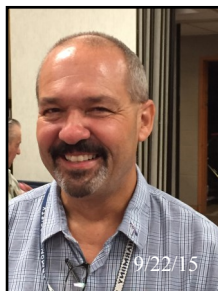
chapter meeting on September 24 that the wife of our Mason City, Commodore-South Barbershopper, **Jon Christianson**, had passed away and that his kids had had to leave for their distant homes Monday, the day before, leaving Jon alone with his grief.

But you must know that Jon was not alone. The *River City Chorus* meets on Monday evenings and Jon was there on the 23rd among his loving friends.

I called him on the 25th. He was hurting so badly but was so appreciative of my call. He hadn't been getting the *Chord-Inator* for some time so I sent hard copies of the last two. A few days later Jon called *thanking me* profusely for a simple gesture that meant so much to him. Of course, *being there* with support is what Barbershoppers do all the time.



Hardin Olson



9/22/15

# Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, *Based-on-a-True-Story Baritone*

It was darker than the darkest night in Doc Hardy's long memory. No fog, just the dark, deepest evil. Whiffing the blackness, Doc tiptoed through his memories trying to pull something out to remind him of what it was he sensed. Nothing frightening he guessed at last, but that didn't settle the nagging uneasiness souring his stomach.

Even the dark had a remarkably familiar smell though. What was that? Not the familiar smell of horses, fine horseflesh though they may be, as they pulled carriages down the rutted dirt street dropping their horse-apples along the way. Nor the gassy, smoky exhaust of the one or two new-fangled cars in town, dodging the ruts and chugging along at 15 miles an hour.

Whatever! It smelled somehow foreboding. "Stop it, Doc!" he said to himself. "I've been through the torments and struggles of medical school with all the vile smells of bodies, alive and dead. Seen the deepest inwards of mind and body often at their most disgusting low points. But, hey, I'm a professional and expected to take all that in while keeping a calm, engaged, but objective demeanor." So what was it that was different at this precise moment?

Earlier, Doc was about to finish a long day that started with a fairly routine, but long surgery. He was nearing twenty years of general practice and his patients never kept their appreciation of his devoted and very competent "doctoring," to themselves, but somewhere in his mind's eye, he had never become the skilled surgeon he had hoped to be. Dexterity is a great asset in the best of surgeons. But Doc

had been born with just a remarkable bedside manner and little dexterity.

So his role in this routine surgery was important, but minimal. Oh, he had to be there. And those aching legs told him he had been, mostly as a spectator like a cheerleader at a football game. Trudging on through the rest of his patient visits, he was about to finish reports and call it a day.

Bang! The door sprang open and a gasping young man screamed, "Doc!" Jerking his eyes up from his reports, Doc listened as he heard the breathless, dire bits about the young-farmer's dad who had fallen into a silo. Pulled from the quicksand-like grip of the grain, he now seemed to be drifting into a coma. Grabbing his iconic black bag, Doc sped out to the



waiting carriage. It was all ready to go. No surprise at all. It was routine for the local liveryman to drop off the carriage at Doc's office at each day's end.

Something about saving the liveryman's life, he thought, that created a life-long obligation the thankful liveryman felt he could honor by doing this daily favor. The always freshly-groomed team (the best black and the best cinnamon-brown steeds in the stable) was tied to the hitching post waiting to carry Doc home. That was not going to happen today.

Barely taking notice as his mind was racing through everything medical he knew, gray clouds were beginning a rendezvous into what would become a medieval line of weather soldiers, picking out their favorite weapons of death and destruction as they martialled for impending battle against the innocent and unsuspecting; not really enemies, just whatever stood in the way of their violent march across the barren prairie.

Nothing! Nothing at all mattered but the explosion of atmospheric testosterone. Finally, girded with stones of hail, cauldrons of rain, and all-powerful spears of lightning, the barbarians pawed the skies, eyes and ears alert for the signal to charge.

Meanwhile, Doc had reached the farm after a frantic race over the familiar road. Exhausted from the fairly short burst of posthaste speed, the horses restlessly tried to catch their breaths. These two had pastured out this way often so traveling along this road was old hat to them. And even the farm buildings were a home away from home. So why were Black and Cinnamon growing ever more spooky and skittish. Using that primal inner-animal sensing? Honed over centuries of impending calamities? The freshening breeze was sorely pricking them and signaling something overwhelmingly frightening—even to a horse.

Inside the farmhouse, Doc checked the burly farmer's faltering pulse. The farmer-tan seemed to have faded to ghostly white from face and arms as his breathing shallowed. Restlessly turning over, he seemed to have awakened enough to wheeze and whisper something to Doc. Finishing his routines, Doc recommended a couple of medications, bed rest, fluids and taking it easy. Smiling to assure everyone, it was then that Doc realized he had had little to eat all day. An offer from a farmer's wife of some real farm food was more than he could refuse, so he sat at the

Go to **Grind**, Page 9, Column 1



*Grind from Page 8*

kitchen table and related the local town gossip while comforting the good woman. A few days and her husband should be getting back to life as before.

Sometimes, however, even the best of food is not worth satisfying your hunger. And that night, lingering proved to be expensive at any price. Giving a hug to the son and wife, Doc headed for the door. He had just begun leaving the doctoring world and entering the ride back-home world. "Hmmm.

When did they light the kerosene lamps in the kitchen? And when did it get so suddenly dark?"

Stepping out and looking to the back of the house, he strained to see something. This was when he realized the dark had blinded all but the bats and moles. And the stench of impending doom filled his nostrils from the ever-louder wind. And then he heard it. The tramp, tramp, tramp to the sound of the rumbling war drums as more fighters joined in the battle line until it sounded a roaring crescendo.

The horses became anxious, jumpy, and wide-eyed in stark terror as Doc unhitched them and vaulted into the carriage, his bag banging loudly against the dashboard. A banging that was completely lost in the crashing drums of thunder that almost drowned out Doc's screams to the horses to "Giddy up, damn you, giddy up!" Oh, this was a night that even the biggest fool in hell would not set a foot outside. No one, that is, but Doc.

(Continued next month.)



## Give to the Max Day

By Harvey Weiss,

*"What if giving was easier and more fun? That simple question launched GiveMN."*

The above quote from their website sums up their vision and mission. GiveMN was launched in 2009 in a collaborative venture with the *Minnesota Community Foundation*. It has had help from the likes of the **Bush Foundation**, the **Knight Foundation**, the **Cargill Fund**, **Hubbard Broadcasting**, **Target** and many more.

To generate excitement in what has become an annual fundraising event, a **GIVE TO THE MAX DAY** was organized to allow organizations seeking grants and funds access to companies and foundations that are looking for worthy causes to support.

The Minneapolis Commodores will be participating in *Give to the Max Day* this year, with the website and marketing strategy in the works at this time. Websites are available to link donors with non-profits and schools that make giving soar.

Soon you will have specific instructions on how to use the website(s). Please start talking to your social-networking friends and also to your customers and family. This is an opportunity for the Commodores to qualify for grants and other sources of supplementary income.

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 Diana Pinard  
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612.927.9363  
minneapoliscommodores.org

 Judy Clement-Lee  
judy.leroy.lee@gmail.com  
715.426.7975  
tcshowchorus.org

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

- EASY LISTENIN'  
Dan Slattery..... 651/747-6384
- HOT COMMODITY  
Dave Speidel.....612/437-4325
- RING IT ON  
Andy Richards.....651/639-9312
- NOTESWORTHY  
Harvey Weiss.....763/439-4447
- SWYPE  
Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232
- SOUNDS of RENOWN (VLQ)  
Mark Ortenburger.....952/942-8382

**To:**

**LOOKING AHEAD**

Chapter Level

- October 15, **Board Meeting at Wooddale Lutheran**
- November 12, **Give to the Max Day** [givemn.org](http://givemn.org)
- December 6, Saturday, **Sing We Now of Christmas with Twin City Show Chorus, Bloomington - Kennedy High School**
- April 16, 2016, Saturday, **Annual Show**

District Level

- October 23-24, **Fall Convention, Oshkosh, Wisconsin**

International Level

- January 26-31, 2016, **Midwinter Convention, Reno, Nevada**
- July 3-10, 2016, **International Convention, Nashville, Tennessee**

**2015 Barbershopper Of The Year**  
***Rich Ongna***

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

- Gordy Aumann
- Jim Erickson
- Hardin Olson
- Rich Ongna
- Jim Richards
- Dave Speidel
- Bill Warp
- Harvey Weiss
- Paul Wigley



**CHORD-INATOR**  
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The *Chord-Inator* is available on the Minneapolis Chapter's website [minneapoliscommodores.org](http://minneapoliscommodores.org) beginning with the January 2006 issue.

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**MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES**  
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