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MINNEAPOLIS
COMMODORES

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

10,000 LAKES DIVISION - LAND O' LAKES DISTRICT

MARCH 2016 - VOL.72 - NO. 3

EXPLORE **Minnesota.com** 

TAG  **NE1**

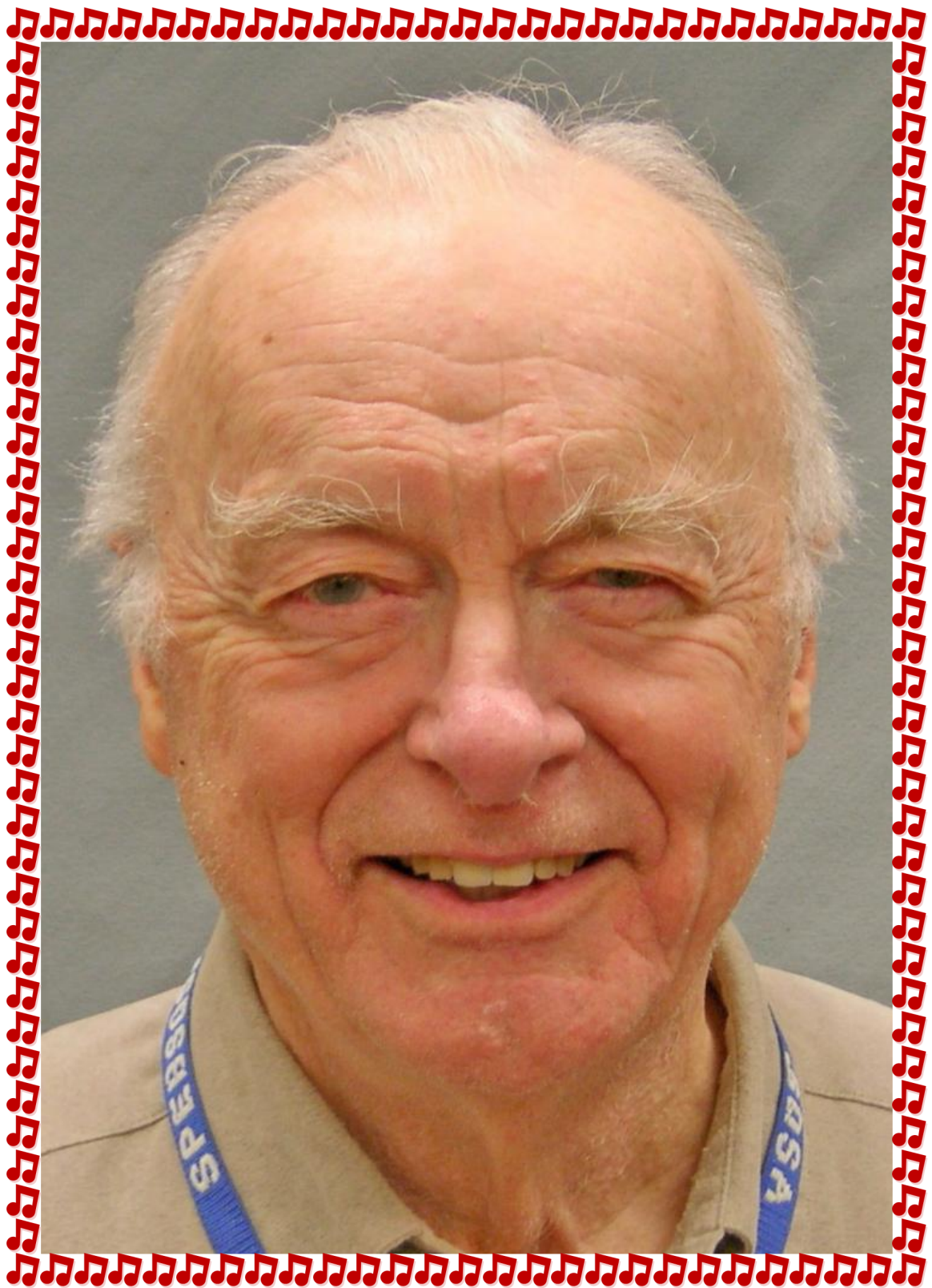
FEB **10,000 lakes** **20**

Jim's admission ticket to the *Celestial Chorus* as Assistant Bass-section Leader



1925 - JAMES DANA RICHARDS - 2016

"Rest in harmony and peace, dear friend Jim!"



#6 "It's only a hobby!" #9

Charting Jim Richards

By Bob Dykstra, Old Friend



Bob Dykstra

I met and became good friends with Dr. Jim Richards as a result of our mutual love for Barbershop harmony. Jim and I both joined the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. in 1953. I was at Fort Riley, Kansas, at the time protecting the eastern part of the United States from Korean war planes. Jim was likely at Northwestern University earning his Ph.D in physics. Our paths crossed probably in the late 1950s when we both arrived in the Twin Cities. Jim came to begin what was to become a very productive career ... I came to finish my collegiate studies and to make the substantial fortune **John Hansen** promised me for moving up here to sing with the *Hut Four Quartet*. Jim joined the Roseville North Suburban Barbershop Chapter, I joined the Minneapolis Commodores.

We may have met at the first annual Parade of Quartets presented by the Roseville Chapter. I recently found a program from that concert held on Friday, Oct. 10, of some unknown year, at Ramsey High School. My educated guess is that it was 1958. The *Hut Four* sang on the show and the program lists Jim Richards as a member of the Roseville North Suburban Chapter. I assume he sang in the chorus but there was no mention of his being involved in any other way. He didn't perform in a quartet, didn't direct any numbers, apparently left his bass fiddle at home, and had no speaking parts in the show. I'll bet that never happened again.

So Jim and I have been fellow Barbershoppers for over sixty years and I've noted and experienced first-hand the wonderful attributes ascribed to him on social media during the past week by Barbershoppers from all

around the world. I even learned something new. Jim was the drum major in the Pekin High School Marching Band.

Many respondents mentioned how much they appreciated Jim's mentoring qualities. Others said: Jim was a delight to be around. He exuded class and was a true gentleman. He was one of the true greats in our Society. We lost a Barbershop GI-ANT.

I particularly liked **Brent Gerber's** comment: "Jim was the ultimate mad scientist of Barbershop who loved to teach but was also the consummate student of his craft; always listening and taking things in."

Undergirding most of these remarks, it seems to me, is a trait that I think very accurately described Jim. He was plainly and simply ... *a giver*. He obviously received a great deal of satisfaction from ringing chords, the trademark of Barbershop harmony. He sang in a number of quartets including three that experienced the thrill of appearing on the International-competition stage.

You old-timers may remember the *Men of A-Chord*, who competed at International in 1963-64 and the *Red Barons*, who sang on the International stage in 1972 but also were crowned Land O'Lakes District Quartet Champs in 1971. His quartet experiences were highlighted, of course, by his singing bass with *Grandma's Beaus* when they were named Barbershop Harmony's 1990 International Senior Quartet Champions at the Midwinter in Tucson, Arizona.

He also has been a stalwart for decades in his beloved chapter chorus, the *Minneapolis Commodores*, during which time I doubt that he's ever missed a show or competition. In fact, according to Barbershop Harmony Society historian, **Grady Kerr**, Jim performed 12 times with the Commodores in International chorus competition.

Which reminds me of something that

was so like Jim. In 2013 the Commodores were edged out in their quest to represent the LOL District in BHS International Chorus competition to be held in Toronto. Jim very much wanted to appear on the Toronto international stage because fifty years previously he had competed on the same stage with his quartet, the *Men of A-Chord*. Jim's wish came true when good friend, **Steve Delehanty**, director of the *Westchester Chordsmen*, heard about the situation and invited Jim to sing with his chorus, which was scheduled to be the mic-tester chorus for the competition. Jim quickly accepted the kind invitation, learned his music and choreography from afar, rehearsed a few times with the Chordsmen at the international contest, and happily joined them on stage. And he did just fine!

Also, Jim obviously reveled in the camaraderie that spawns the wonderful lifelong friendships we develop in our precious hobby. But Jim more than most of us felt a real need to give back. Let me mention very quickly some of Jim's "give-backs." I'm sure I'm just scratching the surface.

He served on the faculty of Harmony College for 35 consecutive years where he taught his very popular course, "The Physics of Sound." He was heavily involved in the Society's judging program serving terms as Chairman of the Judges and as Sound Category Specialist. He served as Land O'Lakes District Secretary in 1972 and District President in 1973 and 1974. He was Minneapolis Chapter President in 1976, and International President of the Barbershop Harmony Society in 1989.

Let me also give you a few examples of the awards that were presented to Jim in recognition of his exemplary contributions. He was named District Barbershopper of the Year in 1975 and Minneapolis Chapter Barbershopper of the Year in 1978. He was inducted into the LOL District Hall of Fame in 1990 and the International Society's Hall of Fame in 2009. He

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also earned the *John Foster Friendship Award* from the district in 2003. (I can't imagine the size of his trophy room at home.)

If you thought Jim would rest on his laurels following such a record of achievement, you're dead wrong. He certainly could have said, "It's time for somebody else to step up, but that wasn't Jim. In recent years he maintained a very busy and productive Barbershopping schedule, only now with far less visibility and fanfare. For example, Jim served as bass-section leader, he contributed a tag to virtually every issue of the chapter's newsletter, the *Chord-Inator*, he served a proofreader, he was in charge of multiple mailing lists, he seldom missed a chorus rehearsal or a singout, he took charge at the chorus members' weekly afterglow at the Richfield American Legion Club, he organized the Dixieland group that appears on every Minneapolis Commodore show, and played a mean bass fiddle with the *Dixiedores* to boot. The Commodores will find that many things they took for granted will not get done in the immediate future because Jim had very quietly been taking care of them.

Another thankless job that Jim handled for many, many years was to teach a tag to the *Friday Lunch Bunch that Meets on Thursdays* (TFLBTMOT). Jim's love of singing and arranging tags has been illustrated for years by personalized license plates given to him at the 1989 Honolulu Midwinter by **Hardin Olson** in recognition of his ascendancy to the presidency of the Barbershop Harmony Society ... TAG NE1. (Get it??)

For the uninitiated, a tag in Barbershop music is analogous to a coda, the ending of a classical piece. At any rate, sometimes, perhaps often, we had difficulty with his particular Tag of the Day. You can imagine the disconnect when Dr. Richards, the musicologist, was trying to explain a Chinese seventh chord to a number of musical morons like me. We soon

Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, Dedicated to the memory of Jim Richards and to his family.

I'M HAPPY BECAUSE I SING!

Now I don't know if that applies to the late **Jim Richards**. But it certainly could have! Why do I think so? Why don't I think so? Many have known him for years beyond the several I did and yet, I wouldn't be at all surprised if what I saw whenever I was around him was the same thing he had in spades all his life. He just seemed to find a way to enjoy whatever he was consumed with, and to spread a bit of that to everyone crossing his path.

OK, I personally take one exception to that. Sometime shortly after joining the Commodores, I found myself alone with Jim. Don't think it was at an afterglow, but some casual circumstance. And I don't recall if I asked something about it, or whether he cleverly introduced the subject only to enlighten a wayward, musically-clueless baritone in the technical aspects of sound and music. Whatever, the "Circle of Fifths" came up and never having heard of that sonic explanation, I was intrigued to learn more. And so much more did I.

learned not to ask Jim to explain anything unless we had a lot of time to listen. Let's just say he was quite thorough in his explanations.

We all loved and respected Jim more than words can express. To say that we'll miss him is the understatement of all understatements, although I'm sure none of us can predict at this time all of the ways that he will be missed. He was simply a giant in so many ways. Rest in peace, old friend.



Jim Erickson

Nowadays I think I have a pretty good intuitive grasp of the concept and where it leads, but on that day, once Jim drew the extensively detailed diagram of the Circle on a paper napkin, he had me lost. Not Jim's lack of teaching skills, which he had aplenty. Just a bone headedness when it came to my understanding of what he had so skillfully laid out.

I smiled with him as he was once again delighting in exposing someone to the intricate fabric of musical pitch-weaving. As I recall he had this aura of serious happiness throughout the explanation and I could only encourage him into thinking I was comprehending it all. At the end, he happily walked away and I happily stood there wondering, "What hath science of sound wrought to my now-*confettied* brain?"

It was just in this last month that maybe I began to understand where this ever-sprouting happiness came from. Not to diminish Jim's intellect and favorable genes, but I think there may have been something more that joined with those to create the being of Jim Richards.

What I found was in a newly released book, *Presence: bringing your boldest self to your biggest challenges*, by Harvard Psychologist and TED star [*Technology Education Design* (google Sapling Foundation)], **Amy Cuddy**. In that, she mentions **William James**. (1842-1910) (The William James Hall houses the Harvard University Department of Psychology). James is known as the father of American psychology. Of his many ideas, one struck Cuddy in particular. James' famous assertion, "I don't sing because I'm happy; **I'm happy because I sing.**" Why was Cuddy so taken with this? Because of the provocative idea asserting that bodily experiences cause emotion, *not* the other way around.

Another way of looking at it is, we experience or perform a physical sensation or action with our bodies, and that causes us to feel a certain way.

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More specifically, that we can sing ourselves to happiness, faking an emotion until it becomes a reality. Or in a nutshell, bodily expressions become emotions. Or even more simply, *the body shapes the mind.*

So what effect did singing have on Jim to foster his happy approach to life? From what I could gather (and others can most likely add much more to this) he was involved in music from his earliest days. Being a Drum Major as part of a band and I am assuming other musical endeavors, he started down a path where music directly enhanced his disposition. And later, his astounding and remarkable romantic entanglement with so many musical avenues must have had a profound influence on his attitude and life approach. In no way is this an attempt to diminish what he was on his own initiative, but with such heavy involvement with quartets, choruses, and all the singing opportunities, how could happiness not evolve. And even

when he wasn't singing, he was still being exposed to teaching, judging, encouraging and other world-of-music aspects.

One personal experience with Jim was just before going onto the contest stage with the **TETRA** quartet of which I was a member. As I recall, all of us were in our pre-stage excitement running over the music probably to little advantage. But Jim stopped by our warm-up room and offered to listen to us one last time. Listening intently as we ran through our songs, he suggested a couple things and then, about to leave, he turned, looked at us with a knowing smile, and extended to us his insightful perspective, saying, "Just have fun out there."

That, to me, was pure Jim. Having fun in the pursuit of all things. And since that usually involved singing in some way, it meant for a contagious, happy approach to life.

Can we learn something even now from Jim by his example? Oh, wouldn't he be tickled if he saw we were doing so. Well, maybe we can. What is it that **Gary Jacobson** endlessly preaches? To us? Smile. Light up your face. If you really are happy because you sing, let your face know it. Inner feelings of happiness only go so far. And if you haven't allowed that Jim-like happiness to connect to your singing, begin now to make it a point to unleash it. Can you imagine how much more you'll appreciate the power and the ultimate gift of singing?

A close friend of mine, **Tom Hallin**, a bass and Commodore alum, once put it best. "No matter how I feel when I come to a rehearsal, I feel much better after all that singing."

So, was it part of the reason Jim was a happy soul because he sang and sang and sang. I think so. I would go so far as to say I know so. What might Jim have to say to us then? Sing, sing and sing some more. No matter what your skills are. And enjoy it. Grasp it. Relish it. AND show it! I think he would then add, "But remember, just have fun out there."

Bulletin: The research on the origins of the Georgia Grind continues unabatedly and I intend to reveal some startling deciphered documents soon. And the saga of Doc Hardy will reappear next month if enough people buy me lunch or show me some other special attention. Maybe some 70% dark chocolate. I don't



Reading the Georgia Grind

Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor

It was the summer of 1965 that I, my wife, and my year-old daughter arrived in Minnesota where I was to join private practice in Minneapolis with **Dr. Dick Jackson**, who used *North Memorial* as his primary hospital. Early on I met one of his referring physicians, **Dr. Bill Thomas**, a local GP and long-time Commodore.

Fast forward six years to the spring of 1971 when one day my partner announced that Bill was going to take him to a Barbershop chapter meeting that particular evening. Now I had seen Bill Thomas virtually every work-day in the doctors' lounge for all those years never knowing he was a Barbershopper (World's best-kept secret?).

In college in the early 50s, several of my fraternity brothers were members of the Society's Alexandria Chapter. However most were WW II vets on the GI bill and, along with singing, liked to drink lots of beer. My being a naïve young tee-totaler was probably the reason I was never asked to a Barbershop chapter meeting (although my Commodore brothers might suggest other reasons).

Be that as it may, I tagged along to the old *Moose Hall* in *Northeast Minn*-Go to **Bag**, Page 6, Column 1

want to appear needy but... OK, I am needy. I don't want to appear that way.

In the meantime, hold fast to that which is good, keep on recruiting and I command you to work on fulfilling those items on your Barbershop Bucket List.



Hardin Olson

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neapolis to my first chapter meeting. About three weeks later, I first encountered **Dr. Jim Richards** at which time he auditioned me for admission to the chapter and in all the years since *he never got over it*. (As a penance for the deed, Jim was condemned to wear at the top of his nearly-reach-to-the-floor badge collection, a black hanger emblazoned in white letters with the words, *Auditioned Hardin Olson in 1971*.)

Since then, many of my Barbershop memories center around Jim and of course, **Ebie**. In 1975, as I served as Chapter president, Jim was one of my three vice-presidents, all of whom later went on to occupy the presidential chair.

In the spring of 1981 at the Ladies Night Dinner, it was Jim who, using a projected crossword puzzle, introduced me as the Minneapolis Chapter Barbershopper of the Year.

At the 1989 Midwinter in Honolulu, where Jim was to assume the Society presidency, a quartet composed of **Del Ryberg, Mike Stump, Merrill Miller, and Bob Griffith** (the latter three Jim's *Grandma's Beaus* mates) and I crashed the Society leadership breakfast, and as the quartet ended an appropriate tag, I presented Jim with his **TAG NE1** auto-license plates.

Later, during the Seniors Quartet Contest at the same midwinter, Judy and I were in the audience when the (out-of-tune) fire alarm went off during the third or fourth measure of *Grandma's Beaus* contest set. Undaunted, they regrouped and effected a solid second-place finish.

It may have been that same year and perhaps at that same breakfast that Jim brought his first quartet-uniform jacket along. He auctioned it off (for *Harmony Foundation* or perhaps *Logopedics*) and the winner had to wear it for a time and bring it back the next year. Somehow I wound up with the jacket later and sent it to **Joe Liles** who kept the auction going for a number of years. Perhaps some of the past

Society officers might recall Jim's jacket. (by no means was it *Brooks Brothers*.)

In 1990, Judy and I were in attendance that glorious day at the Tucson Midwinter when *Grandma's Beaus* at last became the Seniors champions. And, if you ever have a chance to listen to their recording of the winning performance, the voice you will hear in the moment of silence before they burst into song, is mine shouting, "Uff Da!" No question, the boys knew who it was.

That same year, 1990, I had the privilege of nominating Jim for the Land O'Lakes District Hall of Fame.

When I began my third and current hitch as *Chord-Inator* editor in 2003, Jim began in December of that year submitting his monthly *Chord Candy* tags. Prior to that time, he had been submitting tags called *Tag Lines*, to the bulletin.

Although the first *Chord Candy* was in a 2003 issue, he didn't start numbering them until #41 in June 2007. I counted back and every *Chord Candy* appeared during my tenure, the last one, #141, in the recent March 2016 issue. I don't know how many *Tag Lines* there were but think of the hours Jim spent to make the *Chord-Inator* as well respected as it is today. (I never even had to beg, grovel, or kowtow.)

In the last year or two, Jim volunteered to bolster my proofreading staff. With **Ebie's** help, I am sure, Jim never missed the tiniest extra space or dangling participle.

You would not be faulted if you thought that Barbershop was Jim's 24/7 occupation until you realize that, among other less discernible pursuits, he also mentored at the *Science Museum*, delivered *Meals On Wheels*, served in many lay positions and took part in Bible-study at his church. As Bob Dykstra said in Jim's eulogy ... *Jim was a giver!*



Remembering Jim

From the St. Paul Pioneer Press, Tuesday, February 23, 2016

James Dana Richards, Ph.D. Age 90. Born June 12, 1925; died Feb 20, 2016 after a sudden and brief battle with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia. Survived by wife of 67 years Betty "Ebie", daughter Mary, son William (Kirby), son Andrew (Karen); grandchildren: Kylan (Jake) Pimley, Kendal (Matt) Poth, Matthew (Allison) Richards, Andrea (Jordan) Nimlos; great-grandchildren Kellyn and Corbin Pimley, and Clayton Poth. Long-time active member of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church. Served as choir member, lay minister, Vestry, and fix-it guy. Senior Research Specialist in the Electrical Products Division at 3M for 32 years. Key contributor to SNAP-27, the thermoelectric generator used to conduct experiments for the Apollo 12-17 missions. Volunteered in many capacities, including 25 years at the Experiment Gallery at the Science Museum of Minnesota, 63-year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society; served as International President, contest judge, and member of the Minneapolis Commodores Chorus. Creator *Go to Remembering*, Page

and instructor of the "Physics of Sound" course for Barbershoppers attending Harmony University. His influence in the worlds of science and music continue to be an inspiration to many; however, the love for his family is just as remarkable and will be remembered dearly. Visitation at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 2300 Hamline Ave, St. Paul, Wed, 2.24.16, from 4p-7p Memorial service Thurs, 2.25.16 at 11am. Visitation one hour prior. In lieu of flowers, memorials to St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, Episcopal Homes, and Harmony Foundation.

I've been asked to write an article about Jim Richards. Where to start?

I could write about Jim, the great bass
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singer and the joy of woodshedding with him at conventions and at the Sage Lake Round-Up. Or, I could write about the bass player in the Dixieland Band who performed at the conventions including the recent Mid-winter in Reno, and at Sage. In fact, it was Jim who invited me to Sage in the first place and sponsored my membership. I could write about the many times we served on judging panels together. Yes, I could write about all that but I want to write about friendship, the special friendship that the love of music can engender.

At Harmony College, when we were both on the faculty, I would always find Jim's classroom between sessions, where he would show me his *Physics of Sound* paraphernalia. Then he'd take out his bass, I'd get on the piano and we'd play a few tunes, always including *Scotch and Soda*. It was his favorite.

At the Mid-winter convention back in 2013, I was having breakfast with Jim and he was bemoaning the fact that his chorus, *The Commodores*, had just missed qualifying for the Toronto International Convention Chorus Contest. He explained that he made his first appearance on the International stage in 1963 and had hoped to compete in Toronto to mark the 50-year anniversary.

I told him that my chorus, *The Westchester Chordsmen*, had qualified to be the mic-testers and, on the spot, I invited him to sing with us. He jumped at the chance and likewise, my chorus embraced the idea. Over the next few months, he learned the music and choreography to our *Music Man Parody*. When Jim joined the chorus to rehearse in Toronto, the guys welcomed him and were impressed that he knew the music and choreo better than they did.

I would never have imagined that our Dixieland session in Reno would be the last time I would get to play with my friend and enjoy the company of both Jim and his beloved Ebie. The

memories are many and fabulous.

Steve Delehanty

Editor's Note: Steve and Connie have been much-loved friends of Jim and Ebie. It is Connie's photo of Jim on the front page acknowledging his Society Hall of Fame award

Hardin, thank you for the note...and yes mother nature was against us this week.

Jim's contributions to the Society were many, and I'm personally grateful to have had the opportunity to get to know him as a fellow Twin Cities and LOL Barbershopper. Ever since I accepted the CEO job, we talked about installing the musical stairs on Harmony Hall's spiral staircase like he did with the Minnesota Science Center, but this time he would have to add a volume button because the front desk might have another thing to say about that! That produced a pretty good laugh.

What a great man and he lead by example. He inspired SO many. I wished we could have been there for his celebration. If there is anything we can do for the family and Ebie, let us know.

In Harmony,

Marty [Monson]

I have to say that Jim Richards was one of my favorite friends in the Barbershop world. We sang together at many, many conventions, contests, and other Barbershop gatherings. I know his hundreds of friends will miss him as much as his chapter, and I, will. My sympathies to all at this time.

BURT SZABO

Editor's Note: I would guess that when it came to playing "TAG" the team of Szabo and Richards had no peers and that their mutual love and respect were monumental. It was poetic justice when both were elevated to the Society's Hall of Fame at the 2009 International Convention in Anaheim.

I will miss Jim ... we all will miss Jim . . . but haven't we just the greatest memories of this giant icon of a man: teacher, leader, quartet and chorus singer, "tagger," contest adjudicator, writer, Society Board member, International President, Barbershop Hall of Famer, inspirer, awesome bass player for our Society's Dixieland band, exalted illuminator of all things Barbershoppers wish to be and do! Each one of us is so much richer to have sat under his tutorage.

Before he left us, he transported each of us to "seventh heaven" and now he leads the way for us to the heavenly choir. Jim and Ebie have been our dearest loves and guiding lights. We are so grateful to have been a part of their lives.

Joe 'n' Kay Liles

Editor's Note: Needless to say the Richards and the Liles were the greatest of friends over so many Barbershop years.

The 1989 International Midwinter Convention was being held in Hawaii and it was Jim Richards' first convention as newly-elected Society President. One morning, about 6:45 a. m., the phone rang and as I answered, the voice asked, "Do you want sing in a quartet?" Still half asleep and startled I asked, "Who's this?" The answer, "Judy...and get down to the room as soon as you can!"

We left for her room, and as Hardin Olson opened the door, he said, "Have some coffee ... you're going to need it." It was then I learned I was to sing the bass part in *Grandma's Beaus Quartet* as they were presenting a personalized license plate to Jim that read TAG NE1. And this was to be for the International Board of Directors Breakfast meeting.

WHAT!!!!!! ARE YOU KIDDING??

Merrill Miller was sitting on the floor with a small tablet about two inches

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by three inches and was making notes and humming. Hardin said, "Merrill is writing down the notes you will sing." In the meantime Mike Stump and Bob Griffith were pacing the floor and I'm wondering what I got myself into. And the carafe of hotel coffee was so strong it poured like black paint.

Merrill deciphered his scribbles and sang the notes with me one time. Then we sang it as a quartet and I remember looking across at Judy Olson and hearing her words as she said, "It can only get better!" So we sang it one more time and then Hardin said, "We're on in 10 minutes."... and we headed for the elevator.

As we stood in the back hallway waiting to go on I thought of the words of a song, *Just like leading lambs to slaughter...* We went on and the rest is a fog. But as Jim Richards told me many times over some 40-plus years, "It's only a hobby..."

Del Ryberg

Jim Richards has been such a positive fixture in Barbershop, both locally, and internationally, since the day of my first Chapter visit, in late December 1969. A fine gentleman, always. A congenial and inclusive fellow of character. And, a brother in harmony of the highest caliber.

Our hearts fly to his side, and with

his beloved family we stand, united in all that Jim found good in this barber-shop lifestyle.

God Speed, good man...Our love and utmost respect go with you.

Alan & Karen Matchinsky

Very saddened by this news. What a great guy and outstanding Barber-shopper. Our love goes out to Ebie and the rest of the Richards' family. Sorry we'll have to miss the funeral in person but you can bet we'll be there in spirit.

Chuck and Pat Guthrie



Connie and Steve Delehanty with Jim and Ebie at the Orlando Midwinter in 2013.



Jim (ctr.) with the Westchester Chordsmen at the 2013 International in Toronto celebrating 50 years as an International competitor.

From the Delehanty Photo Album



Jim, slapping his bass last month in Reno.



The famous Dixieland Band in Reno. To Jim's left are Bill Biffle and Steve Delehanty.

**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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From the Prez ...

By Gordy Aumann, President

Barbershopping is a wonderful hobby.



Gordy Aumann

It brings me so many great friends and activities that it's hard to keep them all in my schedule. But it is not hard to keep them in my heart. I attended the closing performance of the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade on Saturday, February 20, and was thrilled by both the level of performance and the camaraderie demonstrated by about 80 men who attended. That is one of the things that makes Barbershopping great! Special thanks to **Dave Speidel** and his team for a great job.

By the time you read this the Commodores may have sung at our second benefit concert for our area's ICA Food Shelf. The *Faith Presbyterian Church Choir* and the *Plymouth Rockers*, a senior performing chorus from Plymouth, Minnesota, will also be performing.

In addition to these performances, we were honored to sing, along with many of our friends from other area Barbershop chapters, at The Celebration of Life of our special friend and mentor **Dr. Jim Richards** on February 25. Jim provided the Commodores (and the whole Barbershop Society) with a wonderful role model of what it means to be a Barbershopper and a model citizen in the community. We will all miss him greatly but I am so happy that his son, **Andy**, and his grandson, **Matthew**, have joined us to continue the fantastic Richards Barbershop tradition.



March Reenlistments

- Kaleb Smith.....6 yrs

Happy Birthday

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

Happy Anniversary

- 04/09 Hardin & Judy Olson



**9th Annual
BHS Open
Monday,
August 8, 2016
SCRAMBLE FORMAT
to benefit
Harmony Foundation
Elk River Country Club
12:00 p.m. start
Register on line next
summer at
bhsopen.com**

**SUNSHINE
HOTLINE**



By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman
Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: ddongna@usfamily.net

Jim Richards passed away on Saturday, February 20. Jim, a friend and inspiration to all, was a true pillar of a man in our Barbershop Harmony Society as well as in life in general. The Minneapolis Commodores extend their sympathy to **Ebie, Andy, Matt** and the rest of the family members. I'm sure there will be many well-deserved words of adulation in this issue of Chord-Inator so I won't go on.



Rich Ongna

Andy Richards tells me that his sister-in-law, **Kirby**, his brother **Will's** wife, is recovering nicely after the brain bleed and that the prognosis looks good for a full recovery.

Jane Rolloff, Denny's wife, was scheduled for neck surgery, to fuse some vertebrae, on Friday, February 26. As of this writing her status is not known.

Bob Griffith had a right shoulder replacement in February and is now at home recuperating. Bob must follow a vigorous outpatient rehabilitation schedule and he has doubts about performing in the spring show.

Dan & Carol Smith's granddaughter, **Hannah**, was involved in a terrible multi-car auto accident on February 3rd. Her car was torn into two pieces but somehow she miraculously escaped, sustaining a fractured sternum, pelvis and arm. She had surgery on the arm and has since been discharged from the hospital. Although she is doing fine, she has a long road of recovery in front of her. She's still wheelchair ridden until her pelvis heals and accepts the weight of walking.

Harlan Mellem tells me that while he's keeping his membership active he is retiring from active singing with the Commodores. He's concerned about slowing down his fel-

low singers as he finds it taking increasingly more time to memorize the music. He also doesn't want to take time away from his volunteerism at Presbyterian Homes and his church. He'll still be active with TFLBTMOT and his quartet.

Jim Jorgenson informed me that **Vern Johnson**, a long time member of the Commodores, and his wife **Virginia** have suffered some health setbacks. They both fell while shoveling snow. According to Jim they called 911 and had a romantic ambulance ride together to the hospital. They determined that Virginia broke a couple of ribs and Vern broke his hip. He now has a hip replacement. They're both recuperating at home and it sounds like they'd enjoy some calls, cards or even a quartet or two. (Any quartets available?)

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 feeling ill.

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

From the meeting of February 11

By **Bill Warp**, Secretary



Bill Warp

- **Treasurers Report**
The 2016 Budget is in the works.
Help is needed for the chapter audit.
- **Membership**
Guest Night will be Tues., April 19.
Andy Cook will work with Harvey

and will ask the *Summit Singers* to visit a Chapter meeting.

• **Music and Performance**

Annual Show tech rehearsal set for Thursday, April 14.

Looking at a possible performance at the Arboretum.

2016 Christmas Show approved, possibly December 4.

Chapter goals:

- + Develop chapter quartets.
- + Promote individual vocal instruction.
- + Performance improvement, earn 1000 points at District competition.

• **Marketing**

Forty mailers have been sent to area Senior Living sites.

Annual Show will be promoted on radio and in the local papers.

A business card promoting our show

is in the works.

• **Old Business**

As of this date only eight (8) Chorus Survey responses have been received.

Reminder that **Matt Richards** is maintaining the Groupanizer site. All announcements and event details should be forwarded to him.

• **Next meeting** - March 5 at Wooddale Lutheran.

Let's put the capital "B" in Barbershop as the PROBE Style Manual suggests

Quartet Quaffs

Sounds of Renown

Déjà vu all over again

Late November, the **Sounds of Renown VLQ** had to cancel its appearance at **Maynard's Restaurant** due to pretty difficult weather. But, it stepped right up to perform once again on February 8. Encouraged, of course, by customer inquiries about "Whether that Barbershop group was going to sing again?" Known for its community spirit, Maynard's schedules benefit days to raise funds for worthy causes with 100% of the day's income going to the cause. This event was to benefit kid's athletic activities in the area and a recent benefit for the ICA Foodshelf with a matching grant raised over \$50,000 from the single day event. So anticipating a large turnout for dining, we VLQers were eager to sing again for this generous donor.

Having performed for various benefits at Maynard's over many, many years, the VLQ has helped raise thousands upon thousands of dollars. Now some of us in the VLQ have sung at these benefits from the start, but others were new to the outing this year. Not knowing quite what to expect, the newer members quickly got into the spirit of the evening and basked in the appreciation of diners of all ages. Circulating through the tables and booths is a challenge to sing over the clatter of knives and forks against dishes, tinkling glasses and lively conversation (difficult), but diners always pause to enjoy men singing to them. With the smiles, laughter, an occasional tear, singing face to face is up close and personal Barbershop at its best!

At one table in particular, there were younger children, mother, grandmother, and the special birthday girl who had just turned 18. Tickled would be a scarcely adequate description of their response as they smiled widely throughout the songs sung especially for them, and warmly thanked us.

Having videoed all of this, they will be able to recall the unexpected songful attention to this age milestone.

In a Barbershop instant, the hour of performing ended. And our voices, which had to be overly bold to sing above the din, were starting to rasp a bit. A pretty small price to pay for such a rewarding event. Lots of thanks followed us out the door along with assurances we would be invited in the future. For a Barbershopper, satisfaction supreme!

By **Jim Erickson** for the **Sounds of Renown VLQ: Dick Rimenschneider, Rollie Neve, Dan Williams, Andy Tate, Mike Hojan, Rob Hartert, Mark Ortenburger, Dave Wall, and John Carlotto.**

Barbershop Bucket List Magic

For some time, I have ended my *Georgia Grind* articles encouraging readers to start a **Barbershop Bucket List** and then begin living out the adventures on the list. Following is what one Barbershopper did to check off an item on his list. But it came with a completely unexpected surprise and reward.

Now not having really publicly performed in a Barbershop Quartet, **Don Bartels** joined **Harvey Weiss, Ken Glover, and John Lloyd**, to sing Valentines as part of the Singing Valentines promotion. And coincidentally, public quartet performance was right there on his list. Completely at ease about this whole thing he was not, but excited by the challenge he was.

Before the quartet headed to greet the Valentine recipient though, a little warming up was necessary and they took advantage of a nearby **American Legion Post**. It just happened that as they were in a back room running through the songs, an American Legion member (preparing chicken wings, no less) overheard as they sang. Listening with pleasure, he told them his post was having an anniversary soon and

would be interested in some entertainers. Like he had just heard. After recovering from being caught completely off guard by the impending offer, the date was discussed, a suitable fee was arrived at (Harvey cleverly negotiated a package that included free amber beverages), and the show was on. Then the quartet was off to sing to the nearby Valentine!

Don was tickled to be singing Valentines, but he was ecstatic that as part of his bold step forward, he was also going to enjoy his first "Gig." With a big smile, he energetically told me all about this at the end of our last chorus rehearsal, and was almost beside himself when he got to the gig part. Erupting, he uttered something like, "You always end your articles by urging us to start and then check off our Barbershop Bucket List, and now I can hardly believe I'm actually going to do it." Barbershop Bucket List magic, that's what it is! As **Garrison Keillor** might say, "Gives you what you need to get up and go." If you haven't already, when will you try a list for yourself?

Jim Erickson

From the files ...



First quartet win for Andy and Matt. Left to rt.: Ken Wentworth, Andy, Jim, and Matt Richards at Chapter's 70th anniversary party, summer, 2014.



Jim, Ebie, Bob Dykstra, and Bob Spang at the 2014 celebration.

Northern Pines Harmony Brigade is four years old

By Dave Speidel, NPHB President



Dave Speidel

As many of you know, the Commodores are well represented at the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade and in fact are integral to the continued success of this special event. The NPHB Board consists of four Commodores along with your current LOL president, **Steve Zorn**. **Ken Wentworth** is responsible for the Friday school singout program at which time we went to four different schools and sang to very appreciative students. By employing the courtesy bus (Greyline Coach), the logistics are simplified and we can travel in comfort and all arrive together. The costs are covered by a generous donation from *Hobo, Inc.*, along with cash contributions by those who participated.

The *behind the scenes* music selection and acquisition work is handled by **Steve Zorn**, **Randy Rogers**, and **Tom Hawkins**. We were thrilled to have a fun song from *Toy Story* this year, *I Will Go Sailing No More*, and thankful to have good-quality learning tracks prepared by Randy. The other tracks were provided by the always-stellar **Tim Waurick**. We experimented with electronic distribution this year and it seemed to be a hit. Those who still prefer hard copy also had that as an option. If you didn't hear, the charts were unusually difficult this year but the guys did a stellar job handling the extreme voicing challenges.

Paul Swanson does a great job managing our website, electronic registration, financials, music distribution and on-site registration—not to mention acting as Contest Administrator! To date, Paul's scoring methodology has maintained a high level of integrity (as far as we know, although rumors of financial influence have been circulated by losing contestants).

Mark Bloomquist is our official Show Chairman. The show was another success with *St. Croix Crossing* doing their usual bang-up job, as did the *Now and Then Singers*, *Basses Wild*, and, of course, the *NPHB Chorus*. For those of you who didn't come, you missed a really good show! Mark also coordinates our *Taxi Service*. The men who fly in and out of the Twin Cities are extremely grateful for the transportation service and often comment about what a first-class operation we run up here in the Northland...

As president, I just try to keep things moving forward, and assist with communications, marketing, riser-hauling, convention-hosting and all the other little things leading up to the Brigade Rally. I have to admit that it can be nerve-racking. The thing that always concerns me is our attendance and knowing that we are going to have cancellations for one reason or another. This year was no exception, and, of course, we all know the sad circumstances of the death of **Jim Richards**.

Jim was slated to be one of our judges this year and was looking forward to another year at the Brigade to watch and participate while son and grandson, Andy and Matt, continue on with the Richards Barbershop Legacy. We were lucky to have the outstanding services of **Ev Nau** at the Brigade this year, not only as a judge, but also as our show Emcee. Ev has been on the International Staff, has served for many years with the Harmony Foundation, and has been the master of ceremonies for many International Conventions and chapter shows. He eloquently delivered a fine tribute to Jim Richards and the meaning of Jim's contributions to all of us in the Society.

Gary Jacobson and **Judy Olson**, completed the judging panel. Contest Emcee Steve Zorn and the judges engaged in a continual back-and-forth exchange of raging insults that could have been mistaken for one of the recent presidential debates.

Finally, **Jim Clark** (Lead of the International Quartet Champs, *Storm Front*) was in attendance and participated in all the functions including the school singouts, directing, and singing. Having the opportunity to sing with a Gold Medalist-quartet man was a thrill for those who've never had the chance to sing with a, shall-we-say, mediocre lead (*Wigley noted that Jim seems to have some potential*).

Other Commodores participating this year included **Paul Wigley**, **Dave Casperson**, **Kevin Huyck**, **Paul Padlock**, **Jeff Culp**, **Ben Wanggaard**, **Bill Ward**, **Conrad Ward**, **Tony Lapakko**, and **Dick Riemenschneider**. (Sorry if I missed anyone.). The support from the Commodores was greatly appreciated, not only financially but also for the loan of the chapter risers (*No one told me how heavy that dang trailer was going to be!*) and, of course, all the moral support. You should all know that the sponsorships help us to fund Rally scholarships as well as stipends for our show talent, the *Now and Then Singers* and *Basses Wild*. Other sources of financial assistance include ADC Scholarships, our general scholarship fund, and sponsorships.

Well, it's all over for this year and we can sit back and relax for the moment, but in the coming months our team will start the plans for the February 24, 2017, NPHB Rally.

What it really is all about!

Thanks again for visiting us last Friday. Our choir students loved watching the guys sing passionately! Please pass on my thanks and admiration for the hard work your singers do as they provide such meaningful educational opportunities for our youth.

Appreciated,

Tony Rangel, Choral Teacher

Robbinsdale Armstrong High School





The Brigade Chorus

4th Annual Northern Pines



Dave Speidel (2nd from rt.)

**Our
Commodores
In
Action**

All NPHB Photos
By
John White



Paul Swanson (left), Dave Casperson (2nd from rt.), Jeff Culp (rt.)



Ben Hancock, Bill Ward, Conrad Ward, and Ricky Chaddock



The winning quartets: 1st row gold medalists; 2nd. row silver medalists, Commodores Paul Swanson (far left), Dave Casperson (2nd from left), Jeff Culp (rt.)

**Crown Plaza Hotel
Plymouth, Minn.
February 19-21, 2016**



Park Center was one of the four high schools visited by Brigade attendees on Rally weekend. Traveling by Grayline bus from site to site, the Brigaders performed for their student audiences introducing them to the marvels of Barbershop harmony.

Harmony Brigade



From left: Dick Riemenschneider, and Ken Wentworth



From left: Kevin Huyck, Conrad Ward



"Ahh ... the wonder of it all!" (Paul Wigley)



Ben Wanggaard (3rd from rt.)



Swype



Judy Olson, without a doubt, takes charge!



Paul Swanson (left)



Judges: Ev Nau, Judy Olson, and Gary Jacobson



The Minneapolis Commodores

Proudly Present:

WAY OUT WEST

Saturday, April 16, 2016

ONE Show Only - 3:00 p.m.

Benson Great Hall - Bethel University



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

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

Chapter Quartets

- BOMP
 Dan Cole.....612/940-4554
 CHORD SMASH
 James Estes.....612/237-3234
 EASY LISTENIN'
 Dan Slattery.....651/747-6384
 HOT COMMODITY
 Dave Speidel.....612/437-4325
 RING IT ON
 Andy Richards.....651/639-9312
 MINNESOTA GO-4's
 Harvey Weiss.....763/439-4447
 RANDOM SAMPLE
 Darrell Egertson.....952/943-8737
 SWYPE
 Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232
 SOUNDS of RENOWN (VLQ)
 Mark Ortenburger.....952/942-8382



CHORD-INATOR

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



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



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

Logo courtesy of Bob Clark

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

To:

LOOKING AHEAD

- March 5, 2016, Saturday - **Food Shelf Performance - Hopkins, Minn.**
- Thursday, April 14, 2016 - **Tech Rehearsal**
- April 16, 2016, Saturday - **Annual Show and Afterglow**
- July 19, 2016 - **Lake Como**
- July 25, Monday, **Centennial Lakes**
- August 16, 2016 - **Minnetonka**

District Level

- April 29-May 1, 2016 - **10,000 Lakes/Southwest Division Contests and International Preliminaries, Nicollet (Mankato)**
- October 21-22, 2016 - **2016 Fall LOL District Convention**

International Level

- July 3-10, 2016 - **International Convention, Nashville, Tennessee**

PLEASE NOTE: Cover and Page 8 photos are all by Connie Delehanty. Cover shows Jim as he accepted his Society Hall of Fame citation and plaque.
Many thanks, Connie!

**1st CLASS
 POSTAGE
 HERE**

2015 Barbershopper Of The Year
Rich Ongna

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

- Gordy Aumann
- Steve & Connie Delehanty*
- Bob Dykstra
- Chuck Guthrie
- Jim Erickson
- Joe & Kay Liles*
- Alan Matchinsky
- Marty Monson*
- Hardin Olson
- Rich Ongna
- Del Ryberg*
- Dave Speidel
- Bill Warp
- Burt Szebo*

**CHORD-INATOR
 MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES
 Minneapolis Chapter of SPEBSQSA
 MEETING EVERY TUES -7:00 p.m.
 House of Prayer Lutheran Church
 7625 Chicago Ave. S.
 Richfield, MN 55423
GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME**