

KEEPING THE  
WHOLE WORLD SINGING

# CHORD-INATOR

BARBERSHOP  
HARMONY  
SOCIETY



MINNEAPOLIS  
COMMODORES

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

10,000 LAKES DIVISION - LAND O'LAKES

JANUARY 2021 - VOL. 77 - NO. 1



## President's Corner



Happy New Year,  
Commodores!

**Dave Casperson**

As I sit here in the Phoenix airport, waiting to return home, I am excited for the year we

have ahead of us! Perhaps more than that, I'm excited to put 2020 in our rearview mirror.

I am really grateful for every one of you, and I'm proud of the way the Commodores faced - and overcame - the adversity of everything set before us last year.

As we look towards the coming year, there are uncertainties surrounding which shows we can do, and when we can do them. As well as when we can even be back in person.

Regardless, please know that we recognize that not everyone will be on the same schedule, in terms of when they feel comfortable being together again. Because of that, we will continue to make every effort to include everyone in weekly chapter meetings, whether that be via Zoom, in person, or both. Nobody will be left behind!

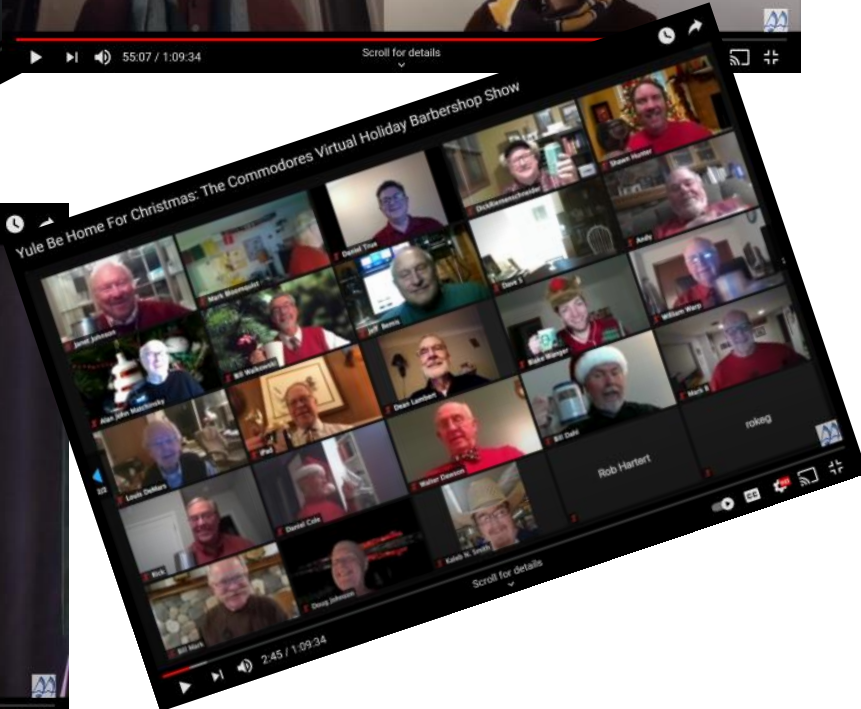
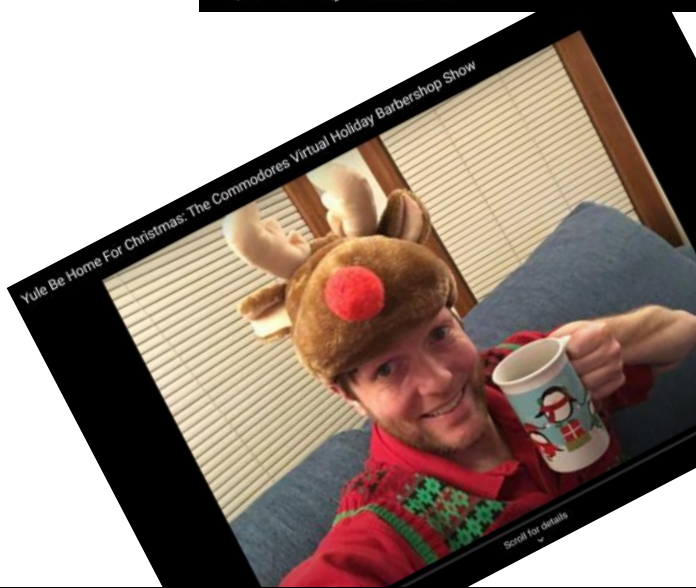
If everyone could be patient, and understand that all plans for the foreseeable future are a bit fluid, that would be most appreciated. The music committee and the board will continue working on all of the plans necessary to reach our eventual end goal of singing and performing in person once again.

Thanks for being so adaptable, everyone! It's great to be a Commodore!

- Dave Casperson



# Online Christmas Show a HUGE success with 2,045 views and counting!



## Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, *Beats Me Baritone*



**Jim Erickson**

To finish off this exceptionally puzzling, dangerous and frustrating year, it is fitting that the 2020 script would treat me to laptop frenzy. I would be plugging along on some document and all of a sudden my screen would go “black.” That pattern continued erratically until I finally decided to seek technical support.

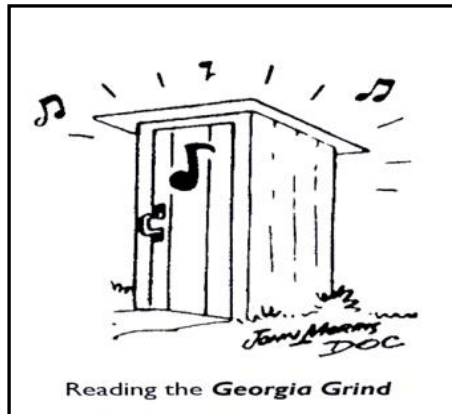
Oh, I love technical support where I spend hours on the phone (which drops calls unannounced at its own whim) only to end up going through another telephone tree, talking to another expert and providing once again the same information. You do suspect these techies work with the latest computers. So why, once I enter my name, address, account number, model number and on and on, the system then assigns me to a different expert and we start all over again. And all the while, if I am put on hold, the music playing on their system is so scratchy, crappy, staticy and gappy that I begin to wonder how good the forthcoming advice might be from this tech center.

Enough! This is really just leading up to an excuse for my penning a briefer article here. Oh, stop the cheering... It’s enough torture that I have to use my old, old laptop from off the dusty back closet shelf. Slower than a lead learning a melody, it has a crank on the side, a single earphone the comfort ear foam of which is one shade away from dust to dust, a screen that refreshes less often than I take a shower (hold back that smirk, please), and is so dim I have to use

one of those head-lamp jobs to see what pearls I have typed. If it were human I’m sure this relic would qualify for a Covid shot in the most vulnerable group.

As for me, being in the ’19-shot “older” group, I am staying hunkered down until February or as soon as shots become available. I do wash my hands endlessly and am learning not to get halfway to a “mask required” area before turning around and fetching my face-mask. I suppose it’s silly to think about doing a face mask tattoo, but not out of the question?

Switching just a bit, I have been surprised how creative people have become to keep involved in work, play, entertainment and more. All



Reading the *Georgia Grind*

of which was reflected in the Commodores Christmas Concert. Director **Jamye**, husband **Dave**, **Steve Grady** and so many others, including each of the singers, all contributed to an effort and production that was outstanding for so many **YouTube** watchers. Many thanked me for alerting them to the concert and later expounded on how fun and meaningful it was. Some from thousands of miles away. The untold hours it took to produce this is beyond anything I could figure, but suffice it to say it was a commanding project. Thanks to everyone. You done good!

Now, to keep my fading promise of brevity and an iron-willed stand to avoid talking about “Naughty Pine,” I will conclude here. Remember to “hold fast to that which is good.” Value the truth, always. And as soon as I have my shots, I will proceed at Warp Speed in pursuing research on the origins of the **Georgia Grind**. Also, my line of Georgia Grind masks is selling out so fast and often that I have told my accountant to mask the profit figures, too. Regardless, “Mask Up America.” Stay Healthy, think creatively! And Greetings to You—2021.

Minneapolis, Minn. Chapter  
 Land O'Lakes District, BHS  
 Meetings every Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.  
 Church of St. Peter  
 6730 Nicollet Avenue South  
 Richfield MN 55423

**Join the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade! You WON'T be sorry. Just contact Dave Speidel.**

**Chapter Officers**

President.....Dave Casperson 9524/324922  
 Past Pres. ....Blake Wanger  
 Marketing/PR VP.....Steve Grady  
 VP Music /Perform.....Carl Pinard  
 VP Membership.....Neal Mortenson  
 Program VP.....Bill Dahl  
 Secretary.....Bill Walkowski  
 Treasurer .....Andy Richards  
 VP Technology.....Paul Swanson

**Board Members**

*At-Large*

David Paxson  
 Harvey Weiss  
 Dan Slattery  
 Dan Williams

**Directors**

Director.....Jamy Casperson  
 Assistant Director..... Dave Speidel

**Section Leaders**

Tenor Section Leader .....Steve Grady  
 Lead Section Leader. ....Shawn Hunter  
 Bari Section Leaders .....Dave Speidel  
 Assistant - Matt Richards  
 Bass Section Leaders.....Dave Casperson

**Committee Chairmen**

Altruistic Programs Chairman.....Denny Maas  
 Audio/Visual Mgr.....Kirk Douglas  
 2020 Show Chairman.....Andy Richards  
 Summer Afterglow Chairman.....Kaleb Smith  
 Attendance/Sgt.-at-Arms.....**Vacant**  
 BOTY Party Chairman.....Mark Ortenburger

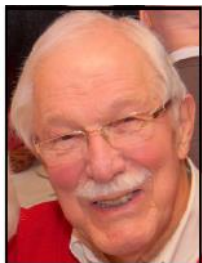
**Chord-Inator Staff**

Editor ..... Shawn Hunter  
 Senior Columnist.....Jim Erickson  
 Chorus Manager.....Dan Slattery  
 Assistant - Neal Mortenson  
 Chorus Performance Managers..... John Lloyd  
 .. Bob Ostergaard  
 Harvey Weiss

Grants Research.....**Vacant**  
 Groupanizer Administrator.....Matt Richards  
 Harmony Foundation.....**Vacant**  
 Historian .....Dick Riemenschneider  
 Learning Tracks.....**Vacant**  
 Librarian.....Carl Pinard  
 Name Tags .....Dan Slattery  
 Nut Sales Chairman..... Dick Riemenschneider  
 Northern Pines Brigade President.....Dave Speidel  
 Performance Mgr.....Paul Swanson  
 Presentation Chairman.....**Vacant**  
 Quartet Promotion.....**Vacant**  
 Riser Boss(temp).....Dan Cole  
 Singing Valentines..... Neal Mortenson  
 Sunshine ..... Mark Bloomquist  
*Swipe* Editor .....Kaleb Smith  
 Tickets/A-Commodears President.....Diana Pinard  
 Uniform Committee Chairman.....**Vacant**  
 Uniforms (Dress & Casual).....Dan Williams



## Musings from a Barbershop Curmudgeon



**Bob Dykstra**

I've had a 68-year love affair with barbershop harmony. There's something soothing about the term even

for those who are not sure what it means. After all, harmony has all sorts of pleasurable connotations for those of us who are familiar with the English language. Merriam-Webster, for example, suggests that harmony is "accord, correspondence, internal calm, tranquility." The dictionary's musical definition of harmony includes "the science of the structure, relation, and progression of chords." That sounds rather straightforward low-stress as well. Most of you reading this are familiar with a peculiar style of harmony called "barbershop." Collectively, given my brief definitions and descriptions above, observers of, and neophytes getting involved in, barbershop harmony have every reason to expect peace, quiet, singularity of purpose and a minimum (if not total absence) of controversy concerning their new-found harmonious hobby. As I'll soon detail, that has not always been the case.

There are three primary musical organizations today that emphasize barbershop harmony. The first of these was organized in 1938 by O.C. Cash and Rupert Hall, a pair of Tulsans who loved barbershop quartets and barbershop chords and made it very clear to all what their organization was all about. It was an all-male

organization named the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA), now known as the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS).

Sweet Adelines, now Sweet Adelines International, a women's barbershop harmony organization, was the love child of another Tulsan, Edna Mae Anderson, and came upon the scene in 1945. Twelve years later a contentious 1957 International Sweet Adelines board meeting (Whoops! disharmony?) led a group of Sweet Adelines to withdraw their membership and two years later form a new organization called Harmony, Incorporated.

All three organizations are still grounded in, and passionate about barbershop harmony.....although today's is quite different from that which O.C. Cash set out to preserve in 1938. And, as one might expect, there appears to be a great deal of harmony and good will among them. Christmas is coming soon as I write this and if it were not for Covid-19 many area Barbershop chapters would be joining hands and pitchpipes with local Sweet Adeline chapters to produce Christmas or holiday shows for the enjoyment of their loyal supporters. In the recent past, for example, the Commodores have linked up with the Twin City Chapter Sweet Adelines, the Greater St. Paul Chapter with Lake Country Sweet Adelines, and the St. Croix Valley Chordsmen with Vallee de Croix Sweet Adelines. These and other cooperative relationships between the two organizations are quite common. I know of no Harmony Inc.

chapters in our environs but since that organization's inception there have tended to be very good interactions and relationships between them and our Society whenever chapters of both are in geographic proximity. Furthermore, certified judges of BHS have judged Harmony Inc. contests for years and in turn the Barbershop Harmony Society is now inviting Harmony, Inc. member judges to apply for certification in our organization.

Although Sweet Adelines continue to restrict membership to women, gender lines have become blurred to varying degrees in the other two organizations. The Barbershop Harmony Society a few years ago for the first time moved to accept women as full-fledged members; Harmony, Inc. accepts men as affiliate members. In general, it certainly may be said today that harmony exists among its three chief Barbershop adherents.

History, however, informs us that that has not always been the case. Consider this, for example. In 1990 Sweet Adelines decided to change its name to Harmony International. Harmony Inc. objected, claiming infringement of its rights, and everybody ended up in court. As reported in the August 6, 1990 edition of South Florida's Sun-Sentinel, "U. S. Magistrate Leo Wagner, saying the courts have more pressing concerns, booted both factions out of the courtroom and into a settlement conference quicker than you can say 'Wait 'til the Sun Shines, Nellie'." The result was that Sweet Adelines' sought-after name, Harmony International, became instead Sweet Adelines International and the "war" was over. (I hope our current "warring" factions, the Barbershop Harmony Society and

Harmony Foundation International, end up in the courtroom of someone as wise as Magistrate Wagner).

Another interesting period of disharmony occurred about sixty years ago during my early days of Barbershop-ping. In 1960 the respective Boards of Directors of SPEBSQSA and Sweet Adelines adopted Joint Statements of Policy designed "to stress the separate identities of the two organizations and at the same time preserve harmonious relationships between them." The complete statements of policy can be found in the January/February 1961 issue of the Harmonizer, the official publication of the Barbershop Harmony Society, but I'll list a few here to try to provide the gist of the joint agreement:

*(1) In no way shall one organization be referred to as an affiliate or auxiliary of the other. (2) Regular meetings shall in no event be held at the same time and place. If the same location is used for chapter meetings, meetings should be held on separate nights. (3) Invitations of a social nature, extended by a unit of one organization to a unit of the other, shall include the wives and husbands of members. Such social events should be held to a minimum. (4) Public convention space.....hotel lobbies, restaurants, etc.....at international or district/regional conventions is reserved for the singing of organized quartets and woodshedders of the sponsoring organization. (5) Attendance of members of one organization at the other's official convention shall be limited to open sessions..... those at which attendance of interested observers is invited or upon specific individual invitation by the person in charge. This policy shall apply not only to business meetings of legislative and administrative bodies but to training seminars as well. (6) Chapter shows should not be jointly sponsored by chapters of the two organizations except in cases where a community is too small to support two Barbershop harmony shows in a single year.*

I don't recall this "cease and desist order" between "two old friends" getting much publicity at the time but I do remember wondering what all the fuss was about. My first reaction was that certain statements of policy were designed to reduce the opportunity and/or likelihood of "hanky-panky" as one might infer from items (2) and (3) above. I also wondered which organization was the driving force behind the statements of principles. I still don't have that information, but I came across an interesting opinion piece in the November/December 1961 issue of the Harmonizer, which provides some context. The title caught my attention: Critic Takes Swipe at "Sweet Adeline"(s). Please note that this article was published almost a year after the publication of the Joint Statement of Policy I summarized earlier, so the critic in question is taking issue with the lack of adherence to the policy.

In this sharply-written piece Richard Mills, identified as a Midwestern Barbershopper, argues that most chapters in his area are violating the policies agreed upon in the joint statement. He writes, "The general public in the locality believes with good reason that the Sweet Adelines are a part of, and a female contingent of, the Society." His position is quite clearly defined in the following two paragraphs:

*It is my opinion that Barbershop harmony, by tradition and general public acceptance, is a male activity. Being an attorney, I am thoroughly familiar with the constitutional right of freedom of speech and expression which gives the ladies a legal right to imitate us. However, this does not give them the moral right to take advantage of their family ties to infiltrate our Society. Those of us who take exception to the members, who either actively promote this infiltration or stand by and let it take place, have an obligation to stand up and object vigorously.*

*The Sweet Adelines seem to manage to get a chorus or quartet into almost*

*all local Society activities. It is time our organization either merged with the women or clearly divided from them.*

Wow! Strong language depicting strong feelings! Infiltration?! The language and feelings, moreover, were strongly endorsed editorially by the introductory comment, "Richard Mills' letter emphasizes the position many of our members take on this subject. Each member has a solemn obligation to see to it that his chapter is living up to these precepts 100%."

My guess is that given vitriol like that in this letter made it easy for Sweet Adelines to sign off on the Joint Statements of Policy even if they didn't necessarily agree with them. Or perhaps they did. Regardless, the letter by Mills published in the Harmonizer and applauded by its editor likely captures the motivation for such drastic action by two organizations both of whom were deeply committed to and immersed in Barbershop harmony.

I doubt that there was a lot of enforcement of the policies at the time. For example, we in the Hut Four never encountered any awkward situations related to them. And I don't know whether the Joint Policy Statements were ever officially "undone" by the two organizations or just allowed to disappear. At any rate, it's great that harmony and cooperation again define our two wonderful organizations, Sweet Adelines International, and the Barbershop Harmony Society, as well as our Barbershop-ping friends in Harmony, Inc. Together let's join our voices in the Sweet Adeline theme song, "Harmonize the World!"

## From Fearless Leader...



*Happy New Year!*

Jamye Casperson

January is a time for resolutions and so it would make sense that my message to you would be about making resolutions regarding singing. I also know that many resolutions only last for a couple weeks, maybe a month. Let's not call these "resolutions;" instead let's just try to improve some of our rehearsal habits in order to improve ourselves as singers, musicians and the Commodores as a choir. Very soon, we will be able to be singing again in person. However, it will take awhile for the whole group to feel comfortable singing together in a group, especially close together and unmasked, but I am positive we will get there!

Regardless of whether we are together or over Zoom, there are things all of us can do to make our rehearsals better. If our rehearsals are more productive and efficient, our performances will be better as well! We are getting used to learning notes using videos and learning tracks and that shouldn't end when we are back in person for rehearsals. If we can have notes and rhythms learned ahead of rehearsal, we can use rehearsal for turning notes and rhythms into music.

You should use a pencil when you rehearse with your tracks so that you can:

- Circle troublesome areas so your brain will cue in to those the next time.
- Mark places that work well for you to breathe and

mark places that you absolutely shouldn't breathe.

- Put a star next to dynamic markings
- Write choreography cues when they are given so that when you sing at home, your brain makes those part of the learning.

Challenge yourself to be a student of your music. Lifelong learning has many benefits:

- Improve self-confidence
- Fight boredom
- Keep your brain healthy and your mind sharp
- Get better sleep (when you exercise your body, it gets tired; when you exercise your brain, it needs rest)
- Model positive behavior for your children and grandchildren

Lastly, your voice is a muscle. If you haven't been using it as much, it has gotten weaker. Start singing for 15-20 minutes a day. Sing with your whole voice (breath, energy, good posture) Don't know what to sing?

- Search your favorite barbershop song on Youtube and sing with the quartet you find.
- Sing with any learning track on Groupanizer
- Play one of the videos on our Youtube channel and sing along

- You don't have to sing barbershop: sing to your favorite radio station.

- Go back in my old emails and find one of the warmup videos I sent

Here we go! I am looking forward to a great 2021 with the Commodores!

- Jamye Casperson

## Jim Richards Memorial Chord Candy # 128



**Paul Paddock**

"I chose this tag as a reflection of the times. With COVID's presence, it has certainly forced all of us to reconsider and redesign our plans for a much different holiday season due to COVID's impacts, figuring out spending time with loved ones in a capacity that still respects social distancing and prevents COVID spread. The tune comes from the Straight No Chaser album 'Holiday Spirits' recorded in 2008, written by one of their own, Dan Ponce, and evokes that sense of longing to be with your loved one during the holidays. Even though large family gatherings were discouraged for the holidays this year due to high COVID spikes, folks still ought not

to be alone for the holidays! The full phrase is 'Please find a girl...', though an argument could be made for an adaptation like 'Please find a group...', or 'friends' or however you wish. The tag is a hanger with the basses at the helm starting with the sumptuous gateway Gb after the ii-V progression on 'So I won't be'. Lead has the post and bari has the 'bent' post, only changing on the final note. Make sure the pause at the beginning is very obvious or else the conclusion's setup will be missed. Lead and tenor switch places at the beginning; this makes the most sense for what comes next for the tenors. Jazzers like to call the 2nd-to-last note chromatic substitution--rather than use another V chord in the progression, everyone slides through a B-Major-7 chord to the Bb. In the recording, they all end in a simmering Bb-major-7 as well, but not everybody likes ending on those, so I went with a strong tonic Bb chord instead. Enjoy!"

SCORE

### CHRISTMAS WISH

WRITER: DANIEL PONCE  
ADAPTATION: PAUL PADDOCK

PIANO

SO I WON'T BE A LONE



**Shawn Hunter, Bulletin Editor**  
 4125 Country View Dr.  
 Eagan, MN 55123  
 (651) 341-1373  
[Shawn.h.hunter@gmail.com](mailto:Shawn.h.hunter@gmail.com)



**1st CLASS  
 POSTAGE  
 HERE**

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 the Minneapolis Chapter Board or its officers.

*This logo is neither shared with the Girl Scouts nor dumped by the Sweet Adelines.*

*Logo courtesy of Bob Clark*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Chapter Quartets**

**To:**

- BOMP
- Dan Cole.....612/940-4554
- EASY LISTENIN'
- Dan Slattery..... 651/747-6384
- JUST ONE MORE
- Nate Weimer.....316/204-8756
- SWYPE
- Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232
- SILVER SCREEN
- Steve Grady.....952/334-7500

**LOOKING AHEAD**

Mid Dec —Christmas Show streaming  
 Apr 24 —Annual Show

The *Chord-Inator* is available on the Minneapolis Chapter's website [minneapoliscommodore.org](http://minneapoliscommodore.org)

**CHORD-INATOR  
 MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES  
 Minneapolis Chapter of BHS  
 MEETING EVERY TUES –7:00  
 p.m.  
 Church of St. Peter  
 6730 Nicollet Avenue South  
 Richfield MN 55423**