

KEEPING THE
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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

OCTOBER 2022 - VOL. 78 - NO. 5



President's Corner



Harvey Weiss

Singing with A Purpose

What is the reason we all get together every week to rehearse for shows and summer concerts?

Who are we singing for and what is our desired purpose? Some people would call this a "**Mission Statement.**" If you were asked right now, to recite the mission statement of the *Minneapolis Commodores*, would you be able to identify it? What is the mission statement of the *Barbershop Harmony Society*? Now there is a challenge!

Honestly, I am unable to give the precise wording of it as found in our By-Laws, but part of it is, "congenial men of good character who love harmony in music." I

am not even sure where the By-Laws are housed, so my search was futile. But is singing our only reason for performing? We have most recently updated our altruistic purpose, (charity) with a collaborative relationship with **Crescent Cove**, a hospice for children with a potential shortened life span.

Since joining the Commodores in 2009, the emphasis coming from the national office seems to have been compete, compete, compete. There are the annual International Shows at glitzy hotels to pick an International winner and other medalists. Plus another expensive promotion to select a Senior Champion at a Mid-Winter weekend, while also enticing youth to sing on stage for ratings, not medals or placement finishes. Districts have the same contests where winners are selected who then advance to the next level. Entertainment here would be defined to me as technically singing better than the opposing chapters or quartets. But how entertaining were they beyond their singing performance? What do you remember what was entertaining to you? Matched vowels? Oh Boy!

So, where is all this going? I will offer the following from **Deke Sharon**, some call the Father of Modern Acapella, who said at the recent Reno Mid-Winter convention:

"Stop trying to impress ourselves with our singing and just reach out and entertain the public. Contests can be both impressive to us all, but even more impressive to those who have never heard barbershop harmony before." (*Pitch Piper, May/June, 2016*)

If singing with the Commodores has shown me anything, it is that we are all about **entertaining**, while competing is just another way to learn how to sing better for our audiences. We don't practice twice a week and Saturdays for months before our District Convention. Winning could be nice icing on the cake, but this isn't all about the whole three-layered cake. (I just made that up?) Although we aren't always articulate about our mission, I feel we are living out our mission every time we sing together. We smile on hearing our audiences appreciate our offerings, and that seems be enough for all of us.

The Harvenor

**Minneapolis, Minn. Chapter
Land O'Lakes District, BHS**
Meetings every Tuesday, 7:00 p.m.
Mayflower Congregational Church
106 Diamond Lake Rd E
Minneapolis, MN 55419

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**Quartet
Quaffs**

Dick Riemenschneider

Some time ago **Rollie Neve**, tenor for The Four Seasons Quartet, started a column called “Quartet Quaffs”. To refresh everyone’s memory, Four Seasons Quartet had **Dan Smith** as lead, **Rich Ongna** as bari, **Tom Dahlin** as bass, and Rollie as tenor. Four Seasons was a very active quartet so there was always plenty of material for Rollie to write about. Rollie was a very loquacious individual and each column was quite lengthy with all sorts of Commodore references as well as happenings with their quartet.

I would like to resurrect the column now that quartets are resuming active performances so all in

the chapter can get to know how the chorus is being represented outside the confines of the Commodores community.

Easy Listenin’ Quartet

Easy Listenin’ kicked off live performances after a 155 week lay off by performing at an 80th birthday party on Friday, September 16 for 13 souls at a private residence. **Phoebe**, the celebrant, enjoyed the 25-minute, 10-song show as the quartet sang such favorites as “I Believe in Music”, “It’s A Good Day”, “Lida Rose”, and other crowd-pleasing songs. The penultimate song, of course, “Happy Birthday”, and to wrap up the show “This Little Light of Mine / Do Lord Medley”. As it turns out Phoebe is an active member of a book group at the church my wife and I attend so there were 7 book club members / church friends plus Phoebe’s family in attendance. It was really great to be back performing again!

NUTS!

See 2022 order forms on the following pages....

Minneapolis Commodores *2022 Nut Order Form*

Customer: _____

Additional Customer Info: _____

Description	Quantity (pounds)	Price/Lb.	+	Foil Gift Bag (Add \$1.50 per bag)	=	Total Amount
Deluxe Mixed Nuts (no peanuts) Price reduced	_____	@ \$13.00	+	_____	=	_____
Cashews, Medium Price reduced	_____	@ \$13.00	+	_____	=	_____
Honey Roasted Peanuts Price reduced	_____	@ \$5.50	+	_____	=	_____
Butter Toasted Peanuts Back again this year - delicious	_____	@ \$6.00	+	_____	=	_____
Almonds (natural whole raw)	_____	@ \$11.00	+	_____	=	_____
Almonds (salted and roasted - whole)	_____	@ \$11.50	+	_____	=	_____
Pistachios , White	_____	@ \$13.00	+	_____	=	_____
Trail Mix - Deluxe	_____	@ \$7.50	+	_____	=	_____
Pecans, Mammoth	_____	@ \$15.00	+	_____	=	_____
Walnuts , Chopped	_____	@ \$13.00	+	_____	=	_____
TOTAL	_____			_____		_____

All orders must be prepaid

Please make checks payable to: **Minneapolis Commodores**

Absolute deadline for orders: **Tuesday, October 11**

Orders available Tuesday, November 15

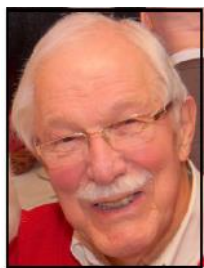
Sales Person: _____

Revised 9/2022

2022 Sales Person Order Record

Sales Person: _____

	Customer Name	Bags are \$1.50 each	Deluxe \$13.00	Cashew \$13.00	Honey Roasted \$5.50	Butter Toasted \$6.00	Almond Raw \$11.00	Almond Roast & Salt \$11.50	Pistachios \$13.00	Trail Mix \$7.50	Pecans \$15.00	Walnuts \$13.00	Total Due	Total Paid
1		rate bags												
2		rate bags												
3		rate bags												
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	TOTALS	rate bags												



Musings from a Barbershop Curmudgeon

Bob Dykstra

The Hut Four competed ten times in Barbershop Harmony Society's International Quartet Competition. One of those appearances stands out in my memory because it came so close to becoming a "what do I do now" situation.

I served as the quartet's pitch-pipe blower on shows and contests until we added a guitar and standup bass to accompany our vocals. At an international contest in the early 1960s, (I don't remember which one), we marched out to center stage as we had done many times before, bowed to the audience, and gathered around the microphone to

await my providing the appropriate pitch for our first number.

I blew the pitch and we prepared to wow the judges and the audience. There was just one problem. After blowing the pitch, I returned the pitchpipe to my coat pocket.

Well....that's what I intended to do. Instead I missed the pocket and the pitchpipe rolled to the very front of the stage, stopping just short of dropping into the judges' pit where the judging panel was preparing to evaluate our performance.

Well, as we all know....the show must go on. So we performed our first contest number, each of us wondering how we'd get the pitchpipe back in order to establish the key for our second song. Of course, the pressure was greatest on me, the "stupe" who had gotten us into the predicament. I had to plan my recovery effort to make it as unobtrusive as possible. When

we finished our first song, I bowed to the audience with my quartet mates, then immediately went to the front of the stage to retrieve the pitchpipe, trying to act as if it were part of our contest plan. Good luck with that!!

I picked up the pitchpipe, joined my mates at the microphone, and blew the pitch for our second song. Voila! Everything was back to normal. We sang our second song and left the stage as if nothing had happened. I don't recall that we suffered any major penalty for our faux pau. However....suppose the pitchpipe had rolled off of the stage and into the judges' pit. What would I have done?? I have no idea! Nobody in the quartet had perfect pitch so who knows.

I did make sure that we never faced that predicament again. Forever after I took two pitchpipes on stage....just in case.

Red Lodge Flooding

By Russ Born

On Monday, July 13th as we were driving back to our home in Red Lodge, MT we started getting reports, as well as Facebook posts about massive flooding taking place in our idyllic little town in the Beartooth Mountains, as well as the North portion of Yellowstone National Park which is 60 miles from Red Lodge over the 11,000' Beartooth Pass. Rock Creek, which flows out of the mountains and right through Red Lodge as it flows downstream to-

ward the Yellowstone River, and ultimately, the Missouri. Red Lodge, and more importantly, the mountains above town experienced an extreme rain event the previous couple of days, and now all that water was flowing downhill taking out everything in its path. The World famous Beartooth Highway runs out of Red Lodge and is one of five primary access routes to Yellowstone National Park via the Northeast Entrance. Along with Red Lodge, the North half of Yellowstone sustained massive damage. The Northeast entrance at Silver Gate/Cooke City has been closed since the flooding which took out entire sections of the only road through the Lamar Valley. We

are hearing the road will not be opening until November which means Cooke City will be isolated after the Beartooth Highway closes for the Winter (typically around October 1st).

Gardiner, MT which is located at the North Entrance (one of the highest volume entrances to the Park) will not be open this season after experiencing major washouts. As a result of the road closures, the towns of Gardiner, Cooke City, Silver Gate and Red Lodge, all who rely on tourism \$ as their primary economic resource are all devastated. Unfortunately, there will be businesses who will not survive this latest setback.

(Born, cont'd)

Red Lodge itself, as well as the Beartooth Highway leading out of town experienced massive flooding. It was estimated that the river flowage was six times normal during runoff season and was double the highest ever recorded. As a result, most of the bridges South of town were washed out. One of those bridges was located right in town at a point where Rock Creek made a slight jog. The 19th Street Bridge was acting as a diversion dam keeping the water following its original path, until it was washed out, allowing the river to start making a new channel—right up Broadway Ave. the main street through town as well as being Highway 212. Fortunately, about

three blocks from that point, the topography goes slightly uphill which kept the downtown business district from being flooded. But, there were still many homes that were either destroyed or that experienced major flooding, primarily in basements or first floors. I have included a few photos which show some of the damage. One of the homes shown was an upscale B&B and it was located adjacent to the 19th St. Bridge I referenced previously. The home was a show place and while they had mandatory flood insurance, it will only cover \$250,000 of a replacement cost exceeding \$750,000. It is sickening to drive by such a beautiful place and see a car sitting in the living room! It is just a shame, but there are many others who were equally impacted

and it will be a long time before they get back to some semblance of normal.

Unfortunately, this is the second year in a row that the local Red Lodge economy has been impacted due to natural causes. Last year, on the same day, June 13th , 2021 we experienced a massive forest fire that approached town resulting in a large part of the South end of town being evacuated. This resulted in much tourist traffic being diverted for several days. We, and this applies most to the local business owners, can only hope that 2023 will be better than 2021 and 2022!





Paul Paddock

Jim Richards Memorial Chord Candy # 145

The Ringmasters quartet recently held a contest where we had to write a tag with these lyrics: "Four pale seals in a shallow river." There they were relaxing in a river near Vaison-La-Romaine, France before a concert while on a tour in this hot summer of 2022 when they came up with the idea. This was one of my submissions, and though it didn't take the cake for their show, there's no reason why the community can't still have fun with it at least, right? It is a tenor hanger, which means tenors hold on one note while the other 3 parts do other stuff underneath. Sure, tenors, you could try to pull a **Tim Waurick** and hold the G the entire time, but you're good with singing 'in a shallow river' along with everyone else at the end. The tag could be a play on perspectives too, with the insertion of 'they're' and 'we're' before each 'four pale seals.' Perhaps the setting could be a comedy routine with one quartet being inspired by another quartet basking in the same sun, sharing the same river, and one tries to hog the spotlight like a Warner Brothers cartoon routine, or whatever bit you come up with: "Hey, they're four pale seals, and we're four pale seals..." Or you might wish to keep 'they' or 'we' both times acknowledging, empathizing, celebrating stepping outside after a long harsh winter of being cooped up inside, or whichever suits your fancy. Leads, those 6th-leaps at the beginning may be tricky, but it'll help to think "My Bonnie lies over the ocean..." You're leads, you got this! Baris, there is no typo on 'shallow'; it's a B-natural compared with basses' B-flats before. The tag ends in a glorious slide to the tonic C chord to bring it all back home, but take your time. It's meant to be a celebratory moment, with potential to be a screamer, but a relaxing screamer at least... if there was such a thing. Enjoy!"

FOUR PALE SEALS

LYRICS ARGUABLY BY THE RINGMASTERS
MUSIC BY PAUL PADDOCK

(THEY'RE) SEALS FOUR PALE SEALS, (WE'RE) FOUR PALE SEALS IN A SHAL-LOW RI - VER

(THEY'RE) SEALS FOUR PALE SEALS, (WE'RE) FOUR PALE SEALS IN A SHAL-LOW RI - VER

Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, *Beyond Baritone*



Jim Erickson

It's fun to see the friendships that develop over the years in Barber-shopping. I still have some from when I first began with the Commodores (and some other acquaintances along the way)

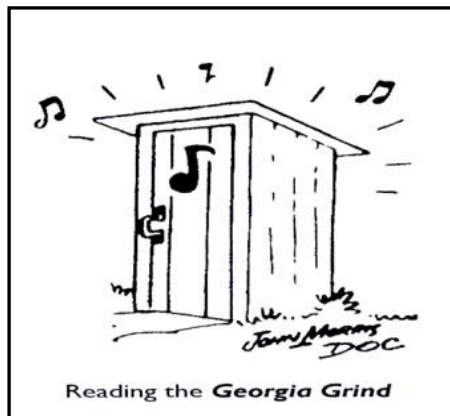
and now just a year or so shy of 20 years. Some singers have become close friends, too many are still alive but no longer active Commodores. Unfortunately, I am no longer in touch with them and way too many have now gone on to sing in a heavenly chorus (I hope). They have all come from different walks of life and been interesting in so many, varied ways,

If I can believe the stories of many of those who started singing Barbershop decades ago, many changes have taken place. "Back in the day" the chorus seemed to be much more casual and inventive possibly enhanced by a very adequate amount of the amber beverage. It seems there was less chorus action, but a lot more quartet singing. Even some lack of attention to the exact notes and musical approach, but rather a heavy emphasis on harmony and singing fun. I have heard that there was a steady progression toward more of a chorus emphasis and competition, while quartet singing held steady.

Another element that seems to have gone away for the most part is the participation of member's wives. Oh, I know many wives who got involved and with very little information and knowledge on my part and I believe they had an active Barbershop wives auxiliary. All that happened, if at all, before I became a Commodore and there only seemed vague references to whatever had been in the past. I realize the BOTY event still takes place, but that seems to be a nod to the wives putting up with having to listen to singers practicing while driving or just about anywhere else. For

me, my wife, Mary, had to listen to me practicing my baritone parts until she could stomach no more. And practicing a baritone part without any other parts playing is a sound only another baritone would appreciate. Kind of like the baby's face only a mother could love!

My kids heard me singing the baritone part so often they began to think that was the melody line. They often failed to recognize a song that was plainly a melody without a background, because they had only been exposed to the lilting baritone line. Did that ruin their ear and appreciation for music? Ah, we ruined them in so many other ways, this was a small afterthought. Life has many things you have to learn to live with and maybe this made them stronger in some way. You probably think I care...



Let's see, now. I was talking about friends made. So, I had gotten a heads up on a fairly recent friend of mine from Chippewa Falls, Wis., as he told me he was going to Minneapolis and wanted to look up the Commodores to attend one of their rehearsals. I told him I wouldn't be there when he might, but gave him location details, etc. I had sung with him and his quartet along with other quartets when we all performed at a fund-raising event for local charities. They were gracious enough to have me join when all of the quartets became one group and sang a few songs. I was with them for the last three years of their ten-year run ending just before Covid. They raised helpful amounts for some needy charitable agencies. "Hearts in Harmony"

was the name of the event and occurred close to Valentine's Day. I kind of forgot about his trip until there he was on Facebook showing a short video of singing at the Commodore's rehearsal. I would guess he had a great time that night.

Another time, I sang with the Dunn County Northern Lights chorus in Colfax, Wisconsin, and was invited to their annual dinner which, may I say, was a "hoot." There was a competition of quartets and since I was not a member, mine could only sing, and not compete. Did I mention that one of the contest requirements was that each person in the quartet had to sing a part other than their own? I'll explain it for the leads. See, if you sang lead, you now had to sing bass, tenor or baritone. Just not lead. Got it?

It was maybe a year later, my wife and I shopped for apples at a local orchard store where they had a bakery, outdoor activities, rides and all the rest. But also, the former owner had been interested in Barbershop and encouraged a quartet from the Colfax group to appear and sing for his customers. They sang some and then recognizing me, happily invited me to step in for their baritone for a few songs. Great fun and goes to show you just never know when you will cross paths with others of the Barbershop persuasion.

I'm sure you have, and will continue to have, those special moments all attributable to you being a Barbershop singer. Here's my hoping you have many more. And, if you get a chance, look up some of those no longer active. I have lost too many in the last several months. Remember, too, to hold on to that which is good, treasure the truth, be kind and get going on that Barbershop bucket list.

One more thing—If you disagree with what I have written above or would like to clarify something if I have gone astray, I would enjoy hearing from you. Even baritones sometimes need to be enlightened. Not often, but, well, sometimes...

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HERE**

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To:

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- EASY LISTENIN'
- Dick Riemenschneider.....651-487-9993
- JUST ONE MORE
- Nate Weimer.....316/204-8756
- SWYPE
- Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232
- SILVER SCREEN
- Steve Grady.....952/334-7500
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- Dave Casperson.....651/247-6319

LOOKING AHEAD

- Oct 14—LOL Convention, Bloomington
- Dec 3—Christmas Show

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**CHORD-INATOR
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Minneapolis Chapter of BHS
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LOCATION TBD
GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME**