

# Minneapolis Commodores CHORD-INATOR



OFFICIAL CHAPTER BULLETIN

January, 2025

VOLUME 81, #1

“YOU BELONG HERE”



**TONY MASON**

## Mason's Musings

FROM OUR PRESIDENT



I'm writing this on January 8th, 2025. I know that for many of you the news elicited a “Huh” or a “Wow... he was still alive?” or maybe even a “Peter who?” (*Ouch*). For me and my family, though, this was big news.

I've mentioned before: Our home is now a Barbershop home. We are ALL in. But it wasn't always that way. The music of my youth, at least until I dove headlong into New Wave, made a weird detour into Hair Band territory, and then fell in permanent and purple love with the Minneapolis Sound and came to Funkytown?

My family's music was dominated by another Minnesotan named **Bob**. And by his progenitors **Pete** and **Woody**. And even more by his votaries **Glenn**, **Lou**, and **Alex** (**The Limelitters**), **Joan**, **Judy**, **Arlo**, **Odessa**, **Paul** and **Art**, **Jerry G** (Dead too soon!) and **Peter**, **Paul**, and **Mary**. I have always loved, and will always love, this music and the community action it inspired. Thank you, **Peter Yarrow**.

I'm sure some of you are now asking why I'm taking precious space in the esteemed and newly formatted (nice job, Mark!) Barbershoppy publication detailing a love for Peter Yarrow and his ilk. 'Tis a good question, 'Tis!

The answer, my friends, is blowing in the wind (sorry, couldn't resist). The real answer: As I've spent the past two days binge-listening PP & M's catalog, 3 lines from one of their coolest songs keep reverberating in my noggin. They've made me realize - again - the impact of this great chorus. (*cont. Page 2*)



(Cont. from Page 1 - Tony's Musings)

#### Chapter Officers

President	Tony Mason
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Executive VP	Dan True
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Co-Director	Jamye Casperson
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Lead Section Lead	OPEN
Bari Section Lead	OPEN
Bass Section Lead	Dave Casperson

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#### Chord-Inator Staff

Editor	Mark Ortenburger
Proofreader	Andy Richards
Editor Emeritus	Shawn Hunter
Editor Emeritus	Hardin Olson

Here are 3 completely out of context lines from **"Because All Men Are Brothers"**:

- *"Because all men are brothers, wherever men may be"* (Singing unites us, removes differences, and fosters good will and community. I wish all men could enjoy what we enjoy. Let's keep growing and evolving.)
- *"My brothers are all brothers, forever hand in hand"* (In our case, it's arm-in-arm as we keep America singing every Tuesday night.)
- *"Let every voice be thunder, let every heart beat strong"* (Makes me want to sing another tag and then yell "IT'S GREAT TO BE A COMMODORE!")

You are amazing people. Here's to another fabulous year singing and serving together. Thank you, my brothers (and everyone else reading right now).



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# Director's Corner With Jamye Casperson



## Making Music Stick...

Memorization Giving You Trouble? Here are some strategies for memorizing your music. Whether it is a busy work/life balance or an occasional “what did I do with my keys” or just predictable “gettin’ older,” memorizing music can be a challenge. Not to worry! Here are a few practical strategies to use along with a dose of patience and you will be able to commit your music to memory.

### 1. Break It Down

Don't tackle the whole song at once! Start small:

- Focus on one section (like the intro or a tricky tag).
- Once mastered, move to the next. Think of it as building a musical puzzle, one piece at a time.

### 2. Repetition with a Twist

Repetition is key, but mix it up to keep your brain engaged:

- Sing along with your learning tracks in the car or while doing chores around the house.
- Hum your part when getting ready in the morning.
- Whisper the lyrics as a bedtime routine—it's like counting sheep but with harmony!

### 3. Write It Out

Studies show writing helps with memory. Try this:

- Write the lyrics by hand without looking.
- Then check your work and fill in the gaps.

### 4. Use Visual Anchors

Some of us are visual learners.

- Picture the lyrics as images or associate them with a scene.
- Example: “Down by the old mill stream” could be paired with an image of a serene riverbank.

### 5. Sing in Slow Motion

Practice singing the song *super slowly*. This reinforces accuracy and lets you savor every note and word. Gradually increase the tempo as it becomes second nature.

### 6. Get Physical

Incorporating movement can help lock in the memory.

- Use gestures or subtle choreography that align with the lyrics. (these can be planned or created by you)
- Walk in rhythm with the song while practicing to add a kinesthetic element.

### 7. Revisit Often

Even after you've memorized the song, revisit it regularly to keep it fresh.

- Quick daily run-throughs can reinforce your recall. Our songs are usually less than 3 mins—easy to fit into your day.
- Don't let “performance mode” sneak in too soon—*focus on truly mastering the music.*

### 8. Be Kind to Yourself

Our brains are like muscles—they get stronger with practice. Don't stress if it takes time to memorize a song. Celebrate small victories, like getting through a tough passage or remembering a lyric you always mix up.

### 9. Lean on Your Learning Tracks

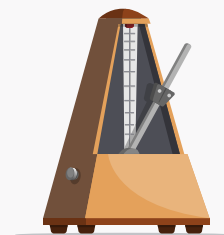
Barbershop learning tracks are your best friends. Listen passively while driving, cooking, or relaxing—it helps build familiarity without feeling like extra work.

**Remember:** You're not just memorizing notes and words—you're telling a story, creating emotion, and sharing joy. The more connected you feel to the music, the easier it will be to commit it to memory.

Happy singing! 🎵



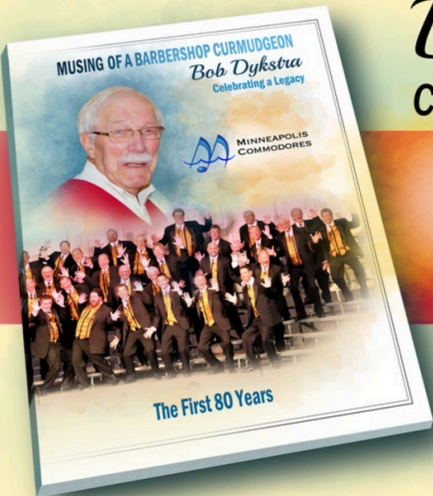
## Markin' Time



The Minneapolis Commodores are ready for a very busy 2025. If you will indulge me I'd like to take a brief look backwards. Among the many people we have to thank, and space doesn't allow for all of them, I'd like to highlight one individual, **Shawn Hunter**. Shawn was the editor for the Minneapolis Commodores CHORD-INATOR for 6 years. In the publishing business that can seem like a lifetime. He understood quite clearly that the editor's role was to manage a journal that serves several purposes. The Chord is an educational tool, an informal news source, a place to record our history, and a journal that helps us celebrate who we are, what we've achieved and just why we have so much darn fun singing and enjoying each others company.

Thank you Shawn, and I'll try and keep your great work moving forward.

As you'll see on the following pages, the Minneapolis Commodores and Minnehaha Academy, our gracious hosts once again, shared the stage for a wonderful Holiday Concert. The highly enthusiastic audience heard a varied program that included the Commodore chorus, The Minnehaha Chamber Singers, and 11 other groups in various configurations, from quartets to larger ensembles. Some of us were lucky enough to have an opportunity to sing with the very talented singers from Minnehaha Academy.



*Musing of a Barbershop Curmudgeon*  
*Bob Dykstra*  
Celebrating a Legacy  
MINNEAPOLIS  
COMMODORES  
The First 80 Years

*Bob Dykstra*  
Celebrating a Legacy

A collection of Bob's articles  
originally published in the  
CHORDINATOR 2014-2024

75 pages of Barbershop history

HARVEY WEISS (no credit cards) **\$20**

[harveyw137@gmail.com](mailto:harveyw137@gmail.com)



Minnehaha Academy Chamber Singers  
 Minneapolis Commodores  
 Spirito, MCX and Quartets present

# Good News! Holiday Concert



SUNDAY DECEMBER 8, 2024 4:00 PM

Minnehaha Academy Upper School  
 Hognander Chapel



## Minnehaha Academy Chamber Singers

**Director: Karen Lutgen**

Soprano 1: Ruby Brown, Linnea Pihl  
 Soprano 2: Maddy Deems, Finley Lefebvre, June Paradis  
 Alto: Jaeda Hutchinson, Maddie Railston, Sophia Smith  
 Tenor: Fritz Reding, Levi Reed  
 Bass: Eirik Howland, Harry Kirkpatrick, Justin Libbus, Patrick Linder

### Spirito

T: Henry Hedberg, Calvin Reed L: Miles Felder, Jonah Schimelpfenig  
 Br: Peter Dubord, Raji Mamo B: Turner Hyder, Sam Menya

## The Minneapolis Commodores

**Come Sing with Us** – The Commodores welcome men who love to sing and have a desire to grow as a singer. Join us every Tuesday night at 7:00 pm at **Oak Knoll Lutheran Church 600 Hopkins Crossroad, Minnetonka, MN 55305**

Email us at: [getinfo@minneapoliscommodores.org](mailto:getinfo@minneapoliscommodores.org)

**We are grateful for our Sponsors:** Chuck Guthrie for his special donation, HOB0 Inc, Matthew Cronin, the Ortenburgers, Harvey Weiss, Thomas Kwak, the Caspersons, the Riemenschneiders, Chad Steeves, DA Financial Advisors, The Wigleys, the Bloomquists, Jay Peterson, Just One More, Thrivent, Northern Pines Brigade, Birchwood Financial, BOMPI, Swype, Amy Wakem, Hopkins Tire & Auto, TR's Barbershop, US Legacy Promotions, Lakeville Tire and Auto, The Glenn Communities.

### MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES

Good News! arr. Jay Althouse  
 It's Beginning to Look Like Christmas arr. Willis Diekema

### HALL PASS

Little St. Nick arr. Jon Nicholas  
 Dave Bechard, Tony Mason, TJ Striblen, Dave Casperson

### MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES

Silver Bells arr. Greg Lyne  
 When Christmas Comes Around arr. Adam Scott

### EAR DOCTORS

Hear Comes Santa Claus arr. Marshall Webb  
 Oliver Nicholson, TJ Striblen, Harley Lentz, Morgan Baumbach

### MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES

It Came Upon a Midnight Clear Sears and Willis  
 Silent Night Franz Gruber

### SWYPE

Warm and Fuzzy arr. Pete Benson  
 Ken Wentworth, Conrad Ward, Mark Bloomquist, Andy Richards

### SWOMP

A Doo Wop Christmas arr. Kirby Shaw  
 Swype + BOMP

### BOMP!

In the Still of the Nite arr. Tom Gentry  
 Harvey Weiss, Bill Walkowski, Mark Ortenburger, David Wall

### CINEMATIX

Happy Holidays arr. Adam Scott  
 Auld Lang Syne arr. Don Gray  
 Steve Grady, Shawn Hunter, Scott Zoellner, Andy Richards

### ELEVATOR MUSIC

Caroling, Caroling arr. Larry Wright  
 Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas arr. Larry Wright  
 Sarah Spedding, Grace Mason, Debbie Mason, Jamye Casperson

### INTERMISSION – 15 Min

### JUST ONE MORE

Joseph's Lullaby arr. Gary Lewis  
 You're a Mean One Mr. Grinch arr. Greg Volk  
 12 Days of Christmas arr. Noah Walker  
 Nate Weimer, Tony Lapakko, Matt Richards, Ben Wanggaard

### SPIRITO and BOMP!

Jingle Bells arr. Ed Waesche

### MCX

The Man With the Bag arr. Dave Briner  
 Mary Did You Know arr. Theo Hicks

### MINNEHAHA ACADEMY CHAMBER SINGERS

Ding a Ding a Ding arr. Greg Gilpin  
 Lullay My Liking arr. Gustav Holst

### Finale Ensemble

Joy to the World



**The Commodores at the 2024 Holiday Show**



**Hall Pass Quartet at the 2024 Holiday Show**

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**Spirito & BOMP at the 2024 Holiday Show**



**Minnehaha Academy Chamber Singers at the 2024 Holiday Show**

## Dick & Marge Riemenschneider honored by the Commodores



*Commodores President's Award*

**A PROCLAMATION**

*Inasmuch As, The Minneapolis Commodores have a special responsibility to recognize and honor meritorious service;*

*And Whereas, **Dick Riemenschneider** is an honored 26-year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society and the Minneapolis Commodores;*

*And Wherein, **Dick Riemenschneider** has been extremely generous with the time he has donated to the chapter in many different roles, perhaps none more important to the Chapter's fiscal well being than Nut Chairman;*

*And Forsooth, in the manner of some other great duos such as Sonny & Cher, The Captain and Tennille, and Karen and Richard Carpenter, Dick has had the great fortune to have at his side, the equally talented and generous giver of time, his Co-Chair, **Marge Riemenschneider**;*

*And Whereinsoever, the indefatigable Riemenschneiders have admirably served the chapter for the past 18 years with their leadership accounting for 43,200 pounds of nuts sold and over \$185,000 that went into the Commodore's operating fund;*

*And Verily, Dick has constantly sought to enhance this vital program over the years by applying continuous improvement techniques that have yielded significant benefits in quality, efficiency, and affordability;*

*And Notfor naught, With his unending supply of patience, Dick has educated, nay attempted to educate, his yearly team of minion baggers that the concept of a "tare" has ancient roots in both the philosophical and mathematical worlds, which he often demonstrated by putting Descartes before the Norse;*

*Be It Hereby Resolved, The Minneapolis Commodores are extremely proud to present this President's Award to **Dick Riemenschneider**.*

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*On this Nuttiest of Days* *Tony Mason, President*



**Dick and Marge Riemenschneider** were honored at our recent Holiday Show Afterglow with a Proclamation and hearty thanks from **Tony Mason** and **Steve Grady** for all the work they have done over the years for our key fundraising activity - The Commodore Nut Sale.

Over the years they persevered through 6 a.m. "meet the delivery truck" calls, losing their entire garage for months on end, cooking up gallons of chili for the hungry nut baggers, and providing loads of positive good will that kept the operation going.

After 18 years Dick was happy to step aside and assume the role of Nut Chairman Emeritus wherein he will continue to advise the new Nut Chairman, **Dan Williams**, with all the wisdom he has accumulated over the years.



Tony Mason  
Dick R.  
Steve Grady





# Recognition for Kaden Ofstad in BHS Livewire

## BARBERSHOP NEWS

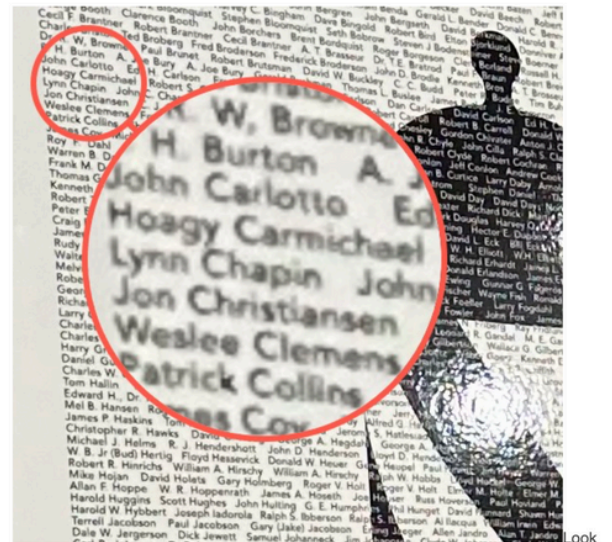
Chapter anniversaries

Four score and 1,568 members ago...



The venerable [Minneapolis Commodores](#) celebrated their 80th Anniversary this year with a Fall show highlighting their eight decades. New member Kaden Ofstad's show poster for the show (with souvenir copies in the show program) honored all 1,568 Commodore members going back to the chapter's founding.

You may remember that **Kaden Ofstad** created an amazing poster for our 80th Anniversary Annual Show. His poster shows every Commodore member from our inception in 1944 to 2024. Kaden's accomplishment received recognition from the **Barbershop Harmony Society**. The two pages seen here (to the left and below), along with the comments, were the lead article for their November 14th Livewire Bulletin that is sent out periodically to all BHS members. As seen below, Livewire chose to highlight the name of **Hoagy Carmichael** who visited the Commodores in 1950 (see picture below) and was named an honorary member of the chapter.



closely at Row 19 to spot famed songwriter Hoagy Carmichael, who was indeed a member of the Minneapolis Commodores!

# Barbershop “This or That” With the Commodores Tenor Section

**Jamye Casperson**



Get ready to learn more about the Commodores tenor section in a fun and quirky way! We asked them to choose between some tough options in a classic 'this or that' game."

Tags or Polecats?

Tags: Kevin H, Grady, Harvey

Polecats: Ken K, Tom B, Bechard, Ken W

“both have their place”: Dick R

Quartet or chorus singing?

Quartet: Ken W, Harvey, Ken K, Bechard, Grady

Chorus: Kevin H

“both have their place”: Dick R

Outfits: Formal or casual?

Formal: Ken W, Ken K, Bechard, Grady (Hip formal)

Casual: Kevin, Tom B, Harvey

“both have their place but formals for Singing Valentines”: Dick R

Favorite part: Tag or intro?

Tag: Bechard, Kevin, Ken W, Harvey, Grady

Intro: (crickets)

“both have their place”: Dick R

Ballads or Uptunes?

Ballads: Kevin, Tom B, Ken W (“Ring those chords”), Ken K

Uptunes: Harvey, Bechard, Grady

“Uptunes for the audience, ballads for the singer” Dick R.

Classic barbershop or contemporary arrangements?

Classic: Ken W, Ken K

Contemporary: Harvey W, Kevin H, Tom B, Bechard, Grady

“both have their place”: Dick R

Stay tuned...next issue Barbershop This or That with the Baritones (ooohh aaaahhh)



## No Frosty While Driving



Sometimes it is the editor's role to inform when something of interest crosses the desk. While some might see the following as worthy of publication, others might characterize it as something that was unearthed from a bottomless grab bag of useless information, however on we go. Following a little analyzin', recognizin', itemizin', summarizin', and realizin' (notice I didn't say antagonizin' although that judgement remains in your purview), I present what I view to be some interesting, and possible life-saving information from an article that was published prior to the recent holidays.

Some research from the South China University of Technology indicates that songs with 120 or more Beats Per Minute (BPM) have psychological and cardiovascular effects that increase the likelihood that a motorist, while underway listening to music, will engage in dangerous driving habits which can lead to an increased risk of a crash.

The researchers concluded that drivers listening to light music, about 80 BPM or fewer, changed lanes about 70 times an hour, while those listening to rock music (the "vehicle" for study used here) made up to 140 lane changes an hour. The "rock drivers" also drove between 5 and 10 miles per hour faster on average. Motorists listening to music with 120 BPM or more were associated with an increased risk of an accident.

So what does this have to do with me and the holidays you might ask. An organization identified Christmas songs as the most dangerous to listen to while driving. The worst song of them all (not Rudolph) turned out to be "Frosty the Snowman". It's 172 BPM and "thump, thump, thump" lyrics make this a high risk for drivers. The second most dangerous song, with 150 BPM, is Mariah Carey's, "All I Want for Christmas is You". "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town", "Let it Snow, Let it Snow", and several other holiday songs also start edging into the danger zone.

Consider yourself warned and rest assured that you now have quite a few months to prepare yourself for a "No Frosty Driving Christmas" in 2025. You may want to look at some of your favorite Barbershop up-tunes and see if they should be given a PG-17 driving rating as well (I'm looking at you Freddie Mercury with "Don't Stop Me Now").



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**SWYPE:**

Mark Bloomquist ..... 612.325.9349

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**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**MCX** ..... January 24  
(Opening for Minneapolis South H.S. Band Concert)

**Valentines** ..... February 14

**BOTY Party (TBA)** ... June

**Annual Show (TBA)**... September

**District Convention**.... October 10-11

**Holiday Show (TBA)**.. December

**The Commodores meet  
every Tuesday at 7 pm:  
Oak Knoll Lutheran Church  
600 Hopkins Crossroad, Minnetonka 55305**

**Guests are welcome but please  
contact us in advance so we can meet  
you at the door  
(Neal Mortenson [nmortenson@usfamily.net](mailto:nmortenson@usfamily.net))**

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