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WHOLE WORLD SINGING

CHORD-INATOR

BARBERSHOP
HARMONY
SOCIETY



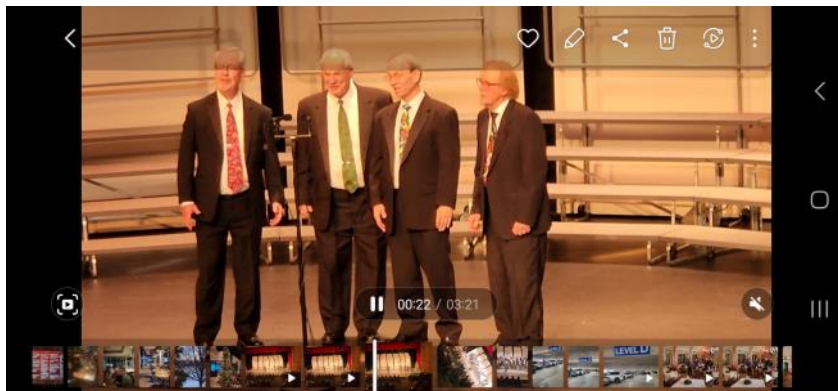
MINNEAPOLIS
COMMODORES

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

10,000 LAKES DIVISION - LAND O'LAKES

DECEMBER 2022 - VOL. 78 - NO. 6

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays!



**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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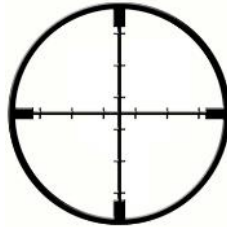
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Hunter's Bullseye



Shawn Hunter

My Brothers in Harmony (and **Jamyie**, of course): As we close out this year, I am counting my blessings to be associated with such a great group. I had a blast at the Christmas concert. All of the groups sounded fantastic and we had a great variety of sounds that the audience really enjoyed. I especially got a kick out of watching Jamyie's high school singers down

front rocking out to various up-tempo songs. It is really encouraging to see the next generation truly enjoying themselves through music.

I want to thank all of the leaders of the chorus, but especially our outgoing President, **Harvey Weiss**. Congrats on a job well-done, sir. You are leaving the chorus in a better place and have navigated our continuing Covid challenges beautifully. THANKS!

Finally, I sincerely wish each and every one of you the happiest of holidays and the merriest of Christmases.



The Prez.



Harvey Weiss

Steve Hartman is a photojournalist with CBS. Recently, in a segment of **Kindness 101**, he has been examining a variety of dimensions of the word *Gratitude*. These segments have appeared on **60 Minutes, CBS Mornings and CBS Sunday Morning**. His two elementary children **Emmett**, and **Meryl**, assist him on these broadcasts from their home.

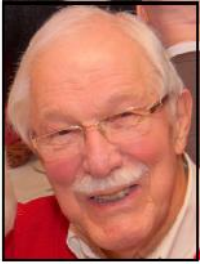
As Commodores, what should we be grateful for? Let me count the ways. Hartman's kids devised a way for people to keep track of things in their daily lives for which we should be grateful. It works like this: Put 10 pennies in your pocket and see how long it takes for them

to disappear, one for each time you find something or someone for which you are grateful. How long will it take me to get 10 new pennies? Where do I start to look?

First, showing my gratitude is not to be limited to just holidays. It should be extended to my daily life, year-round. But this holiday season is a good time to start. Initially, I can begin by looking around at what I have been so fortunate to have had in my life. My family, jobs, hobbies and sustainable good health. These are all good starting points for me. But.....

What about my interpersonal relationships? What matters most to me? Who and what do I benefit from having that relationship? Who can I show more kindness to that have been kind to me or served me and others well? Like people in those service jobs who keep us all running our lives smoothly every day. Workmates, relatives, friends, and the list goes on. You can pick the ones who matter the most.

Let's all make somebody's day better with a simple, "I appreciate what you are doing for me and thank you."



Bob Dykstra

Musings from a Barbershop Curmudgeon

Recently, **Mark Ortenburger** loaned me his treasure trove of Minneapolis Chapter Show programs dating back to 1955. I arrived in Minneapolis in June of that year so I was not in the chapter on the date of that show. I had a great time paging through the programs, especially those from the 1950s, the early years of my Barbershop experience and of the chapter's cooperative agreement with the University of Minnesota in staging our annual shows. These shows, starting in 1951, were held at Northrop Auditorium.

Our initial negotiations with the University's Department of Concerts and Lectures resulted in the chapter's agreeing to certain stipulations: (1) We would provide a professional skit as part of the show; (2) We would bring in at least three "outstanding" quartets to headline the show; (3) We would provide an all-male show unless we received permission to do otherwise; (4) We would conduct an extensive ticket-selling campaign; and (5) We would donate a portion of our show proceeds to the Special Equipment Fund of the Variety Club Heart Hospital.

A perusal of the show programs from the 1950s indicated that we met four of the five stipulations with flying colors. (1) We developed wonderful skits on a variety of topics and supported them with top-notch sets and staging. (2) We

annually hired memorable "show" quartets as well as those who excelled in Barbershop Harmony Society competition. (3) We sold tickets!!!! (4) We made significant contributions over the years totaling more than \$300,000 to the Variety Club Heart Hospital.

I've always wondered about the stipulation that we stage an all-male show. I have no idea how or why that clause found its way into our agreement. Moreover, I doubt that we ever produced such an anachronism. Our skits included female characters. The 1957 show, in fact, was named "The Pageant to Beauty" and featured Miss Minnesota, the Aquatennial Queen, the Winter Carnival Queen, and seven other area queens. Then too, as early as our second show under the agreement (1952) one of our headline quartets was the popular Chordettes from Sheboygan, Wisconsin, by way of the Arthur Godfrey shows on radio and television. We also featured through the years the Note-Cracker Sweets, Music Gallery, and Four Star Collection, area Sweet Adeline International Queens of Harmony. And who could forget the 1958 Commodore show which featured a quartet named "Three Chips and a Block." The "block" was long-time Commodore **Bob Reed** while the "chips" were his three young children including six-year-old daughter, **Marcia**, who belted out the lead to a few old chestnuts in grand style. Ironically **Marcia (Reed) Starnes** was to return to the Commodore Show Stages many years later as the bass of both Music Gallery and Four-Star Collection.

Paging through those early show programs brought back memories of my early quartet experiences. I was not involved in the February

1955 show because I was teaching school in Cedar Grove, Wisconsin. I was, however, an active participant in the 1956 production and in most of the rest of the 20th century productions. Chapter shows were aptly titled "Parades of Quartets" in the 1940s and 1950s. Take the Minneapolis 1955 annual show, for example. Chorus competition was new to the Society; the first international champion had been crowned in Washington, D.C. the preceding June. As a result, emphasis on chorus singing was just beginning to emerge as the major focus of chapter meetings. So chapter shows were literally for the most part "Parades of Quartets." (It's interesting to note that the chapter at the time met only on the first and third Tuesdays of each month at the Elk's Club; I expect that changed shortly thereafter as the chorus became a/the more important focus of the meeting. The Commodores competed in their first international chorus competition in Chicago in 1959).

The Minneapolis Chapter was well-positioned to stage Barbershop shows that depended on quartets to carry the load. The March 1956 Harmonzer carried a photo of twelve registered quartets active at the time in our chapter. A number of those were excellent "show" quartets who sang together for years (Hut Four, Atomic Bums, Gay Nineties, Lake-Aires, to name a few) and were chapter show stalwarts for years.

So let's examine the 1955 Parade of Quartets as an example of our chapter shows of that era. The theme of the show was "Showboat" and an appropriate stage set was constructed. The first half of the show was comprised of a skit featuring the Minneapolis

(Dykstra, cont'd) Chapter performing a grand total of five numbers as part of the skit and five chapter quartets who also performed as part of the story being told. Upwards of three thousand Barbershop fans were likely in the seats.

Following intermission, the assembled audience likely participated in a community sing, although the show program doesn't list it. Such audience participation was a standard and popular segment of shows and contests at the time. It was then time for the "outside" quartets to do their thing, which brings up another characteristic of a 1950s show. It was very common to bring in an emcee for the second half of the show. Well-known local radio personality/newspaper man, **Cedric Adams**, served in that capacity in 1955. We also brought in radio/television personality from Omaha, **Lyle DeMoss**, on occasion as well as a renowned story-teller from Menominee, Wisconsin, **Ed Phelan**, just to name a few. It was apparent we wanted a professional emcee who would contribute more to the show than merely introducing the quartets.

Now for the post-intermission quartets. On our 1955 Parade of Quartets we brought in the Cardinals from Madison, Wisconsin, and the Barber-Q-Four from Chicago, both finalists in international Barbershop Quartet Competition and both well-known audience favorites. We featured the Four Hearsemen from Amarillo, Texas, the reigning second-place international quartet medalist. Also performing on the second half of the show were Minneapolis Chapter quartets, the Atomic Bums, also international quartet finalists, and the popular Gay Nineties who were typically introduced as the quartet

which never won a contest nor ever lost a show. (The Gay Nineties lived in Montevideo, Minnesota, but were members of the Minneapolis, Chapter and made regular appearances on its Parade of Quartets).

The 1955 show was very much like the rest of the shows produced during our years of performing shows at Coffman Union, the last of which was held in 1977 (although we did return ten years later for a seven-year run). In later years, of course, the chorus played a larger role in presenting the music and fewer "outside" quartets were contracted.

I can't conclude this remembrance of the Commodores' 1955 show without commenting on one of the chapter quartets, doubtless the youngest foursome to appear, the Four Flips. The personnel were **Joel Kleschold**, tenor; **Chuck Guthrie**, lead; **Don Sundt**, baritone; and **Dan Gustafson**, bass. This quartet caught my attention because individually they became very close friends of mine when I joined the Minneapolis Barbershop Chapter just a few months after the show in question. As a few of you old-timers know, I came to Minneapolis/St. Paul to sing with the Hut Four which had organized in 1953 at Fort Riley, Kansas, had now been discharged from the army, and planned to resume its singing career. Our army baritone, **Bob Moksnes**, however, decided to get a "real" job and left the quartet. And that's how my friendship with two of the Four Flips began.

John Hansen, the Hut Four's bass, lived in Minneapolis, was a member of the Minneapolis chapter, and knew the quartet men in the Four Flips casually, especially **Joel Kleschold**. John also was aware that

the quartet had disbanded shortly after the annual show. He knew of Joel's quartet experience and ability, and asked him if he would be interested in joining the Hut Four as its baritone. Coincidentally, Joel had just hours before agreed to sing with the Aquatennial Quartet during the 1955 summer season. However, he suggested that John contact **Don Sundt** about his potential interest in joining us. Don enthusiastically expressed his interest.

Voila!! The Hut Four had its baritone! And I not only had a quartet mate but a lifelong friend who served as the best man at my wedding a year later. I in turn presented a eulogy at his memorial service many years later. Dan Gustafson, Joe, Don, and I were fellow chapter chorus members for many years. In 1958, all four of us competed in the International Quartet Contest in Columbus, Ohio, Dan and Joel with the Lake-Aires, Don and I with the Hut Four. In our retirement years, Joel, Don, and I sang for years in a Barbershop/golf foursome we named the Dream Quartet. **Chuck Guthrie** meanwhile settled in Rochester where he directed the chorus, did a lot of quartetting, and sang baritone in the 1967 Land O'Lakes District gold medalist quartet, Gemini Crickets. Chuck is now back in the Twin Cities (during the summer) following retirement and he, Joel, and I are regulars at the Friday Lunch Bunch That Meets on Thursday. Imagine this. The three of us met in the middle 1950s through Barbershopping and our pursuing higher education at the University of Minnesota. Seventy years later we are still close friends and still participating in and enjoying our wonderful hobby.

IT'S GREAT TO BE A BARBERSHOPPER!!!!



Paul Paddock

Jim Richards Memorial Chord Candy # 146

Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas was written in 1943 by **Hugh Martin** and **Ralph Blane** and introduced by **Judy Garland** in the 1944 MGM musical *Meet Me in St. Louis*. **Frank Sinatra** later recorded a version with modified lyrics. In 2007, ASCAP ranked it the third most performed Christmas song during the preceding five years that had been written by ASCAP members. In 2004 it finished at No. 76 in AFI's 100 Years...100

Songs rankings of the top tunes in American cinema. I set this in a comfortable range for most voice parts; maybe a tad on the low side for tenors. The chords are all close with some light dissonance happening in some of them, and some doubling-up, but it has a feel, as though you're bidding somebody good-bye in remembrance for the holidays. Some major 7ths and the ending on an inverted 9 with the 7 omitted. An abridged version of this tag would be simply just doing the 2nd line. It doesn't have to stay in tempo; 2nd line can be more rubato with 'merry' & 'Christmas' 2nd-syllables held, leading to the ending note, as a suggestion. Enjoy this tag!"

Have Yourself a Merry...

Hugh Martin/Ralph Blane/John Fricke
arr. Paul Paddock



tenor lead

And have your - self a mer - ry lit - tle Christ - mas...

bari bass

And have your - self a mer - ry lit - tle Christ - mas

5 *rit.*

Have your - self a mer - ry Christ - mas now!

now! Have your - self a mer - ry Christ - mas now!

Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, Buyer Baritone



Jim Erickson

Buying presents for Christmas this year is a sleigh full different than last year. Some of those remembrances of all the adjustments we personally, and as a choir, had to make fade a little, but there are a few holdovers that we have gotten used to. Or at least we don't give such things as a mask a second glance. I didn't love the masks. With glasses, they fogged up even in warmer weather as so many of you know. Then you bumped into things or stood there until your eyes could make out where to take the next step. On the other hand, I didn't have a cold or allergies for those two or three years of masking and that was really worth the precaution.

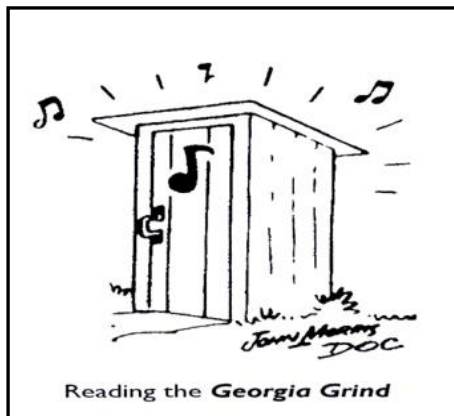
My wife and I spent our Christmas during the pandemic alone in our home with less decorating, but a few old items from the past that brought back many memories. And Zoomed, of course, with the family. But there was real hesitancy to be out in large crowds or even where a few were gathered. So, isolation became one of the solutions. Another was to have someone shop for you or deliver to your place and many offshoots along that line. But all in all, we found new ways of doing things, tried foods we hadn't tried, enjoyed the free time isolation provided and went through closets that had seldom been touched.

Why do I pull all of this out of the past? OK, watching the news the other day, the reporter was at a large shopping center. Yeah, it was Mall of America. But the story was the same at the other large centers, too. Shoppers came out in droves, the numbers a bit unexpected and, more importantly, to the excitement of retailers everywhere. Spending billions of dollars at the start of the season. There was, though, a bit of a surprise.

More than a few said they weren't

exactly shopping. Browsing, soaking up the lights and holiday showings in stores and noting what they might buy. To sort of quote one young woman, "I'm just getting an idea for presents and for me, but to make sure I get my size or whatever, I'll just order them online." In answer to the reporter's question why she was here in the crowded parking, herds of shoppers in the walkways and stores, and restaurants, and...?" She answered that she "had missed the excitement of all that was going on, talking with others, people watching, sharing stories or comments, the promotions, and all the hub-bub everywhere." It was a longing to be in an upbeat group like this once again. Something like returning to some kind of normal in spite of all the world is churning through right now.

Oh my! Erickson has lost it again. He



Reading the *Georgia Grind*

is supposed to be writing about Barbershop singing for a Barbershop publication for this fine chorus, and he is talking about buying socks during the holidays. Weeellll, maybe. But what I have seen in people lately is that they are longing to get back into some kind of normalcy. So much is in turmoil that associating with others as in years gone by seems to satisfy a longing in so many ways.

And what could be a better association with others than singing in a chorus, quartet or/and VLQ. Maybe I'm not looking at the best tea leave blend right now, but it seems the Commodores could use this trending opportunity to encourage former members, new members and even Zoomers to become involved in this great men's group. The time seems to be ripen-

ing! (Can time really ripen?)

Now before the pandemic, the reported analyses were showing people falling away from joining groups. Of any kind! So, they showed across the spectrum of various organizations the memberships were dwindling as age groups reflected their beliefs and commitments. Who knows if and when this might swing back the other way, but there may be hints along the line of what those holiday shoppers mentioned? And if that's true, then don't you think we Commodores should step it up and encourage all those we can think of to become part of our chorus. You have seen all the benefits of becoming a Commodore and in a nutshell, it's just plain fun to sing Barbershop!

Each of us travel in various circles and cross paths with good singers in all walks of life. And some of these guys are just a rehearsal or two away from joining with other men in a life-long hobby. I have enough years on me to be proof of how long singing can be enjoyable!

So, what do you say? Look around, talk to anyone who shows interest, maybe dig out that "I Sing" button to stir up a conversation. Contact former members. Think about how you got started and use that if possible. Again, let's see if we can "Keep the whole world singing" in ever growing numbers.

In the meantime, remember to hold on to that which is good, treasure the truth, be kind and get going on that Barbershop bucket list. To give you an example of my being kind, notice that I didn't say anything mean about lead singers. Had to bite my tongue, but I promise to be much more kind to them in the future. Whether they deserve it or not. (Until the New Year, anyway...)

Hope you enjoy the holidays as we start to envision all the good things the future may hold for us. And keep singing! Dash away, dash away, dash away all...

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**1st CLASS
POSTAGE
HERE**

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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
- Mark Ortenberger.....952-250-0968
- 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
- HALL PASS
- Dave Casperson.....651/247-6319

LOOKING AHEAD

- Jan. 7 LOL Leadership Training
- Jan. 10 Joint rehearsal with Stillwater
- Sept. 23 Annual Show

The *Chord-Inator* is available on the Minneapolis Chapter's website minneapoliscommodores.org

**CHORD-INATOR
MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES
Minneapolis Chapter of BHS
MEETING EVERY TUES -7:00
p.m.
LOCATION TBD
GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME**