

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 DISTRICT

MARCH 2015 - VOL. 71 - NO. 3

3rd Annual NPHB Hits New High

By David Speidel, Ass't Director [Brigade President]

Wow! What a great weekend of singing, outright laughs, and camaraderie! Seventy-six guys from all regions of the US and even Canada helped us successfully complete our 3rd Annual Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Rally. The Canadians (All 7 of them!) were pumped up after missing last year's event due to the Snow Storm of the Century. We also had a record number of Commodores, 21 at last count. Many of the 21 were rookies to the Brigade experience and now they all know why we emphasize "over and over" about being **Totally Prepared**.

I wouldn't be surprised if we see a few more quartets forming as a result. One of the highlights of the weekend was when we sent the Rookies off with **Gary Jacobson** to practice one of the ten required songs, and then perform it for the veterans. They literally blew us away! I personally experienced the proverbial *hair-raising goose bumps*. You all know what I'm talking about. I would have placed an 84 on their score sheet.

Our own **Bryan Langren** was recognized as a *Quartet Tramp* this year. Contrary to the name, it is a rather prestigious award. When you register you get a dance card with the names of all the other attendees and their voice parts. You have to somehow sing with approximately 60 other individuals in quartets by the end of the afternoon on Saturday. I get exhausted just thinking about it. Commodores making their mark on the Quartet Contest stage were **Tony Lapakko**, **Jeff Culp**, **Mark Bloomquist**, and **Ben Wanggaard**. These men finished in one or the other of the top-three quartets. Our own "**Judge Judy**" **Olson** with **Judd Orff** and **Duane Rygg** judged the contest.

The evening show included a fine parade of quartets that included our own *Swype and Hot Commodity*. They helped fill the evening-show program due to the unfortunate cancellation of *Sound Image*, former Commodore **Todd Mattison's** quartet from Willmar. The Sweet Adelines' quartet, *Medallion*, did a wonderful job taking the headliner spot, and as always, gave us some great music. Judge Judy, in her somewhat inimitable way as the guest director for *Blue Skies*, shifted the chorus into overdrive much to the delight of the audience and the most-appreciative performers. And there were many **Commodore** connections this year!

Early Friday morning **Ken Wentworth** took a busload of about 35 Brigaders, with several Commodores, to four area high schools, Armstrong, Cooper, Park Center, and Washburn, where they performed before about 350 young men and women. One boy was so excited about what he heard that he brought his parents, three sisters and a brother to the Saturday-evening show. I had a chance to chat with the family and they were absolutely amazed at what they saw and heard. I'm hoping to get the dad down to one of our chapter meetings. It just goes to show that we need to spread our message of harmony out into the community more often.

Ken received this note from a grateful teacher:

It was an absolute joy to have you perform for us. It is always exciting to see the students perk up when that first chord is sung! They were still talking about it today

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**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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"Tis better to give ... "

By Gordy Aumann, President

So, as I was wrapping up my pre-benefit concert preparation I got to thinking; why are we doing this? Just because we're all good guys? No, it's because community service is what we're about. Community service includes vol-



Gordy Aumann

unteering. Since I've retired from full-time work, I've been a volunteer for the organization we recently sang for, the *In-ternational Communication Association*.

I've driven people to doctor's appointments, sorted and stocked donated food and worked on other short term projects. You can't believe how fulfilling it has been! We are all so blessed and giving back to those less fortunate feels really good.

Find an organization. Find a cause you believe in. Talk to your pastor. Every city has a food-shelf and they all need help and so do lots of other service groups. Try it you'll like it! *It's Great to be a Commodore!*

Brigade from Page 1

and those that went to the concert on Saturday were so excited to be able to go! Thank you again for contacting us and please keep us in mind in the future!"

*Park Center High School,
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota*

Kate Kallevig

As **Paul Wigley** mentioned to us at this past Tuesday's (February 24) Chapter meeting, that you Commodores have to take time to appreciate belonging to a well-above-average chorus and fine group of dedicated men. Many guys coming to the Brigade really don't have a chapter like ours but belong to smaller chapters where they will never get this experience. They just don't have available singers that can sing

Oh, to be in England ...

Robert Browning 1845

By Paul Wigley, Director

Becky and I just returned from a wonderful two-week adventure to the UK. My primary purpose for that trip was to assist the British Association of Barbershop Singers, BABS, and LABBS, the Ladies Association of British Barbershop Singers at a judging seminar held in Walsall, England.



Paul Wigley

It was so exciting to see the enthusiasm that the Brits have for Barbershop singing! They also have a very good grasp of the evolution of the Barbershop style, as well as a good understanding of the traditions that must be preserved. It will be exciting to see the future musical growth in those groups, because they have some candidate judges that are all quite young, yet very impressive with their musical skills and coaching abilities.

We were treated to wonderful hospitality, and there was a genuine sense of camaraderie among all of us. One always hopes will be the case! All were there for one reason, the love of Barbershop music! It was quite humbling for me to actually

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in quartets. It gives me personal pleasure knowing that our NPHB team is providing a fundamental activity that is supposed to be core to our society. Thanks again to the Commodores for your support and encouragement of the *eXtreme Quartet Experience!*

Hardin Olson took off his Editor's cap and volunteered his photographic skills to memorialize the event. View a selection of his photos soon to be posted to our website www.nphb.org



UK from Page 2

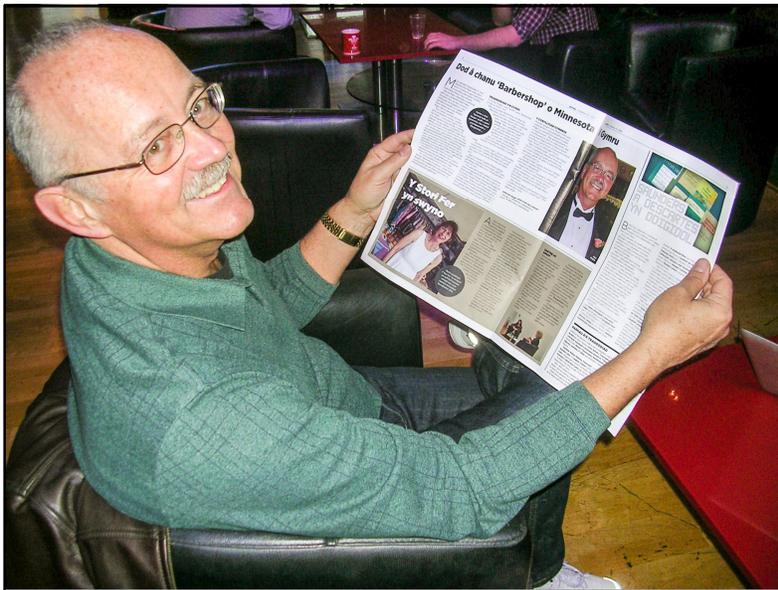
realize that I was across *the pond* to represent our BHS judging community. The world seemed incredibly small, especially when we ended the whole weekend with *Keep the Whole World Singing* ... pretty unforgettable!

I also conducted two Barbershop workshops in Wales. The first was in north Wales, in Caernarfon (where Prince Charles had his investiture) at the *Canolfan Gerdd William Mathias Music School*. This was a beautiful facility, having mixed chorus of about 20 students who had already learned a couple of Barbershop arrangements I had sent them. We were also joined by a LABBS chorus from Mold, and a few BABS guys from the island of Anglesey. It was a great night, with about 50 people total--And could they ever sing!

People indicating in advance that they were coming were sent music files via e-mail and thus were prepared. We also sang some tags, and at one point I picked four volunteers to sing a tag as a quartet. It was cool to see four people who had never met before ... singing (And sounding good!) in four-part harmony.

The other workshop was near Cardiff

in south Wales, at the Acapella Studios. This venue is actually a very old church that has been magnificently re-purposed into a recording studio and performance hall. This workshop also had about 50 people, but 48 of them were women!



Taking a break with all the news that's fit to print ... in Welch! Rough work but someone's got to do it. (Nice tux, Paul.) Becky photo

So, I basically pitched all the music up a few steps, had all the men sing bass (along with the LABBS basses), and away we went! This was also a fun evening, because there was an entire LABBS chorus from Cardiff present, and also a girls' choir (That were incredibly good!) from the area. Each group performed a song, and then we sang tags. I talked a bit about the origins of Barbershop, and what makes Barbershop music unique. There were lots

of questions like, "How did it get the name Barbershop?"

We also talked about the differences between Barbershop and other a cappella singing. Everyone was really interested in something that the Minneapolis Commodores get to do every week!

I could go into a lot more adventures that we experienced (Yes, I drove on the wrong side of the road --but had no accidents!) We visited lots of my Wigley relatives, and it was great to get back to our old country (Becky also has Welsh roots!). Interestingly, I will be returning this July to judge the "Choir of the World" contest (which Westminster won three years ago!). I received that invitation while I was over there, so that will be another exciting experience.

Again, the entire time, during these Barbershop workshops and judging seminars, made it clear how we are all so closely connected when we sing together. Truly, the world would be a better place if everyone could share what we get to share every Tuesday at House of Prayer.

It is great to be a Barbershop singer, and great to be a member of the Minneapolis Commodores!

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

By Bill Warp, Treasurer

From the meeting of February 19

- **Membership:** Andy Tate was approved for membership. Copies of the orientation pamphlet are available for new members in Berthilson Hall.
- **Music and Performance:** The

annual Como Park performance will be July 21.

Al Matchinsky's proposal to implement the *Inner Game of Music* program was approved.

A push for show-ticket sales will be made.

- **Old Business:** Dan Cole's motion to proceed with the replacement of our truck with a suitable trailer was approved.
- **Miscellaneous:** Andy Richards will replace Vince Trovato on the

Board.

Andy Cook requests riser help on Friday, March 13.

The searches are on-going for a Groupanizer manager and assistants for Loren Berthilson.

Rich Ongna would like help with *Sunshine Hotline*.

Next meeting March 19 at Wooddale Lutheran Church.



SUNSHINE HOTLINE



By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: ddongna@usfamily.net



Rich Ongna

Paul Martz, who sang bass with us until he moved to Georgia, has been diagnosed with kidney cancer. He came back to MN to be tested at the Mayo Clinic but will be receiving his treatments in Atlanta. The pathology reports have revealed it to be a rare and aggressive strain.

Pete Villwock has been diagnosed with congestive heart failure. As a result he has had to quit his job and has moved in with his mother. According to her, his condition is such that he may not be able to return to sing with us. Pete's new address is 3666 E County Line N, Apt 302,

White Bear Lake, Minn. 55110.

Bob Dykstra has returned home after spending some time in cardiac rehab at Benedictine Health Center. He is doing well and is in good spirits as the healing process continues.

Jim Jorgensen has some torn ligaments in his knee as a result of a fall on the ice back in mid January. He said the doctor also indicated something about a torn meniscus. His wife, **Romana**, also continues to be in a weakened condition and Jim tells me she may have to move into a nursing home as she requires more care than he can give.

Leo Odden's family plans to have a celebration of Leo's life in early May. We'll keep you posted with details .

John Odden, Leo's son, did not receive his kidney transplant on February 19th as planned. Some health concern with the donor delayed it. According to **Sharon** it is nothing serious and the plan is to do it in about two weeks. John is of course disappointed but feeling good and doing well. Sharon will keep us posted.

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 not feeling well.

Happy Birthday

- 03/14 Nancy Cook
- 03/17 Ken Jones
- 03/17 Dan Krekelberg
- 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



February Reenlistments

- Bob Dillon.....4 yrs.
- Kaleb Smith.....5 yrs.

Editor's Note: There are members, veterans, yearlings, several regulars, who have yet to pay their 2015 dues.

Not only is this a concern of our roster numbers but any unpaid-dues member singing in the March competition will effect the immediate disqualification of the Commadore chorus thereby eliminating it from the District contest in October. PLEASE, PAY YOUR DUES!

Letters

*Editor's Note: Following is an excerpt from Kim's Feb. 9 e-mail reporting that her dad, **Bob Dykstra**, was moving to rehab following his successful open-heart surgery.*

... I'm so glad to see that you are all going to use my late husband, Larry Ajer's, *Inner Game of Music*. Larry's writing and brilliant ideas for this program, were seconded by Barry Green, the original Inner Game strategist. Larry really worked hard to put this together for the Barbershop Music form. I am excited to know that Larry's legacy is continuing. He was a great guy, and I loved him very much.

Steve and I continue to keep his legacy going through the Larry Ajer Endowment. We have a party at eve-

ry International Convention to benefit his legacy and Endowment. Steve is very involved and has read all of Larry's writings . (I was lucky to marry another Barbershop enthusiast!)

Thanks for the shout out in the last Chord-Inator. I loved that Fibber Magee and Molly show, and have fond memories of the great time we had singing on that show. It was one of the few shows that all three of us were on together. Lou was in that Championship Quartet with me, Dad sang with the *Salty Dogs* on that show too. How fun! Thank you for the great memories....

Love to you all and thank you, from my heart, for all you do!

Kim [Dykstra] DeVoss, CFP

Go to **Letters**, Page 5, Colimm 1

Letters from Page 4

*Editor's Note: At a break during the HPH Brigade's Saturday-evening show, in passing I remarked to **Jim Richards** that I noticed a Brigader or two who I thought weren't really active in their chosen chapters.*

A few days later by e-mail I asked Jim if he had any thoughts on the subject. Following is the cogent reply.

...Each Barbershopper cannot be blamed for seeking that type of activity that feeds his Barbershop appetite. Each chapter should strive to provide interesting and challenging activity that earns the attention and devotion of the Barbershopper. This includes quartetting. I am very

pleased that the brigades are starting to do this for those who have not had this experience within their chapters. I am pleased that the Society is embracing the brigade concept and even has brigade sessions at Harmony University. Maybe, the Society is sorry that they didn't think of the Brigade concept!

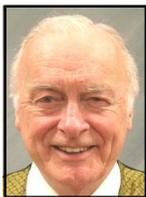
Since our founding-years we have become a consumer of popular music as opposed to a society of producers of music. This may explain why now fewer people are drawn to quartet singing that requires a higher level of musical responsibility than chorus singing. This trend has led to our Society membership that consists primarily of those men who

seek to sing in a chorus only. This trend has caused us to drift further and further from our original function of "preserving quartet singing." We used to have chapter meetings. I wince when I hear a member say, "I'm going to rehearsal."

**"UNDER THE
BIG TOP"**
 April 11, 2015
 Two shows 3:00 & 7:30 p.m.
 Benson Hall
 Bethel University
 Tickets
 Diana Pinard 612/927-9363
pinardbbs@g.com

Chord Candy #131

by Dr. Jim Richards, Der Tagmeister



May I Never Love Again was sung by the 1992 International Champions, *Keepsake*. This tag has a "lot of dots," so for the faint of heart, just try the last four measures and you will get a sample of the wonderful arranging skills of Renee Craig, a Sweet Adeline and a quartet champion in her own right. Renee has made tremendous contributions to our Society's musical literature and without any doubt, if our rules permitted it, she would most certainly be a member of our Society's Hall Of Fame. So now that you know just how very good this tag must be, try starting at Measure 1. Enjoy!

Words by SANO MARCO

Music by ERICKSON JACK
 Arranged by RENEE CRAIG

Tag

Tenor Lead

Bari Bass

1 2 3

You're the an-swer to my prayer, but if your love is - n't there, may I never, No, I'll ne-ver

4 5 6 7 8

a-gain, No I'll ne-ver love ne-ver a-gain!

love a-gain!

ne-ver love gain, a-gain, No, I'll ne-ver love ne-ver a-gain!

NORTHERN PINES HARMONY BRIGADE



HOT COMMODITY: Paul Swanson, Tony Mason, Ben Wanggaard, and Dave Speidel,



SWYPE: Ken Wentworth, Conrad Ward, Bill Ward, and Mark Bloomquist



THE BAYTONES: Rod Johnson, Larry Komo, Dan LaBarre, and James MacLean



Steve Zorn
Fri. Emcee

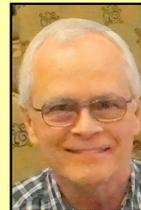
JUDGES



Judd Orff
&
Sat. Emcee



Judy Olson



Duane Rygg



MEDALLION: Denise Baber, Jan Rick, Patricia Ostrander, and Angela Blackwood



CHIPS: Jerry O'Brien, Randy Knaack, Steve Hein, Tom Arneberg.



The ubiquitous microphone

**CROWNE PLAZA
HOTEL - WEST
PLYMOUTH,
MINNESOTA
FEB. 20-21, 2015**



Ken Wentworth



Conrad Ward



Mark Bloomquist



Bill Ward



Gary Jacobson

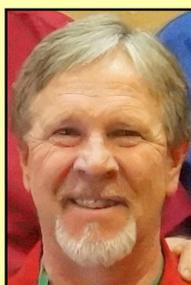
COMMODORE BRIGADERS FEBRUARY 20-21, 2015



Bryan Langren



Paul Swanson



Dave Speidel



Ben Wanggaard



Jeff Culp



Tony Lopakko



Jim Richards



Andy Richards



Matt Richards



Dick Riemenschneider (ctr.)



Nate Weimer



Jeff Sansgaard



Dave Casperson



Ben Hancock



Andy Cook



Paul Paddock



Chuck McKown

Quartet Quaffs

Easy Listenin'

The *Easy Listenin' Quartet* had a busy month. Valentine singing started early on Tuesday, February 10, with a Singing Valentine for a young lady at a musical-play practice at East Ridge High School in Woodbury. Her fiancé coordinated from the east coast as the quartet waited patiently for her to arrive during the aftermath of the late Tuesday snowstorm. When she arrived she took a chair-of-honor on center stage as the quartet serenaded her, and the 50 others in the theater, with the typical valentine songs plus some other numbers in a brief performance. After a ten-minute song session the amateur thespians insisted that the show must go on and the quartet was taking valuable practice time so we departed after a round of enthusiastic applause.

The Friday of Valentine's Day kept us going from 8:00 a.m. to an early finish at 4:00 p.m. We sang six paying gigs and also took time out to sing for convalescing Commodore Pete Villwock at his new home in Mahtomedi. About 100 heard us sing on Friday at gigs that spanned from Mahtomedi on the east to Minnetonka on the west with a finish in Eagan.

Saturday we had a very tight starting schedule with 20-minute, back-to-back gigs at 11:30 a.m. and noon in south Minneapolis and Golden Valley respectively. With creative scheduling we started the first gig ten-minutes early, which allowed us to drive to Golden Valley and start the second gig ten-minutes late. The first gig was our fourth visit to the Mount Olivet Care Center in south Minneapolis.



Dick Riemenschneider

Four years ago a fellow wanted a Singing Valentine for his aging mother-in-law so we were dispatched to complete the gig at the center. He and the residents liked our singing so much we sang there the next two years. Unfortunately, his mother-in-law passed away last December but this fellow is still very attached to the place where she spent her last years. To show his appreciation for the nice social atmosphere where his mother-in-law spent her last years he hired the quartet again to entertain the residents.

The next gig was in the cafeteria of the Colonial Acres of the Covenant Village in Golden Valley, an assisted living facility. We sang for about 35 residents and guests as they had their Valentines Day noon meal.



Judy with Dick, Rod, Dan, and John Riemenschneider photo

We then moved to Anoka to sing a regular two-song Valentine for lead **Dan Slattery's** mom at her senior residence. When we arrived we found that, unbeknownst to us, she had assembled about 50 residents in the lobby. Not wanting to disappoint and having ample time we did another 20-minute set to the enjoyment of all. To assure we got enough miles on driver **John Carlotto's** car we finished out the day with back-to-back gigs in Maple Grove and south Maplewood. We sang for the wife of a family of four in Maple Grove and then traveled to south Maplewood for our final gig.

First, some background for the South Maplewood gig. We have sung Valentines for at least eight - years for a Day Surgery nurse at United Hospital in Saint Paul. This

lady saw an opportunity to turn the tables on her husband so she hired us to sing at a dinner party for her and her husband at the home of other friends. Since we have sung for this lady so many times we put on another mini-concert in the living room; a very nice way to wrap up another Valentines Day. Over 120 people from Maple Grove to Maplewood heard our Valentines Day Saturday singing.

Easy Listenin' Quartet also took over for the *Sounds of Renown VLQ* to sing at a benefit at *Maynard's Restaurant* in Excelsior. The VLQ has had a long-standing relationship with Maynard's and their two benefits every year, however, the VLQ did not have enough members to complete this gig this year. This benefit was for the Minnetonka Diamond Club that supports youth baseball, softball, and football. Maynard's part in this is to give their profits from one day of operation to the organization. As a result the benefited organization crams all the supporters they can into Maynard's for a meal to maximize their return. These

benefit days also feature entertainment for the diners.

Thus, *Easy Listenin'*, filling in for the *Sounds of Renown VLQ*, arrived on the scene on Monday, February 16. We filled our allotted hour of entertainment strolling the tables and providing Barber-shop sounds for the diners. By rough count we sang for 200 people during our hour and we were very well received. If monetary



Rollie Neve

tips for our songs were an indication of success we were able to expand the Diamond Club coffers by over \$125.00 that was donated to the cause by diners enjoying our music.

Dick for Dan, John, and Rod

Four Seasons

“And so they got married and lived happily ever after ...” That’s the beautiful story line of love and romance, the joy of which comes to everyone’s attention in February on Valentine’s Day. The *Four Seasons Quartet*, with **Mark Ortenburger** subbing for **Tom Dahlen** on bass, became singing ambassadors, delivering *Singing Valentines* to surprised recipients in the Twin Cities area on Friday and Saturday, February 13 and 14.

On Friday, our first stop was at the Maplewood Cancer Center where Pamela McCabe was receiving treatment for Stage-4 brain cancer. Her husband was there to encourage and to express his love for her. We sang to other patients in the room as well, helping to lift their spirits as they face the rigors of their medical treatments.

The staff and some students and teachers at Sharon Hills Elementary School were delightfully surprised at our next stop when we broke out in song for Marilyn Klos, a Special Ed teacher. We could tell from her bearing that she had a genuine love for her students and we were blessed to return in song some of the love that she so freely offers. You might say that we gave to the elementary level a taste of higher-level harmony education. Marilyn’s smile warmly rewarded us for our music.

Edina was our next stop as we searched out Wendy Anderson in the Radiology Department at Fairview Southdale Hospital. Once again the sounds of harmony wafting through the hallways brought approval from all within earshot. Wendy was impressed and delighted. While waiting for an elevator, a lady asked us if we would sing for her comatose mother who was on a respirator on another station. We sang to her hoping that

somehow our effort might register in her subconscious. The staff were most appreciative of our visit.

On Saturday, the 14th, we sang for Monie Carlson at the Martin Luther Care Center in Bloomington. Her husband and four family friends were there to share in our gift. They were impressed with our ringing Barbershop chords as evidenced by their smiles and happy faces (Jake would have been happy to see them and might have even have taken photos to show the chorus). Monie said to us, “You made my day!” For that we made her an honorary Mary Lou singing *Mary Lou* as a bonus.

Rich Ongna’s neighbor, Betty, be-



Marylyn Klos with Rollie, Dan, Mark, and Rich *Rich Photo*

came the ultimate recipient of our valentine venture’s largesse when, unannounced, we walked into her room at the Shriner’s hospital in Bloomington where she was recovering from a knee replacement. She was overwhelmed and thanked us profusely. (That was quite neighborly of Rich, which is why I always call him our *Rich baritone* (Rare praise’ indeed, for a baritone, I do admit).

If you haven’t experienced the fun and excitement of the *Singing Valentines* program, I urge you to try it next year. It’s a breeze compared to singing in front of your chapter-mates and the practice will most likely benefit our whole chorus

Dear hearts, there are exciting developments in the ongoing saga of the ringing-chord-caper involving yours truly and that foundational baritone,

Gentleman **Jim Erickson**. You are all aware of the hours of investigation he has invested in this saga, and the many avenues explored in the diligent search for a solution to bring peaceful closure to this affair. There were, in fact, suspicions that the barons of Baritonía were involved in devious diversions. At one time the idea of hacking into Jim Erickson’s apps file was even considered.

Which brings us to the arcane answer to the chord-ringing-caper; the answer lying within the rhetoric of the Georgia Grind itself. Fortuitously one evening, while deep in thought, a small voice, most probably in the Key of G said to me, “Read the Grind!” I did and lo and behold, here are the words verbatim, “ There are whole frequencies of Erickson’s hearing-range that are now dead after listening to hours of archival recordings hoping to hear something revealing about the Grind!” There you have it!

Our beloved baritone suffers from frequency failure. No wonder that the issue of frequency failure factored into the rehearsal session that put into question the purity of the *tenor* voice. My heart is full of forgiveness and compassion for our beleaguered baritone. Let us embark on an emergency baritone-frequency-restoration program. The prayers and supplications of the entire Barbershop world will, I’m sure, be with him and will ensure his recovery. Just the thought raises goose bumps on my skin and the reinforcement that results at every Commodore chapter meeting brings joy to my heart. So rejoice, dear hearts, our solution is secured. His inherent talent speaks for complete success.

It’s great to welcome a restored baritone. It’s great to be a Commodore!

Rollie for Dan, Rich and Mark (for Tom).

Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, Bound Baritone



Jim Erickson

As I write this, I am multitasking. Not my greatest talent, but I need to go over my tools list and supplies as I venture to southern Florida in a quest to root out whatever more I can about the origins of the Georgia Grind. My fellow adventurer will be **Tom Hallin** of former Commodore Bass Section fame. He lives in Naples, Florida, in winter and has offered his shack on the beach as a base camp from which to reconnoiter. Let's see, check these off: beach umbrellas, water bottle, sunscreen, map, snacks, folding chair, a few odds, no ends. That should about do it. Tough trekking, but there are no limits to what I will endure for you, dear reader.

And talking about enduring, in my last article I wrote about trying to antagonize **Doc Hardin** by ever increasing the font size on my drafts. He still hasn't acknowledged that I did such a thing. By happenstance, I came across an article draft that probably followed my font growth drafts and reflected my frustration with his silence. For a heading, I had typed a letter "G" for instance and then hit the return button. Then typed an "E" and so on. What I ended up with was a stack of single letters vertically spelling out Georgia Grind. Strange, isn't it, what boredom and one-way communication frustration can lead to.

I probably tried several other things to tweak Doc, but he is perturbably, imperturbable. I suppose I could add in some grammatical errors and misspellings, but since I am one of the intrepid Chord-Inator proofreaders, I would only have to correct my own intentional errors. That's no fun at all! Of course, when I catch Doc making

an obvious error or oversight, he just says it was a trap he laid to see if I was on my proofing toes. Maybe I'll keep that in my elder bag'o tricks, so when my mind doesn't track as well at some far future date, I'll just pull out Doc's coverer.

Having mentioned proofreaders, I should say that an especially talented one for the Chord-Inator is **Bob Dykstra**. I haven't medically verified that proofing caused him the need for some surgical attention. I hope not. But, I wish him a solid recovery and little need to hug that heart-shaped pillow the hospital provides to stabilize a chest when a cough comes on. Heart-shaped Valentines are one thing. Heart-shaped hugging pillows something else.



Reading the *Georgia Grind*

Thoughts go to Bob for a steadily improving recovery with what has always been a good heart of his in so many ways.

Complete change of subject, but it bugs me. And I don't know if it's even true. Here goes. Do you keep a bottle of ice water—maybe even with ice cubes or other ice forms—at hand for rehearsals or performances. Some thinking is that a dash of cold ice water before singing causes the throat and vocal cords to contract and tighten, resulting in less than best singing. Better is lukewarm beverage, they say. Why don't you give the tepid a try for a change and

see if it makes a difference. Ice water hurts my teeth anyway. Wonder if it affects dentures?

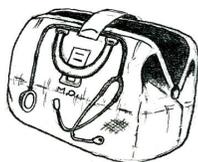
Another subject right turn. My daughter, Sarah, recently gave me a card. She said it didn't apply to me, but thought I would get a kick out of it. Did I believe her? I'll leave that for you to guess. The card said, "Everything happens for a reason. Sometimes the reason is that you're stupid and make bad decisions." Personally, I don't see how that could possibly apply to me, but to you, smart reader ... ? No. No reader of mine.

Solidly orient yourselves because here's one more change of direction. Keeps your compass spinning more than **Jim Richards** has **Chord Candy** tags! Unless you have been living in a rabbit hole for the last couple years, you must have heard about the book and movie, *Fifty Shades of Grey*. Haven't read or seen either, but I understand they are almost as sexy as a baritone. Hey, maybe I should write a book along similar lines. How about *Fifty Shades of Baritone*? No, skeptics, the premise would not be categorized as fiction.

It could tell of a singer encountering his first Barbershop quartet and beginning to realize the unfulfilled promise of a new, more adventurous journey into the world of Baritonia. Seeking an experienced baritone and learning all things baritone, he could find all the pleasures, and some of the pain, of the baritone personality. Maybe he could become so enamored of the baritone life, that he creates baritone bumper stickers and sells them online. Then, with his most popular sticker, "Go Baritone or Go Home," he could become a multi-millionaire. Sorry, but my mind has wandered just a bit. Enticing, though, isn't it.

Time to depart, but I'll leave you with something with which to impress your friends. Which is the *Go to Grind*, Page 11, Column 3

Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor



Hardin Olson

You should have been at the Crowne Plaza Hotel-West in Plymouth, Minnesota, on Saturday, February 21, for *Drivin' Me Crazy*, a stunning Barbershop show offered by the *Northern Pines Harmony Brigade*.

In preparation for the Brigade rally, each man attending must learn the ten prescribed arrangements perfectly and be ready to sing any and all of them in 15 or 20 quartets during the two-day get-together.

The final scheduled event then is the Saturday evening show featuring an exceptional chorus made up of the 76 attendees; and following, a parade of guest quartets.

With only about two hours of actual chorus practice the sound produced by the group was phenomenal and certainly exhibited potential for an A-level score were they ever to be judged by a Society panel.

However, most exciting for your Editor was the sight of 21 Commodores in the group, young ones and older ones, all having a time of their lives. They have set the bar several notches higher for the Minneapolis chapter and I fear that if we of the lesser voices don't meet their challenge we may lose some of them along the way.

Moral: *Commodores do your homework and be prepared.* A dedicated Barbershopper will always try to pay it forward by striving with his chapter compatriots to improve his musical abilities and to promote positive interaction with his audiences, earning their praise while demonstrating to them that Barbershop is a respectable art-form.

Many of us might not have the drive or the stamina to learn and have note-perfect and quartet-ready, ten very difficult charts in two or three months but we certainly ought to be able to master two or three chorus numbers in that time. So, Commodores, let's all take the bull by the horns, put our noses to the grindstone, turn off the TVs, polish our pitch-pipes, (don't sell your golf clubs) and always learn our music ASAP.

Anyone who has been around me even for a short time knows that I am extremely thick-skinned and that I rarely show emotion even in the most dire of circumstances. But at this writing I have to admit that finally something has gotten to me.

Last Sunday, the day after the Brigade, I finished the editing I had begun Saturday evening, of the 200 pictures I took at the rally. That done I proceeded to put them on the web and then e-mailed them to a half-dozen Brigade principals.

Much to my surprise (not really) to date I have received not one oral, written, e-mailed, or otherwise, word of thanks from anyone. Not that I was expecting any but after 13 years of bulletin editing I have learned to roll with the punches. (My skin has become a lot thicker over that span.

Addendum: Last Thursday, February 26, at the regular TFLBTMOT luncheon, Brigader **Steve Zorn** could not thank me enough for my work on the pictures. Even more gratifying was his effusive praise for **Judy's** [my much-better half] masterful direction of the NPHB chorus with the *Blue Skies* number.

Thanks a bunch, Steve!



**8th Annual
BHS Open**
benefiting
**Harmony Foundation
Elk River Country Club**
**Monday
August 10, 2015**
12:00 p.m. start
**Register on line at
bhsopen.com**

Let's put the
capital
"B"
in Barbershop

Grind from Page
rect version, Gray? Or Grey? The answer, good friends, is ... both. Both spellings are acceptable, but "Gray" is used primarily in the United States. "Grey" is used in Great Britain and areas using UK English. Now, when someone asks if you have read the book, or seen the movie, you can distract them by smiling knowingly, and then asking, "Never mind those, do you know the correct spelling of Grey? (Here project a cunning smirk.) Or, is it Gray?" Grinders, I have given you a tool to disarm them. Now, you are on your own.

And speaking of being on your own, now is the time to make your own Barbershop Bucket List. Too, keep on recruiting and hold fast to that which is good.

Please Note: This article was assembled from 90% recycled materials. No trees were spared in the production of the creative or entertaining ideas contained herein—if any whatsoever.

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

Logo courtesy of Bob Clark

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- FOUR SEASONS
Rollie Neve.....952/470-2129
- HOT COMMODITY
Dave Speidel.....612-437-4325
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Harvey Weiss.....763/439-4447
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- TRIPLE Q.....VLQ
Dave Speidel.....952/941-7153
- TURNING POINT
Judd Orff.....651/439-3108

To:

LOOKING AHEAD

Chapter Level

- March 19, **Board Meeting, Wooddale Lutheran Church**
- March 28, **10,000Lakes Division Contests**
- April 9, **Tech rehearsal for "Under the Big Top", Benson Hall, Bethel University.**
- April 11, **"Under the Big Top". Benson Hall, Bethel University.**

District Level

- October 23-24, **Fall Convention, Rochester, Minnesota**

International Level

- June 28 - July 5, 2015, **International Convention, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**

**2014 Barbershopper Of The Year
 Rod Vink**

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

- Gordy Aumann
- Kim DeVoss*
- Jim Erickson
- Rollie Neve
- Hardin Olson
- Rich Ongna
- Jim Richards
- Dick Riemenschneider
- Dave Speidel
- Bill Warp



CHORD-INATOR

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