

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

APRIL 2016 - VOL. 72 - NO. 4

## Paul Wigley remembers ...

I have no idea of where to begin when talking about a man that I admired and respected as much as Jim Richards. In fact, my "circle of barbershop life" keeps coming back to Jim over and over again, and every memory makes me smile with ever-present gratitude.

The first contact I ever had with Jim was when I first started singing Barbershop, and at virtually the same time attended Harmony College (in 1979). I was a young hot-shot choral director with training at the University of Minnesota, so I knew everything ... until I sat in Jim's *Physics of Sound* class. I had never heard ANYTHING like this about tuning in four years of college! Every second of that class I was amazed with the knowledge that was pouring out of Jim. And he looked like the crazy professor with all of his oscilloscopes, synthesizers, speakers, computers, etc, etc! I still tell everyone in the choral world that my entire concept of tuning acappella singing is founded on what I learned in one week from Jim Richards.

My next contact with Jim was as a quartet singer with the *Favorite Sons* from Mason City, Iowa. Our local coach, **Ron Phillips**, was good friends with Jim, and arranged for us to come up and have a coaching session with him (and additional coaching sessions with **Judy Olson**, nee Ode, and **Bob Spong**. Small world!) Jim warmly welcomed us into his home, and proceeded to fine-tune our quartet to the point that we ended up being *21st in the world* that following summer. That coaching session with Jim was in 1981.

Our paths next crossed after I became a certified judge in 1986, and Jim was heavily involved in the Sound category as a judge. He was also on his way to becoming the International President. I basically admired him from afar for a few years, but we always remained in contact.

I was judging the International contest in Pittsburgh (1994), and came across Jim in the hotel lobby as I was

checking in. It was the rare occasion that **Ebie** did not accompany Jim to an International contest, and he casually asked if I had anyone rooming with me (Becky had not accompanied me, either.) I said, "I've got extra room." ... and we figured we could save a few dollars by rooming together at that contest. What a great week! I thought as a judge I'd get some special privileges, but that was nothing compared to the little things that a past International president (my roommate!) received! I ended up eating lunches, breakfasts, and schmoozing with all the big movers and shakers of the Barbershop Harmony Society. It was fantastic! And Jim and I had a chance to once again resume our close Barbershop friendship.

Then there were many years that we were fortuitously able to judge at the same contests around the country. It was always a great weekend with Jim on the judging panel and it was a certainty that there would be tag singing happening when we were not actually working.

So, how odd did it seem when the circumstances aligned that I became the director of the Minneapolis Commodores ... the very chapter in which Jim Richards had been a member during all but the first few years of his Barbershop career? And what a boon for me to be able to have that source of knowledge and leadership within the chorus and to make taking the job as Commodores' director much, much easier!

Once I began directing the Commodores, rehearsals were often punctuated with a comment from Jim about some theoretical/arranging issue that basically no one in the entire room understood. When I could counter back with another music theory reference, his only remark would be, "I love it when you talk dirty like that!"

Jim also supported many of my high-school quartets by offering to transport them to youth festivals, to coach  
*Go to Wigley, Page 2, Column 2*

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Richfield, MN 55423**

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## Remembering Jim

Hi, Doc.

I just opened the March Chord-inator and I can't tell you how saddened I am to hear about Jim's passing. He was such a gentleman and a great inspiration to so many of us, especially us basses. Jim was one of the first Commodores I met, as he and the rest of Grandma's Beaus auditioned me. For the audition I sang the lead part for "Let Me Call You Sweetheart" with Jim, Bob Griffiths, and Mike Stump. After the audition he was very encouraging and excited to have another new Commodore on board.

When I switched to bass I always tried to stand next to him on the risers because I knew that there was no one better to lean on for the correct notes. Occasionally, he would give me the shoulder shrug and the thumbs up sign to let me know that I was a bit below the correct pitch so that I could make the necessary adjustment

I loved it when he would start explaining the "physics of sound", even if, after a few minutes of listening to him, my eyes would glaze over and I would have to ask Don Milton, "What in the hell is he talking about?" Don would just look at me with that great smile of his, and that twinkle in his eye, and respond, "Don't you just love it when he talks dirty like that."

### Wigley from Page 1

them, etc. He was an incredible mentor to many of my singers, and James **Souhan** is one of the products of the Richards' encouragement of young Barbershop singers.

With my high-school groups, many times (as they were complaining about standing for a total of about ten minutes...) I used Jim (in his 80s) as an example of "I've got guys in their 80s in the Commodores that stand for two hours and never sit down! You young kids can stand for ten minutes!" (Insert ranting-teacher voice here ...) Then, after nights of all that rehearsal, Jim would invariably be the very last guy singing tags at the afterglow! Many nights I came home exhausted, and I realized that Jim (in his late 80s) had completely blown me away

Even after I moved to Madison and would come up to The Cities for an annual show, Jim would make a point of coming over to say hello and ask me if I was singing with any other chorus. I told him that I was singing with the Madison Diocesan Choir and all he said was, "Just as long as you keep singing!" I also remember how supportive he was to me when I tearfully called him from the hospital to inform him that Joe Houser had passed away. Jim was a great man and he will be missed by many.

Also, I can't believe how many Commodores we have lost since I moved away from Minneapolis. It seems as if every few months or so I find that dreaded black border on the front page with news of another passing - Joe Houser, Mark Sathe, Vern Halvorsen, Loren Wuttke, Loren Berthilson, Wes Hatlestad, Merrill Miller, Jack Beaver, Leo Odden, and quite a few others who were from before my time. I'm afraid of who might be next to join the celestial chorus. Whoever he may be, he will have a great bunch of guys waiting to welcome him. Please say hello to everyone for me.

Vince

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi, Hardin, thanks for the note.

I'm not sure that Jim's passing was featured in an issue of *LiveWire*, but he's certainly one deserving of being *Go to Jim, Page 3, Column 2*

with his energy ... *an amazing man.*

Commodore rehearsals were always more inspiring when Jim was in the room. Everyone knew of his pursuit of accurate pitch! When the chorus sang with consistent accuracy, I could always look up and see Jim with a big smile on his face. There was nothing better than seeing that smile of satisfaction--I knew the Commodores had done it the right way.

Dr. Jim Richards was the epitome of class. He was the gold standard for caring about others. He wanted only the very best for everyone. His vision for Barbershop was pretty simple-- *Enjoy singing with others*. If I can be half the caring man and Master Barbershopper that our great friend, Jim Richards, was, my life will be worthwhile. Gosh, I miss him so much. I love you, Jim.

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*Jim from Page 2*

mentioned in every single form of communication available to us. I can confirm that we created a page in our Society website's News and Events Section here, honoring Jim, at :

<http://www.barbershop.org/>

**in-memoriam-jim-richards/**

And this post was shared on the Society's Facebook page which currently has over 21,000 members of the page itself, so news of his passing was shared by many, many people, and many sympathies were expressed via our Social Media channels in the Post and Comments Section.

On a personal note, I was saddened to hear of Jim's passing, as we have been playing in the Barbershop Dixieland band together now for about a decade (Jim on bass, me on clarinet). We most recently jammed together at the Reno Midwinter. I'm not sure any of us knew he was even ill. He looked great and as always he played the bass fantastically ... This is probably the memory of Jim I'll always have. This is the Jim I knew, and I know from hearing other people's stories about him that he was a true gentleman in every sense of the word. I only wish I could have known him even better.

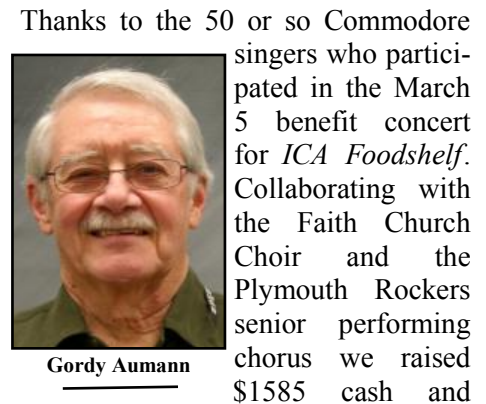
*Eddie Holt, Society Webmaster*

## Happy Birthday

04/16/1945 Dan Slattery  
04/19/1999 Marc A. Duran  
04/20/1940 Chuck Gribble  
04/24/1944 Bob Dillon  
04/26/1954 Walt Macwicz  
04/29/1937 Dan Smith  
05/04/1929 Dale Lynch  
05/05/1939 Roger Meyer  
05/06/1940 Rich Ongna  
05/09/1936 Jim Windey  
04/12 Janet Johnson  
04/14 Char Carlotto  
04/15 Barb Aronson  
04/15 Janet Huyck  
04/18 Kathy Nelson  
04/19 Sarah Hartmann  
**04/20 Romana Jorgensen**

## From the Prez ...

*By Gordy Aumann, President*



**Gordy Aumann**

Thanks to the 50 or so Commodore singers who participated in the March 5 benefit concert for ICA Foodshelf. Collaborating with the Faith Church Choir and the Plymouth Rockers senior performing chorus we raised \$1585 cash and checks plus 237 lbs. of food. That's a 30% increase over last year's effort. Peg Keenan, ICA Director, thanked us for our wonderful show and generous donations, explaining to all in attendance that the need in the Western suburbs of Minneapolis continues to grow, and our efforts are very much appreciated. In fact, wouldn't we do it again next year during March Foodshare Month?

Now it's time to polish our music and antics for our show at Bethel University on April 16. Show-chairman **David Speidel** and his team have come up with great songs and dialog to go *Way out West*. It's up to us to prepare for the long trek and to take our audience along with us. After the show we will go to another venue (The Mermaid) and continue with an expanded afterglow including a dinner and more music from our featured quartet, *Artistic License*, chapter quartets, our chorus, and maybe a few surprise groups. I hope to see you there.

04/22 Jamye Casperson

04/26 Becky Wigley

## Happy Anniversary

04/11 Chuck & Kelly McKown

04/12 Gene & Karene Heupel

04/22 Jim & Judy Johannsen

04/27 Dick & Sarah Hartmann

04/30 Matt & Allison Richards (5)



# SUNSHINE HOTLINE



By Rich Ongna, Sunshine Chairman

Phone: 952-829-7009

Email: ddongna@usfamily.net

The Commodores extend their sympathies to **Mark Ortenburger**.

whose mother passed away on March 25.

**Denny Rolloff's** wife, **Jane**, had neck surgery late in February. It

went very well and after an overnight in the hospital she returned home.

**Glenn Retter** underwent a procedure to check his vocal chords on March 18. It was determined that he needed another surgery to be done on April 4.

**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 for one not feeling well.



## Welcome Aboard

**Doug Klemz** lives with his wife in Shoreview. He is a retired electrical engineer.

Doug has sung tenor in the Christ the King Choir and in 1999 joined the St. Paul Chapter, singing with them for 17 years earning a novice-quartet championship in 2000.

Hunting (big game) and fishing are

## BOARD HIGHLIGHTS



Chapter members are always welcome to attend the Board meetings.

By Bill Warp, Secretary

### From the meeting of March 10

#### • Treasurer

+ Xmas Show net \$3135.65.

+ Monthly summary after expenses a positive \$875.

#### • Membership

+ Doug Klemz approved for membership.

+ Visitor's Night moved to Comedy

Quartet Night, May 24.

#### • Music/Performance

+ Hopkins Food Shelf performance went well with about 50 Commodores singing.

+ Commodores have checked out 650 show tickets, minimum sales goal is 1000.

#### • Marketing

+ Suburban papers are receiving show information.

+ Follow-up flyers being sent to senior-residence homes.

+ Andy Tate gave a social media

his other avocations. (Ask him to show you his trophy room or at least his photos.)

A regular attendee at our annual shows, Doug was always impressed with our "dynamic stage presence" so **Neil Mortensen** suggested he visit a Commodore Chapter meeting. The rest is current history.

Doug has another story to tell. Two years ago he was inflicted with a serious but successfully-treated brain tumor. He 'feels like living for a long time to come.'

Doug will join the Lead Section.



### March Reenlistments

Walter Dawson.....	2 yrs.
Gerald Koch.....	10 yrs.
Robert Ostergaard.....	12 yrs.
Dave Casperson.....	13 yrs.
Jim Erickson.....	13 yrs.
John Carlotto.....	14 yrs.
Mark Ortenburger.....	14 yrs.
Peter Jarnberg.....	16 yrs.
Harvey Weiss.....	16 yrs.
Terry McClellan.....	19 yrs.
Lawrence Nelson.....	19 yrs.
Rodney Vink.....	21 yrs.
Guy St Martin.....	24 yrs.
Jim Windy.....	26 yrs.
Daniel Smith.....	29 yrs.
Charles McKown.....	29 yrs.
Dan True.....	30 yrs.
David Speidel.....	40 yrs.
LeRoy Zimmerman.....	43 yrs.
Gary Jacobson.....	51 yrs.
Robert Griffith.....	52 yrs.
<b>Jim Richards</b> .....	62



presentation that was reprised to the Chapter on March 29.

**Next Meeting April 21 at Wooddale Lutheran.**

Let's put the  
capital  
"B"  
in Barbershop  
as the  
**PROBE**  
Style Manual  
Suggests!



Jim Richards

## Chord Candy #142 PR (Post-Richards)

In Memorium Dr. Jim Richards

I do believe that the "Annie" tag by Mr. Burt Szebo, was Jim's favorite. Burt's hand-notated copy is reproduced here through the courtesy of Burt himself, who kindly forwarded it along with a folio of some of his own tags which we are free to use in *Chord Candy* and elsewhere. Burt's overall tag collection currently totals about 778 pages.

In the analysis of this tag Jim would have concluded ... Oh, shucks, you know. Enjoy!

ANNIE'S GONE AWAY

AN-NIE'S GONE A-WAY, WHAT MORE CAN I SAY?

AN-NIE DOES-N'T LIVE HERE AN-Y-MORE.

Burt Szabo 1980s

## Doc's Bag



By Dr. Hardin Olson, Editor



Hardin Olson

Jim Richards has passed on but after all the heartache and the tears, that gentle man and iconic Barbershopper has left the Commodores a legacy that will keep his name in our hearts and minds forevermore—a legacy that has inspired his son, **Andy**, and his grandson, **Matt**, to take the Minneapolis Chapter by storm, musically and administratively. Both are on the chapter board and have jumped with all four feet into

the Brigade as well as shining on the Commodore risers. In addition, Matt has taken on the management of *Groupanizer*.

Just how broad do you imagine Jim's smile is up there? No question, the names Richards and Commodore Barbershop will be synonymous for many decades to come.

Oh, and let's not forget **Ebie!** She may be said to have had a rather significant role in this epic production.

\*\*\*\*\*

And allow me to expound on one more virtue that Jim exemplified. In the dark days of the mid-80s when gold fever struck the Twin-City-Area Barbershop community and the Commodore ranks were decimated by the loss of so many of

their most talented singers, young and old, it was Jim who stayed the course.

He along with other loyal and dedicated Commodores, the Bill Shaws, the Merrill Millers and others, righted the ship and piloted us through raging seas to where the Minneapolis Chapter is today with heads unbowed and pennons flying in the breeze.

\*\*\*\*\*

Is it too much to ask that every active Commodore at least sign and turn in a survey sheet that **Blake Wanger** and his team worked so hard to put together? Perhaps you might even make some comments about the state of and the aims of the Minneapolis Chapter.

A really concerned Commodore ought to have something to say about the Chapter's operation and goals.

# A Tribute to the Par Four

By Bob Dykstra,

Curmudgeon-at-Large

The Minneapolis Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA) was chartered in 1944 and the St. Paul Chapter in 1948. Those



Bob Dykstra

were the only two chapters chartered in the 1940s in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan area. A number of quartets, especially from the Minneapolis Chapter, helped to make the public aware of Barbershop harmony and helped to inspire others to get involved in the wonderful hobby of quartet-singing. The *Atomic Bums* were the dominant quartet of the time, performing all over the country on SPEBSQSA shows as well as singing many local gigs, and earning the right twice in the forties to compete in the Society's International Quartet Competition. Other well-known Barbershop quartets affiliated with the Minneapolis Chapter at the time included the *Gay Nineties*, the *Ewald Golden Guernsey Quartet*, and the *Shrine Quartet*, just to name a few. These quartets and others certainly influenced many men (and later women) to join the Barbershop Society and experience for themselves the joys of this unique form of four-part harmony.

An argument could be made that a non-society quartet of the same era

also had a very strong impact in spreading the gospel of quartet-singing and even of Barbershop quartet singing. The *Par Four* quartet was organized at Macalester College during the 1950-51 academic year. Original members of the quartet were **Chic Tjornholm** on tenor, **Art Olson** singing lead, **Dale Lynch** on bari, and **John Hansen** singing bass.

During its formative year the quartet sang primarily around the college and at college functions. They also recorded a few radio commercials or jingles, created by Dale, including one for a new radio station in Detroit Lakes which had just given Roger Awsumb (a Macalester graduate later well-known in local circles as TV's Casey Jones) his first broadcasting job. The early repertoire of the quartet included primarily Barbershop arrangements, the same ar-



Pictured here are four of the many men who performed at one time or another with the "Pride-of-Macalester-College" quartet, *The Par Four*. From left to right are Bob Spong, Tom Tjornholm, John Hansen, and Dale Lynch. John and Dale were originals, Bob and Tom came later.

rangements being sung by quartets affiliated with SPEBSQSA.

The original four guys sang together until December 1951 at which time Dale, a Naval Reservist, was called to active duty. **Tom Tjornholm** replaced Dale at bari. The arrival of Tom, a talented musician/arranger signaled a year of greatly-increased visibility and recognition for the group. Their repertoire expanded greatly and became much more varied. The *Par Four* joined *Ski Antics* as the show's band and vocal quartet.

As part of the show they played instruments while cruising the lake on water skis. The quartet also produced a couple of commercial records and appeared regularly at Bar Harbor in northern Minnesota on weekends.

Special fans of the *Par Four* at Bar Harbor included **Mel Hanson** [a friend of your Editor's father from their Montana days], owner of the Metropolitan Bldg., and **Jack Harris** of Harris Steel, who provided moral support and financial assistance to help the quartet's getting accepted as a competitor on the *Arthur Godfrey Talent Scout* TV program. The quartet finished second out of four contestants and Godfrey liked them so much he invited them to appear for a week on his radio show, *The Chesterfield Hour*.

During 1952 the *Par Four* recorded two discs using the Jack McMarr trio as instrumental background. Disc one included *I Don't Know Why I Love You Like I Do* and *Pennies from Heaven*. The other had *Have You Seen Jeannie in Her Bikini* and *You're Making a Wreck Out of Me*. The last song was named the winner of an original song contest and was arranged by Tom Tjornholm.

This version of the *Par Four* ended in December 1952 when John Hansen was drafted to take care of our country's armed conflict in Korea. At about the same time Art Olson took a job in Chicago with Harris Steel (remember Jack Harris, the Bar Harbor groupie?). Tom and Chic soon found replacements in **Gene Groom** as lead voice and **John Charn** as the bass.

Apparently some time during 1953 Tom realized that he couldn't continue at the same hectic pace of quartet-

Go to **Par Four**, Page 7, Col. 1

*Par Four from Page 6*

ting, practicing chiropractic, and playing trombone gigs and he dropped out of the quartet. **Bob Spong** now took over at tenor and Chic moved down to baritone. John Charn continued as bass and Art Olson returned as the lead. This group continued to perform many shows for the next three years including regular performances at the Lowry Hotel in St. Paul.

There were additional permutations of the Par Four but I haven't been able to document just who sang with them and how long the quartet continued to perform. The quartet was never affiliated with a Barbershop chapter although they did sing occasionally for the old St. Paul chapter whose director at the time was **Hollis Johnson**, who also directed musical groups at Macalester.

However, various members of the quartet at one time or another, usually after their tour of duty with the quartet ended, became prominent mem-

bers of SPEBSQSA. Tom, for example, became the first director of the Bloomington Barbershop Chapter which chartered in 1958. The longest tenure belongs to John Hansen who has been a member for over sixty years, many of which were as the bass of the *Hut Four*, who won the LOL District Quartet Championship in 1958 and competed ten times in the International Contest. John also directed the *City of Lakes* Sweet Adelines chorus for a time.

Bob Spong has been a Barbershopper for over 50 years and is both an LOL District and International quartet champion as tenor with the *Hut Four* and bari with the *Happiness Emporium*. He was also a long-time very successful musical director of the Minneapolis Commodores.

John Charn was the bass of the *Jubilaires*, a Bloomington Chapter quartet, which won the LOL District quartet contest in 1966. Dale Lynch has been and continues to be a long-time member of the Minneapolis

Chapter. Chic Tjornholm was a charter member of the Bloomington Chapter and was a very active member of the Bozeman, Montana, chapter for a number of years. These are the men I know who were members of the Par Four before becoming members of the Barbershop Society. There may be more. Also other Barbershoppers (**Rich Williams** of the Minneapolis Chapter comes to mind) sang with the Par Four on occasion after they already were members.

So we area Barbershoppers owe a debt of gratitude to this very influential quartet even though in their heyday they were not members of our beloved Society. That is certainly true for guys like me who are Barbershoppers today only because of the Par Four in general and John Hansen in particular who "roped me into" this wonderful hobby while we were both stationed at Fort Riley, Kansas, during our military service. I'm sure many others have had similar experiences.

## Youth will be served...



Jim Clark, HF Regional Director, accepts the check from Dan Cole. Looking on (left to rt.) are Judd Orff, Steve Zorn, and Gary Jacobson.

A special guest at the March 31 *Friday Lunch Bunch That Meets On Thursday* meeting was **Jim Clark**, Harmony Foundation's Regional Director. He happily accepted a check from TFLBTMOF for \$2000, toward the \$10,000 the group plans to raise to subsidize a *Youth Festival Chorus*. Stay tuned for further developments. (These monies are raised in part by bidding to suppress Dan Cole's weekly Minneapolis Chapter report.)

## A new gang on the corner



The *River City Quartet* clockwise from the top: Tenor Bob Dowma, Bass Jim Foy, Lead John Chouinard, Bari Rick Anderson. They represent 172 years of Barbershop singing in nine different quartets.

Bob Dowma, John Chouinard, Rick Anderson and Jim Foy are at it again making four-part harmony! The quartet formed in 2014 taking their name in the Spring of 2015, after being asked to perform at the Festival Theater in St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin. It was an evening of tribute to the St. Croix River so their quartet chose *The River City Quartet* as their name and appropriately sang, *Lazy River*. It turned out to be the hit of the evening.

# Georgia Grind

By Jim Erickson, Beleaguered Baritone

## Part 6 – Doc Hardy

(Resumed from February issue)

*With hastening deep sleep, Doc again found himself back in his old medical school days. His painful, matted, blood-seeping gash took him to a time he did not like to recall. A time when he suffered a wound from a fight soon after he started medical school.*



Jim Erickson

*Of course Doc was not the only one on campus to note what a fascinating woman the Dean's daughter was. Cold cadavers were the only human bodies at school that did not react to her intriguing presence. But one student, an upperclassman, decided he was the heir apparent to winning the prized female. It never occurred to him that she might not return his feelings. Not, that is, until he overheard how she teased the blabbering freshman. "Hi, Mr. Hardy." From that moment, Ben Starkly knew whom his competition was and what he had to do to halt this flirtation. "With all haste," as he might have said. So Ben's cunning mind, hot with anger, connived to lay out a plan to...*

... get Hardy kicked out of medical school. Recall that the standards of any school back then would scarcely be recognizable today. Some schools were selective whereas others of more dubious pursuits would entertain practically anyone crossing their threshold. Sort of in their defense, medical schooling as we know it today was still very much in its infancy.

Ben, then, was going to have to find something that would leave Hardy's school little leeway except to reject him. This was going to take some clever planning. But Ben Starkly was up to it. Stealthy enough was he that he was always a step ahead of any connection to misdeeds on and off

campus. And this was going to be another from the same misdeeds mold Ben had successfully used before. Ben was not only devious, though. He also had a deep insight into the psyches of others. And he knew of the Dean's very prudish beliefs and strong convictions. This latest misdeed, however, wouldn't take anything particularly insightful. It helped, but the Dean lived in a world where something was either black or white, right or wrong. No gray areas! Little insight needed.

In the world of flip-flop, if the Dean was the "flop," the Dean's daughter was, without question, the "flip."



She often lovingly laughed behind his back when she saw him faced with a situation that just could not be all right or all wrong. What contortions his mind must have suffered having a daughter like this. Oh, I believe he was fully aware of her obscured mirth and further knew he had no chance of ever changing her. Did anyone? But there was nothing he adored more than his daughter. There was no gray area in his deep admiration of the mirror-like opposing apparition of his own flesh and blood. Didn't begin to understand it, but completely respected it. And with someone as many-splendored as she, it was an easy burden to bear.

How could Ben Starkly use this knowledge to get rid of Hardy and win his heart's desire? This would take some diabolical strategy and a big bit of luck. And time was not his friend. He had to end the flirtation now. Now.!

First, he would have to play on Hardy's sense of what the gentleman's code was. It was a natural for Hardy to respect women. Raised in a home where that was just plain understood, he also seemed to have it within him from the earliest years. Maybe because his mother, a woman not unlike what the Dean's daughter would likely become, was an influence that was always in his heart. Befuddled as he was in the presence of some women (Oh, let's just say this one young woman), his respect for them, and especially her, dwindled not a bit. Maybe even multiplied.

Next, Ben would have to create an incident where there would be no choice on the Dean's part but to immediately expel Hardy. Do something that caused things near and dear to the Dean's heart to be tarnished beyond doubt.

Using bits of information about Hardy that Ben had surreptitiously gleaned from school records swiped by a cohort who worked in the school administration office, Ben put together a crude scrap of a poster. In stilted handwriting with the intended look of clumsiness, on it he wrote, "For a good time with eager young ladies of the night, see me for names. I promise you an evening you will never forget. Olaf Hardy" When he had finished making several similar poster scraps, Ben stopped the labored, faux-scribbled writings and leaned back to admire the cleverness of his scheme. Uttering a soundless chuckle, his face contorted into a grimacing smirk as the next step of his plan congealed from the black mess that was his brain.

To offend and not necessarily to inform, he stealthily searched out the best strategic locations to nail his poster scraps. Bulletin boards? Probably not as no one looks at those unless desperately eager for any news from whatever source. Not likely in med school. On tables where medical students lunched? Too risky. Pondering, Starkly sat resting against a huge

*Go to **Grind**, Page 9, Column 1*

**Grind from Page 8**

old oak tree out side the doors to the administration building where the Dean's office was prominently located. After a few moments, the handle on the tall brass door turned and the Dean walked out, gazed admiringly at the campus grounds as was his daily habit, and then strolled past the regal oak, past the reclining Starkly. Intentionally ignoring Starkly, or just not stooping to acknowledge a student's presence? It didn't matter. The Dean almost stepped on Starkly's outstretched legs.

In seeming slow motion, Starkly raised one leg just as the Dean was stepping ahead with his left foot. Then with the utmost deftness, Starkly coiled his foot back and ...

(Email me if you want to know what happens next. Your move!)

*Barbershop Article Orientation* - Do you have performance worries as a Barbershop singer? Are you anxious and nervous about how you will perform? I'm sure you have been told many times that the audience really wants you to perform well ... that they are on your side. And except for a few truculent foot-draggers, that's quite true. Most of the time audience members have put out their hard-earned cash to reflect their sophistication in making sound (Whoops – pun) entertainment investments. Don't worry, be happy? Well that should be what's on your face, but inside, remind yourself that you aren't doing this singing stuff

because you have to, but doing it because you choose to! So replace your anguish with eager and excited anticipation. You will still be greatly energized, but in a better way.

And while you are at it, remember to keep recruiting new singers and holding fast to that which is good. Good news, too. I have hired some top software experts to develop a *Georgia Grind App*. As they have other top priorities, they could not promise delivery until after the election. Guess I forgot to ask which election ... Keep the faith!



## Reno revisited

By Harvey Weiss, LOL District Staff Development

Just a short note to you about the re-



Harvey Weiss

cent Midwinter in Reno. The hotel was always bustling with young people from all over the world arriving to compete in the *Youth Harmony Festival*.

The farthest competitor, the Diocesan Boys' School Choir, 60 strong, came from Hong Kong. All under 17 years of age, they sang with perfection and fullness.

Also, *The Wildcat Harmonizers*, the first-ever, middle-school chorus competitor came all the way from Quinton Township School in New Jersey, all eight of them! They had a great routine, sang their hearts out, and the audience adopted them as their own. The *Wildcats* won the Audience Favorite award in the competition and performed again on the main show Saturday night.

Chandler, Arizona, High School was most impressive with four different choruses, a mixed chorus, another all-

girls choir, and two boys choirs, all performing in the festival. Top ratings went to all of them. Each group had about 50 young singers.

Four of the top five medalist quartets from Pittsburgh last summer performed in Reno. They were *Instant Classic*, *Lemon Squeezy*, *Throwback*, and *Forefront*. The fifth, *Main Street*, did not make the trip, sadly to say. *Trocadero*, the Swedish Collegiate Winners, made the trip. Top that off with the 2015 championship chorus, *Westminster*. The chords are still ringing in my ears, and beautifully.

LOL's own St. Croix Crossing, among 25 competing quartets, won the Silver Medal in the International Seniors Contest for the second consecutive time. Congratulations, gentlemen, you made LOL proud.

Finally, Deke Sharon, labeled the *Father of Modern Acappella Singing*, was the clinician and emcee for much of the weekend. He has produced TV's *Sing Off*, two *Pitch Perfect* hit movies, the *Glee* TV show, and over 2000 acappella arrangements. A dynamic and entertaining speaker, he recounted the more recent and enthusiastic rise of unaccompanied vocal music. Deke was awarded an Honorary Life Membership in the Barbershop Harmony

Society for his promotion of Barbershop as an early and staunch leader in the acappella movement.

There was more but this report gives you a little insight into the total immersion everyone had with the old and the new in current Barbershop. It will be a great ride from here on, as the Society continues to deliver with the most relevant and enriching music in the industry. Have fun and check things out on the Society website; it will be well worth it.

## Ladies Night/BOTY celebration coming soon

By Dick Riemenschneider, Convener

Coming May 22 is the Minneapolis



Dick Riemenschneider

Commodores Ladies Night/Barbershopper of the Year celebration. This is an annual event where the men of the Commodores offer a night out and dinner to our significant partners as a

thank-you for putting up with our numerous absences for singing. A featured occurrence of the evening will be introduction of the 2016 Bar-Go to **Ladies**, Page 10, Column 1

**Ladies from Page 7**

bershopper of the Year (BOTY). The BOTY is a Commodore who has given exceptional time, talent, and help to the chapter.

The event will take place in the auditorium of the Richfield American Legion Post at 6501 Portland Avenue. This is the venue for the weekly Tuesday-night afterglow and several other past Commodores events.

The menu is still taking shape but they have excellent food and the price should be reasonable as well.



**Velma & Roxy**

Entertainment will be provided by *Special Kay Entertainment*. This duo features a former Klondike Kate from the Saint Paul Winter Carnival and a friend. They will do a rip-snortin' 1920s song-and-dance set as *Velma and Roxy*.

This is one of the highlight events of the Commodores yearly calendar, and a rare event where we just show up to have a good time, no practicing, choreography, or song memorization required. I hope to see all members there.

**Musings on Way Out West**

*By Dick Riemenschneider*

It strikes me that our show theme this year has some colloquialisms that may need some definition. Such as:

- **Cayuse:** Interestingly enough, the first definition is "a member of an American Indian people of Washington and Oregon, but in our usage it refers to "a range horse of the western United States".
- **Hobbles:** A hobble is a device that prevents or limits the locomotion of an animal by tethering one or more legs. Western hobbles are normally used to secure a horse when no tie device, tree, or other object is available for that purpose, e.g., when if traveling across open lands a rider has to dismount for various reasons. Hobbles also allow a horse to graze and move short and slow distances, yet prevent the horse from running off too far. This is handy at night if the rider has to get some sleep; using a hobble ensures that in the morning he can find his horse not too far away, but of course the horse loses freedom if hobbles are used. So our cowboy may be quite inconvenienced after a good nights sleep to find his "cayuse" no where to be found since he had

wandered off during the night because he "can't stand hobbles".

**My old .44:** Does not directly refer to a pistol but rather a pistol cartridge; as it was called in the old west, the .44 WCF, or Winchester Center Fire., or sometimes the .44-40. This was one of the first mass produced cartridges, and freed the user of the old musket ball and powder style of shooting allowing rapid firing.

**Jimson** is the name of the weed, formerly known in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century as *Jamestown* weed after the Virginia settlement, that the VLQ's show song refers to in the phrase "long-horned cattle feed on the lowly jimson weed." Jimson weed is known as Loco Weed and all parts of the plant are toxic to mammals. It is highly unlikely that cattle will voluntarily feed on Jimson Weed because of its unpleasant taste. However, poisoning can occur when hungry animals are on sparse pasture with Jimson weed infestation.

One story about human consumption of Jimson Weed occurred in Jamestown, Virginia in 1676 when the soldiers boiled the weed for inclusion in a salad. This story has been recounted by Robert Beverly in *The*

*History and Present State of Virginia* (1705). Quoting:

*The soldiers presented a very pleasant comedy, for they turned natural fools upon it for several days; one would blow up a feather in the air; another would dart straws at it with much fury; and another, stark naked, was sitting up in a corner like a monkey, grinning and making mows [sic] at them; a fourth would fondly kiss and paw his companions, and sneer in their faces with a countenance more antic than any in a Dutch droll. In this frantic condition they were confined, lest they should, in their folly, destroy themselves - though it was observed that all their actions were full of innocence and good nature. Indeed they were not very cleanly; for they would have wallowed in their own excrements, if they had not been prevented. A thousand such simple tricks they played, and after 11 days returned themselves again, not remembering anything that had passed."*

## 9th Annual

## BHS Open

Monday,

August 8, 2016

SCRAMBLE FORMAT

to benefit

Harmony Foundation

Elk River Country Club

12:00 p.m. start

Register on line next

summer at

[bhsopen.com](http://bhsopen.com)

The Minneapolis Commodores invite you to...

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Comedy Quartet Event

(Formerly Bloomington Chapter Event)

Tuesday, May 24, 2016

At 7:00 p.m.

Mpls./Richfield American Legion Post 435

6501 – Portland Av S, Richfield MN

(Cash bar and food/snacks provided)

(free will offering accepted to cover expenses for food)

**This is an Inter-Chapter event with invites to members of  
Bloomington, Faribault, Frank Thorne, Greater St. Paul,  
Grundy, Hilltop GNU, Minnetonka, St. Croix & Minneapolis**

Rules: 1) Try to be Funny, Funnier, or Funniest. 2) No more than 2  
members of an organized quartet may perform in the same quartet.

3) Try to ring a chord or at least come close.

The performance will be judged and awards may be presented.

Register your quartet with Dan Cole at [danjcole02@gmail.com](mailto:danjcole02@gmail.com) For more  
information call Dan at #612-940-4554

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**952/229-4525**  
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All copy and photos herein without a byline, as well as those opinions and commentaries under his byline, are the sole responsibility of the *Chord-Inator* Editor and do not necessarily reflect the views of those of the Minneapolis Chapter Board or its officers.

### Chapter Quartets

#### BOMP

Dan Cole.....612/940-4554

#### CHORD SMASH

James Estes.....612/237-3234

#### EASY LISTENIN'

Dan Slattery.....651/747-6384

#### HOT COMMODITY

Dave Speidel.....612/437-4325

#### RING IT ON

Andy Richards.....651/639-9312

#### RIVER CITY QUARTET

John Chouinard.....651/343-4145

#### MINNESOTA GO-4's

Harvey Weiss.....763/439-4447

#### RANDOM SAMPLE

Darrell Egerton.....952/943-8737

#### SWYPE

Mark Bloomquist.....952/541-0232

#### SOUNDS of RENOWN (VLQ)

Mark Ortenburger.....952/942-8382

## CHORD-INATOR

*1st Place*

**2013 PROBE HARD-COPY  
 INTERNATIONAL  
 BULLETIN CONTEST**



The *Chord-Inator* is available on the Minneapolis Chapter's website **[minneapoliscommodore.org](http://minneapoliscommodore.org)** beginning with the January 2006 issue.



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

*Logo courtesy of Bob Clark*

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**To:**

### LOOKING AHEAD

- April 14, Thursday - **Tech Rehearsal**
- April 16, Saturday - **Annual Show and Afterglow**
- April 21, Thursday - **Board Meeting Wooddale 7:00 p.m.**
- May 22, Sunday - **Ladies Night, 5:30-9:00 p.m., Richfield Legion Hall**
- May 24, Tuesday - **Comedy Quartet Night, Richfield Legion Post**
- July 19, Tuesday, **Lake Como**
- July 25, Monday, **Centennial Lakes**
- August 7, Sunday, **Lake Como**
- August 16, Tuesday- **Minnetonka**

### District Level

- April 29-May 1, 2016 - **10,000 Lakes/Southwest Division Contests and International Preliminaries, Nicollet (Mankato)**
- October 21-22, 2016 - **2016 Fall LOL District Convention**

**Jim Jorgensen** notified us on Tuesday, April 5, that his dear wife, **Romana**, had passed away peacefully early that a.m. amidst Jim and many others of the family. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Jim. God Bless!

**1st CLASS  
 POSTAGE  
 HERE**

### 2015 Barbershopper Of The Year **Rich Ongna**

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

Gordy Aumann  
 Bob Dykstra  
 Vince Formosa\*  
 Jim Erickson  
 Jim Foy  
 Eddie Holt\*  
 Jim Jorgensen  
 Hardin Olson  
 Rich Ongna  
 Dick Riemenschneider  
 Bill Warp  
 Harvey Weiss  
 Paul Wigley  
 Burt Szebo\*

**CHORD-INATOR  
 MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES  
 Minneapolis Chapter of SPEBSQSA  
 MEETING EVERY TUES -7:00 p.m.  
 House of Prayer Lutheran Church  
 7625 Chicago Ave. S.  
 Richfield, MN 55423  
GUESTS ALWAYS WELCOME**