



Celebrating 60 years of harmony!

2006, 2007 Illinois District  
Fifth Place Medalist Chorus  
and Plateau 4A Champions

# The C-U ReCHORDer

A monthly publication of the  
Champaign-Urbana, Illinois Chapter  
of the Barbershop Harmony Society

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## Youth In Harmony Festival coming soon!

*By Greg Grey, Central Illinois YIH Festival Coordinator*

Thursday, October 25 is the date for the ninth annual Central Illinois Youth in Harmony Festival. It will take place at the Bloomington Center for Performing Arts in downtown Bloomington. The turnout this year promises to be as good as in years past. As of this writing, 170 girls and 85 boys names have been sent to me from five area high schools. Greg Grey and Rich Hansen from the Bloomington Chapter along with Michelle Adams from the Vermillion Valley Sweet Adelines Chorus are once again coordinating this event.

This year's featured quartets are Men in Black and Main Attraction. This year's clinicians are Jonny Moroni (baritone, Vocal Spectrum) for the young men and Diane Huber (bass, Ambiance) for the ladies. Bob Cernal has agreed to emcee the evening show.

Schools from the Bloomington, Pontiac, Peoria, Springfield, and Champaign areas have been invited.

The reason I'm writing to you is for your chapter to offer any assistance it could - "time, talent or treasure". We need men to help staff the event to sing with the students in the sections, serve lunch, or watch over the auditorium. The day's work is long and hard, but very rewarding. Monetary donations are also graciously accepted as this event takes some money to put on each year. One chapter has already sent a donation for this event which is VERY appreciated.

Mark October 25 on your calendars. If you cannot come during the day, attend the show at night. Please let me know if you can help in any way as we will need all the help we can get.

## The way I see it

*By Hugo Feugen, Chapter Delegate, and Roving Reporter*

I thought I'd share a summary of the House of Delegates goings-on, followed by a few thoughts that occurred to me about this most recent fall convention in Peoria. The HOD meeting featured the standard reports:

Society Board Member John Marshall exits, entering soon: Greg Caetano

The new phone system at Nashville is not functioning well, and the staff isn't dealing with matters very professionally, e.g., getting to phone calls quickly.

The new computer system inter-communicates among its various functions better than the older software, and the staff is sometimes able to be trained on it in a day, but the website doesn't yet "betray" such an advanced state.

With "Kenosha's" disarray, they're having all the Districts fend for their own version of COTS this year, though they stand ready to provide study materials.

District President Phil Rolfs is proud of the three golf outings held around the state. Average attendance, 16-20. His focuses (foci?) through 2008 are: music, membership and outreach. In that, communication has suffered, e.g., no agenda preceded the meeting.

Treasurer Dave Cowin: "good shape, financially" "anticipated income for the conventions about the same as last year, though more in the spring, less in the fall." (The grand plan to increase attendance and involvement seems to have not yet delivered.)

Jim Graham: IDEA funds total \$51K. The IDEA trustees voted to contribute \$250 for each of 3 upcoming YIH Festivals.

Rich Hansen, YIH: Festivals to be held at EIU, Bloomington, UpNorth, all week of 10/21, 1000+ kids, 40+ schools. Men In Black guest quartet.

*(continued on page 2)*

Bill Ward: Harmony Foundation is still in Chicago, planning move to Nashville. Champaign honored at Gold Level, for donating \$64.17/member to HF.

Joe Sullivan reports that the QCA has voted to subsidize all IDAH-registering quartets to the tune of \$100/quartet (off the \$420 fee). Top Gun coaches are to be Joe Connelly, Joe Kronos, Richard Taylor and Jack Pinto of Old School.

COTS (ILT) will be Jan 10th at the Peoria Holiday Inn. Phil wants to know from the chapters what it will take to get each of the chapters to send prospective P, VPP, VPM, and Secretaries, at least every two years.

Will Thorndike/Al Quinn: Disclosure of a Peoria grant for the Civic Center that's running out. Even if the grant is renewed, the Convention Bureau may choose to apply incentives differently (e.g., nixing comp'ed rooms and cutting out union labor expenses for movement of materiel at the Civic Center.) THIS IS STILL BEING MODIFIED somewhat, about which the HOD was put on notice: more goodies could be taken away. It sounded ominous. In that context, it was stated that it wouldn't be out of place to consider other venues for our conventions.

Upcoming Conventions: Spring 08: 4/11-4/13; Fall 08: 9/26-9/28; Spring 09: 4/17-19; Fall 09: 9/25-27; Spring 10: 4/16-18; Fall 10: 9/24-26

Ron Rank is seeking venues, sponsored by hosting Illinois chapters, for a series of quartet-coaching sessions to be held throughout the state. Chapters are being asked to indicate their willingness and ability to host such an event, and locate suitable venues for such gatherings (Wesley would probably be fine, as would many schools.)

### ***Contest Report***

Regarding the Contest, there certainly weren't many attendees Friday night. (Other than Past-District President Jim Graham, I didn't see any Illini Statesmen who didn't have dual membership with Bloomington.) The contest started almost ten minutes late, and at 6:35pm, anyone could waltz in and get a really fine seat without crawling over ten people.

The President's reception had to have been a bust with regard to the food! Despite how hungry most of the attendees were and good the food was, there was a lot left over. Clearly someone wildly overestimated how many people would be attending. Maybe it was the same person who was talking about hundreds of men on stage for the festival chorus.

I didn't see much of the Saturday morning chorus contest, but the last three choruses, West Towns, Bloomington and Northbrook were able to score in the

80s. Springfield was judged to be most entertaining (non-5A), and West Towns was voted most entertaining for the 5A choruses. Only South Cook chose the path of singing non-contestable material (for which they then averaged 31 percent), so their quest for the entertainment fell particularly short.

In addition to Northbrook being the District's International Representative for Nashville, 2008, both West Towns and Bloomington have a chance at wildcard bids, but that won't be determined for another few weeks.

The quartet contest was not particularly well attended, particularly Friday evening, and this writer did not think Voce was the District's best barbershop quartet representative, given the contestants' Friday and Saturday evening performances, though it must be admitted they were fine (operatic) singers. That quartet's singing differed from some barbershop standards, particularly as they failed to lock many chords, had a strong bass that often overwhelmed the quartet blend, and their presentation was not as good as the second- and third-placing quartets, in my humble opinion. Voce was not well received by the audiences, and applause was almost embarrassingly tepid.

The quality of the 20 competing quartets was pleasantly high. Capitol Collection wasn't able to break the top ten, where they had done so in several previous contests. Saturday night's quartet contest featured many fine quartets.

The Show of Champions included a fine women's quartet from the Chicago area, Jukebox. The tenor happens to be Jay Giallombardo's wife, and the crowd didn't seem to be nearly as effusive as Jukebox about the fact that they were singing three Giallombardo arrangements. The audience applause was generally polite throughout the Show of Champions.

The rampant rumor concerning last year's change in contest rules is that the Decatur chapter's vote was mistakenly cast FOR despite the chapter's directive for their delegate to vote AGAINST. One vote turning from FOR to AGAINST would have defeated the proposal, leaving the contest in its previous form. Both Gerry Connor and Bob Hedgecock affirmed to me that the Decatur vote was supposed to have been cast AGAINST.

Tag and song singing was especially enjoyable in the hospitality suites, as several fine quartets passed through the Bloomington suite, where I spent a good deal of time. Furthermore, I got to sing two songs with Rich Knight, Doug Smith and Mark Betczynski, so I was feelin' no pain!

The weather was beautiful, and a good time was had at the Burger Barge!

## Andy doesn't live here anymore

As most of you are probably aware, I have been driving from Decatur to Urbana for the last four years to come to Illini Statesmen rehearsals. You may not be aware that my wife, Sara, is a United Methodist minister and has been serving as Associate Minister at Grace United Methodist Church in Decatur. We have just found out that Sara has been appointed to be directing pastor at Chatham United Methodist Church. The United Methodist Church is a connectional system in which ministers are assigned to churches at the discretion of the Presiding Bishop. Think of it as a job transfer. Sara will begin her new position November 1, and we will be moving to the house the church provides for us earlier that week. While the timing of the move is not ideal, this is a great opportunity for Sara to lead a growing church in a rapidly growing community.

We're not sure what this move will mean for me. I still plan to be in town on weekends in the fall for Illinois football and volleyball, but I can't commit to driving almost two hours each way for chorus rehearsals. I will probably take a break from chorus singing for a while as we get settled in, and then visit Springfield and maybe Bloomington to check them out. I may try to find a quartet before Spring Contest, too.

I can tell you that I will sorely miss being part of the Illini Statesmen. I have been a member of this chorus for almost all of my 23 years as a barbershopper, and all of my experiences as an Illini Statesmen have helped me grow as a singer and as a leader. I hope you all realize what a great chorus you have. I have immensely enjoyed the opportunity to sing, learn, laugh, perform and celebrate with all of you. I wish you all much continued success. Continue to set the standards for quality singing and great camaraderie that the Illini Statesmen are known for.

I know my life will be crazy the next few weeks as we pack and prepare to move. I hope to be able to come to rehearsal at least the next two weeks, and I plan on sticking around to sing as many tags and songs as possible with any of you that are willing to sing with me.

## A little humor

A man with a banana stuck in his ear and a green bean stuffed up each nostril walks into the doctor's office. The doctor looks at him and asks what he can do for him.

"Doctor, I just haven't been feeling well lately."

"Well, I can see why. You aren't eating right."

## Inter-Chapter night planned in Bloomington

*By Pat Dunagan, President, Bloomington Chapter*

As President of the Sound of Illinois Chorus, I am writing to extend an invitation to your respective Chapters to join us in Bloomington on the evening of Tuesday, October 23 at Second Presbyterian Church, located at 313 N. East Street in Downtown Bloomington, from 7:00 until 9:00 p.m. We are hosting our YIH activities that week, and Men In Black will be our special guests on Tuesday evening.

Please RSVP by email to Doug Ferrier at [doug.ferrier.g3dx@statefarm.com](mailto:doug.ferrier.g3dx@statefarm.com), and also let Doug know if your chorus and/or any of your quartets would like to sing for the gathering.

We look forward to seeing you for this special chance to get together.

## Register now for 2008 conventions

Mark your barbershop calendar for January 22-27, 2008. As the saying goes, "everything's bigger in Texas," and the 2008 Midwinter Convention will prove this brag to be true. Held in beautiful San Antonio deep in the heart of Texas, there will be something for everybody—shows, shopping & sightseeing.

Details: [www.barbershop.org/midwinter](http://www.barbershop.org/midwinter)

## Come to your new home for a grand Homecoming event

The 2008 International convention will be held June 29 – July 6, 2008. We'll celebrate "homecoming" at our 70th international convention in Nashville, our new home for the world headquarters of the Barbershop Harmony Society. Don't miss this opportunity to be among the first to experience the beautiful facility and all the special concerts, exciting contests, educational classes, inspiring sights and many more chances to sing.

Homecoming '08 will be a unique opportunity to recharge your barbershop batteries and reinvigorate your hobby. Special open houses at the new headquarters will be held throughout the week. It is located near the heart of downtown Nashville at 110 7th Ave. N.

Details: [www.barbershop.org/nashville\\_home](http://www.barbershop.org/nashville_home)

## Craft Corner

Well, since this is my last edition of the ReCHORDer as editor, this will also likely be my last chance to write the Craft Corner article. We have over the last few months been examining some of the steps needed to achieve artistry in our performances. So far we've looked at good breathing technique, good tone production, and matching vowel sounds. I had originally intended this series to go through December, but I'll try to combine the last three topics into this month's article.

First, let's talk a little about consistent flow of sound. In barbershop singing we want to maximize the time that chords are ringing in order to produce overtones. We can only produce overtones when the vocal cords are vibrating, so we want to keep them vibrating as much as possible when singing. It is much easier to produce overtones when singing vowels than it is when singing consonants, so we tend to maximize the length of the vowels in our words and minimize the length of the consonants. We also tend to minimize unringable consonants (like t, p, k, s, f, ch) unless they are at the end of a word before a breath. All of these techniques help us keep the sound flowing consistently and produce the "wall of sound" that good barbershop singing is known for.

Next, we need to all be singing the correct words and notes. In addition to learning the correct pitches and the words in the correct order, this may require some analysis from each of you to identify what the correct word sounds are for each note. Greg Lyne, who has won four gold medals as a chorus director, often tells his choruses "Don't sing words, sing word sounds." We have all grown up learning to speak the English language slightly differently. Our brains have an amazing ability to translate different dialects of English so that we (usually) can understand people from different regions when they speak. However, for singing purposes we want to match all of our word sounds to give us the greatest opportunity to ring chords. As an example of the analysis needed to determine what sounds to sing, take the word "your." This is a word many groups have trouble with. Some people pronounce it "yore" while others pronounce it "yer" or some other way. Breaking down all of the sounds in the word, we see that the consonants are ringable, and we generally try to sing the vowels as an "oo" sound. So, instead of "your" we would sing "ee-oo-er." The trick is to get everyone in the chorus to sing those three sounds at the same time. ☺

As far as singing the correct notes goes, we have talked about this before in the context of not going flat. Generally, each section has different responsibilities for

tuning depending on what note of the chords you are on. Once you get acclimated to the way barbershop music sounds, you mainly need to listen to the other parts to "feel" where your notes fit in. Your voice will tend to automatically tune chords. This, of course, presumes that you have all learned the correct notes to sing. ☺

Now (finally) we have laid the groundwork for good singing. Once we make all of these singing techniques habitual, we can really begin to focus on the message of the song and make the music "come alive." There are many things that go into interpreting a song. The lyrics, of course, convey the main message that the composers were trying to get across. We need to think through the lyrics to determine the different moods and storylines that are possible interpretations, and come to an agreement within the chorus on which ones we want to express to the audience. If we don't think about this ahead of time, we run the risk of confusing our audiences by each of us portraying slightly (or grossly) different emotions. Or, we may be in general agreement visually, but not match the mood of the lyrics. "Wedding Bells Are Breaking Up that Old Gang of Mine" is a wonderful barbershop tune to sing, but the lyrics are generally melancholy. If we sing it with big smiles on our faces, the audience will think we are enjoying ourselves (which we hopefully are) but they will miss the composers' message in the lyrics. Attention must be paid to the way the melody flows, and how it supports or detracts from the lyrics. We must also take into account the choices made by the arranger. If the song was arranged as a flashy uptune, then singing that arrangement at a swing tempo, or as a ballad probably won't work, even if the melody and lyrics suggest those possibilities. If the arrangement doesn't work with the way we feel the song should be interpreted, then we either need to change the arrangement, or find a different arrangement that allows us to be successful in presenting our interpretation. Attention should also be given to the complexity of the arrangement. The vocal skills of our top quartets have allowed arrangers to create increasingly challenging (and often needlessly complex) arrangements that tend to draw attention away from the melody and lyrics and toward the abilities of the singers. When less talented groups try these arrangements, the results are almost always disappointing. We should try to challenge ourselves with music slightly beyond our abilities. However, most audiences don't know and don't care how difficult the arrangement is. They will appreciate music that is well-sung and conveyed with sincerity, enjoyment and the proper emotions.

I know this is a lot to digest, and it is a long (sometimes years) process to get there. Rest assured, you are well on the way to achieving artistry.

## Happy Birthday!

October 4, Jim Vliet

### Barbershop on the web

Illini Statesmen – [illinistatesmen.org](http://illinistatesmen.org)  
 Barbershop Harmony Society – [barbershop.org](http://barbershop.org)  
 Illinois District – [www.harmonize.ws/ILL](http://www.harmonize.ws/ILL)  
 4-Cast, the Barbershop Podcast – [4-cast.tv](http://4-cast.tv)  
 Links to other Barbershop sites – [www.harmonize.com](http://www.harmonize.com)  
 Ultimate Barbershop Links – [www.harmonize.ws/links/](http://www.harmonize.ws/links/)

### Upcoming Events

October 23, Inter-Chapter Night,  
 Bloomington  
 October 25, YIH Festival, Bloomington  
 November 3, Cabaret Show, St. Patrick's  
 Parish Hall, Urbana

### 2007 Officers

President, Kevin Swartz  
 Marketing & PR Vice President, Paul Stansberry  
 Music Vice President, Andy Isbell  
 Membership Vice President, Jordan Brotherton  
 Program Vice President, Matt Carlen  
 Secretary, Dave Sutton  
 Treasurer, Denny Mulvany  
 Webmaster, Steve Severinghaus  
 Immediate Past President, Vern Knapp  
 District Delegate, Hugo Feugen  
 Chorus Director, Lee Reifsteck

## Cabaret Update

By Kevin Swartz, President

Cabaret tickets will be available, starting this Thursday (10/4) at rehearsal. Tickets are the same as last year, \$18 regular and \$15 for seniors and students. We won't do the random table assignment this year. Too much hassle. So, table selection will be by "choose your table from the floor layout." I will, however, suggest we release tables to the serving line by random draw.

The New Orleans Jazz Machine will be our dinner entertainment this year. "This local ensemble brings the swinging, bluesy style of music synonymous with the city of New Orleans."

We will have flyers available soon.

The menu will be:

- Table Snacks
- Assorted Beverages
- Beer & Wine (suggested donation of \$1 per serving)
- Lettuce Salad w/ Fixin's
- Spaghetti
- Linguini
- Marinara Sauce
- Alfredo Sauce
- Meat Balls
- Meat Lasagna
- Vegetarian Lasagna
- Green Beans
- Dinner Rolls
- Brownies

Unless otherwise indicated, all articles were written by the editor, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the chapter. Submissions are welcomed and encouraged at [rechorder@illinistatesmen.org](mailto:rechorder@illinistatesmen.org), or the return address below.

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