



C-U Re-CHORDer

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Andy Isbell, editor

andy_isbell@hotmail.com

Spring Convention Summary

Well, the Illinois District Spring Convention was held in Peoria last month, and if you didn't go you missed some good times and good singing.

Proving that barbershop singing is not just for us "older" people, we had three quartets competing in the high school contest and three in the college contest. We had a great showing in the college contest with Tesseract performing about as well as I've ever heard them and winning the right to compete in the college contest in Indianapolis this summer. Our other college quartet, Roundabout (the quartet formerly known as Quarter Til Four (the quartet formerly known as Surround Sound)), also performed well and finished in third place.

In the regular contest we only had 12 quartets and only two were from outside the Chicago area. Alchemy, our 2003 District Champion quartet, was the only quartet to make the qualifying score for International this summer.

The best part of the conventions for me, though, is seeing old friends from around the District and finding opportunities to sing with people I don't see very often. Being in the right place at the right time has a lot to do with it. I got to sing tags with Joe Sullivan and Buzz Haeger, two of our Society's legends. I also got to sing a tag and a whole song with the top three of Boomtown while they were waiting for their bass to show up.

I mentioned earlier that we only had 12 quartets in the contest. Well, the District passed a rule a few years ago that if we had 13 or fewer quartets in a contest, then they would all sing again in the finals. Friday afternoon it suddenly occurred to them that if all the quartets were in the finals, they didn't have a mic-tester quartet for Saturday night. Being in the right place at the right time, I got to sing with Terry Ludwig and Rich Hansen from Bloomington and Tim Pashon from Sterling-Rock Falls in the Saturday night mic-tester quartet.

The SMAG-fest (Saturday Morning Anything Goes contest) was another interesting time. Jim Graham always does a great job as MC of the SMAG-fest. I was standing around talking to some friends outside the ballroom when someone came by trying to drum up more groups to compete. Well, Steve Davis, Tim Pashon, Craig Ahlgrim and I entered as Faux Pas Harmony (as I recall that was the late, great Gene McNish's favorite gag quartet name.) Somehow, we won. I demanded a recount, but they said we won anyway and as punishment we have to be the judges for the SMAG-fest at the next contest.

So, what's the point of all this? The point is that it's possible to go to the convention/contest in Peoria and have fun even if you're not competing. In fact, I'd say I probably have more fun when I'm not competing. It's a great way to get to know people from around the state and sing with some of the great barbershoppers in our district. So, next time you're wondering if you should go to Peoria, my answer is "Absolutely!" And if you want to sing some tags, hang out with me in the lobby, and we'll see who comes along.

The M&PR Campaign

My Job Made Easy

By Kevin Swartz

A big "Thank You" to the Chapter Officers and Members for your vote of confidence. I appreciate being given the opportunity to serve as the Chapter's Marketing & Public Relations Officer. As I looked over the list of possible volunteer assignments in the Chapter, it occurred to me the M&PR position would probably be the easiest and most enjoyable. The reason is simple. Just look back over the accomplishments of the Chapter the past 2 - 3 years. Membership commitment is high and increasing, leadership is strong and supportive, and the level of music is both challenging and rewarding. What a joy it is to both sing and serve with this group. And, it's because of these reasons my job is made easy.

As I view my position, I can either try to "sell" the Chapter or "promote" the Chapter. To "sell" means I try to persuade others to recognize the worth or desirability of the Chapter. Not an easy task if you don't have something worth selling. To "promote" means I simply contribute to the progress or growth of the Chapter, popularizing the Chapter through creative advertising and publicity. This is easy because we as a Chapter produce a good product. We are marketable simply by our accomplishments. As long as we all keep up the good work, it's easy for me to promote our organization. Thank you.

As part of that promotion, I have been working to get the word and our name out to the public. Already, "Illini Statesmen" has appeared in such printings as the News-Gazette, the Daily Illini, and the Hub. Our information is also making its way onto numerous community online calendars and area organizational websites. We also now have a professional-looking, up-to-date, reusable, presentation display as a tool for future guest nights, annual concerts, other singing engagements, and numerous community events such as Market at the Square, Taste of Champaign, and the Tolono Sesquicentennial.

And finally, we have our 60th anniversary just around the corner. Talk about your slam dunk, your home run, your no-brainer. Thank you for making my job easy.

Past Society President Ed Waesche Mourned

J. Edward Waesche III, noted arranger, music judge and former Society president, died May 2, 2006 of cancer at the age of 74.

A "Celebration of Ed Waesche's Life" will be held in the chapel of Princeton University, Waesche's alma mater, at a date to be announced. Contact Jack Pinto at BIHDIR@aol.com for more information.

Ed's widow, Kate, has requested donations to [Harmony Foundation](#), in lieu of flowers.

"Ed's passing is a tremendous loss," said Ed Watson, executive director of the Barbershop Harmony Society. "Not only did he leave an indelible mark on the Society and the people he met, but he touched the lives of thousands through his music."

Ed had written some 600 arrangements, many of them performed on the contest stage. He had a long record of leadership in his 49 years as a Barbershopper. He had served on the Society Board for 10 years and was president in 1998 and 1999. A certified Music category judge, he was a past chair of the Society Contest & Judging Committee and the World Harmony Council. He also had served as a Harmony Foundation trustee.

Ed had been a respected member of the Harmony University faculty for more than 20 years. He had sung with three top-20 quartets over a 20-year span, most recently with The New Yorkers, past Mid-Atlantic quartet champion. Ed was a member of the Manhattan and Five Towns College chapters in New York, the Easton, Pennsylvania, Chapter, and the North Carolina Harmony Brigade.

He lived on Long Island, New York, with his wife, Kate, cats, Darla and Buckwheat, and dog, Lucky. He spent 43 years in the aerospace industry as designer, project engineer and strategic planner.

Ron Plankenhorn Mourned

Former Illini Statesmen member and long time supporter of the chapter, Ronald Plankenhorn, 61, of Urbana died Saturday April 8, 2006 at home after a brief struggle with cancer.

Ron was a great promoter of barbershopping and one of the best ticket salesmen we've ever had. Ron is also thought to have been the only barber ever to sing with the Illini Statesmen, and gave many chorus members haircuts at his Sunnycrest Barber Shop.

A benefit for the family will be held on May 6th at Sunnycrest Mall. See the next article for details on our performance at the benefit.

Saturday's Performances

Here's the schedule for Saturday. Uniform is Black Tux and Orange shirt.

3:15 Warm-up at Sunnycrest Mall (SW corner of Florida Ave and Philo Rd in Urbana)

3:45-4:15 Performance for the Plankenhorn Benefit

4:30 Depart (car-pool) to go to the Beefhouse Restaurant in Covington, IN)

5:30 (Central Time) Arrive at the Beefhouse and prepare for our performance

After the show we are welcome to stay and eat what's left on the buffet. I hope they save some of their awesome rolls and homemade strawberry jam for us!

2006 Chapter Officers

President, Vern Knapp

Marketing & PR Vice President, Kevin Swartz

Membership Vice President, Tom Johnson

Program Vice President, Andy Isbell

Secretary, Dave Sutton

Treasurer, Denny Mulvany

Immediate Past President, Andy Isbell

District Delegate, Hugo Feugen

Chorus Director, Lee Reifsteck

May Birthdays

2nd, Bernie Donahue

14th, Andy Isbell

18th, Don Mosher

23rd, Ken Steinsultz

24th, Clint Dodds

Barbershop Style Multimedia Presentation Available

What is barbershop? How has it evolved through the years? A fascinating multimedia presentation by David Wright traces our musical roots. If you have a reasonably fast internet connection and 35 minutes to spare, check this out. From the www.barbershop.org home page, put your mouse on the About Us button, then click on History and you'll find the link.

Indy Updates

Plans are coming along for the International Convention and Contest this summer in Indianapolis. If you can make it over there on Tuesday, this show is always awesome...

Harmony Foundation Presents... The Alley Cats, Realtime, the BUZZ, and VoCA

Sizzling barbershop from men's and women's champs... the top doo-wop act in the business... and the new sounds of mixed harmony, all combine for an outstanding night of vocal entertainment. See more details and order tickets at www.barbershop.org

Convention housing - book your hotel rooms online

Rooms are filling up. Go to barbershop.org to make your reservations. Free shuttle-bus service will be provided from the hotel to the Convention Center (site of registration, marketplace, and exhibitors) all week. On contest days, there will be some bus routes from the hotels to Conseco Fieldhouse. Most hotels will be on one of those bus routes.

Calendar of Events

6 MAY, Plankenhorn Benefit, Sunnycrest Mall, Urbana

6 MAY, Sweet Adelines Show, Beef House in Indiana

24 JUNE, sing National Anthem before fireworks at Tolono Sesquicentennial

2-9 JULY, International Convention, Indy

29 SEP-1 OCT, Fall Contest, Peoria

25 FEB '07, Krannert Show

Forever Plaid

Central Illinois Stage Company (CISCO) will be presenting the musical-comedy *Forever Plaid*.

The musical comedy hit *Forever Plaid* is the deliciously funny and charming story of "The Plaids," a classic 1950s all-male singing group, who were killed in a car crash on their way to their first big gig!

Audiences will be rolling in the aisles and tapping their toes as "The Plaids" are miraculously revived to perform the concert that never was in this hilariously nostalgic musical! Performing precision harmonies and executing their delightfully outlandish choreography, "The Plaids" perform some of the 1950s' greatest hits including: "Catch a Falling Star," "Three Coins in the Fountain," "Love Is a Many-Splendored Thing," "Chain Gang," "Sixteen Tons," "Crazy Bout Ya Baby," and many more.

Directed by Scott Brooks, the cast of characters includes Chris Prince as Jinx, Rich Hansen as Frankie, Mike Brooks as Sparky, and Andy Isbell as Smudge.

All four actors have an extensive background singing both barbershop as well as with other ensembles.

This show will only run for 6 nights, so it's important to reserve your tickets early.

Dates are May 11, 12, 13, 18, 19, & 20th.

Where: First Christian Church in Mattoon ... 1600 Wabash Avenue

Time: All shows are at 7:30. Doors will not open till 7:00. Festival seating only.

Ticket Prices: \$12 adults, \$10 seniors/students, \$7 children under 12.

You can make reservations by phone by calling Scott Brooks at 217-345-9517.

Tickets will also be on sale at the Dairy Queen in Charleston and the Mattoon Bank of America.

Special ticket prices and reserved seating will be available for groups of 20 or more. Please call for details.

SPECIAL NOTE TO BARBERSHOPPERS AND SWEET ADELINES ...

Since the director and all four actors have their roots firmly planted in barbershop, CISCO is extending a special offer. Saturday, May 13th has been designated as Barbershop Night. All members of SPEBSQSA or Sweet Ads that make advance reservations will get in at only \$9.00 per ticket!

Typically all group sales are handled much differently. However, all you need to do is call and make your reservations for Saturday the 13th. Provide us with your name, phone number, address, chorus affiliation, and the number of tickets you need. You will automatically receive the special group rate. Tickets will be held at the door And yes ... this rate applies to your immediate family members as well.

While we would love to stand around and sing a bit with everyone after the show ... it's Saturday and we have to strike the set for Sunday's church service. After that we may head out for pizza, but no specific plans have been made.

Oh yeah ... someone bring a pitch pipe anyway. You never know what could happen.

We hope to see a lot of our old friends in the audience.

Scott Brooks

217-345-9517