



# C-U Re-CHORDer

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## 'Tis the Season

The season? "The season of what?" you might ask. Well, football season, of course, but also U of I students are back on campus bringing welcome additions to our chorus. Contest season is coming up as we get ready for the Fall Chorus Contest at the end of this month in Peoria. Our Cabaret Show is less than two months away, and officer elections for the 2007 Illini Statesmen Board of Directors are coming up in the next few weeks. (Kevin Swartz is heading up the nominations committee, so if you'd like to know how you can help in 2007, contact Kevin.) It's getting to be the busy season for the Illini Statesmen.

Everyone that wants to sing at contest with us will need to be a currently paid member of the Barbershop Harmony Society and the Illini Statesmen. You will also need an All-Events Registration to the contest. (See separate article about contest registration.) Unfortunately, we fell behind on our schedule again for learning our contest songs. But, we now have learning CDs to help you get your part nailed down and this year for the first time we have video files with the choreography. We will also be having extra rehearsals for the contest package. See dates and times on the calendar below.

Also in this issue of the ReCHORDer you'll find articles about our recent board meeting, plans to produce a new Illini Statesmen Yearbook for 2007, and coming soon, an updated and revamped Illini Statesmen website!

## Board Meeting Notes

The Illini Statesmen Board of Directors met last Thursday, August 31<sup>st</sup> before our regular chapter meeting. Several chapter members attended. Here's a summary of the meeting.

Contest was discussed. Chris Reifsteck coming to teach choreography. Hope to schedule John Muir to coach us on music and singing. Extra rehearsals will be scheduled. Learning CDs to be recorded. Everyone will need an all-events pass for contest.

Cabaret Show is October 28<sup>th</sup>. Kevin has found jazz combo to play during gathering and dinner time. Adding Chicken Parmesan to menu along with Beef Burgundy. Tickets will be \$18 regular price, \$15 for senior citizens and students (college age and younger.)

Steve Severinghaus presented a proposal to revamp our website. Motion approved to spend \$200 for first 2 years of site hosting. Steve will follow up.

Treasurer Dennis Mulvany reported that we have approximately \$2400 in the bank.

Kevin Swartz proposed that we produce an annual Illini Statesmen Yearbook similar to the one produced for 2002. Motion approved to go ahead with the 2007 yearbook.

Officer elections for the 2007 Board of Directors were discussed. Kevin Swartz is working on filling the slate of nominations.

## Upcoming Events

- 12 SEP 7-9 p.m. extra rehearsal, Great Hall
- 19 SEP 7-9 p.m. extra rehearsal, Great Hall
- 24 SEP 2:30-5 p.m. extra rehearsal, Wesley UMC Choir Room
- 29-30 SEP Fall Contest, Peoria
- 28 OCT Fall Cabaret Show, St. Pat's
- 11-12 NOV Perform on C-U Sweet Adelines' Show, St. Thomas Moore HS
- 25 FEB 2007 Krannert Show

## **Illini Statesmen Yearbook**

by Kevin Swartz, Marketing & PR

The Illini Statesmen will be moving forward with the creation of a 2007 Yearbook. The Yearbook will feature information about the Chapter (see below) and will be supported entirely by generous contributions from our patrons & friends of the performing arts. Support will be generated during the months of September, October, & November. The Yearbook will be printed and produced during the month of December with distribution beginning on January 1, 2007. Distribution will include each patron, each Singing Valentine customer, Krannert & Cabaret audience members, and various waiting rooms and businesses throughout the community.

We hope this will be a valuable marketing & public relations tool, and also generate additional revenues for community services and educational investments, as well as music, costuming, coaching, and other related Chapter expenses. *(ed. note. This project will take all of our work to succeed. More information on how you can help will be coming soon.)*

Yearbook features will include:

- The Illini Statesmen Fall 2006 Chorus picture in full color as the program cover.
- Mission Statement.
- Illini Statesmen (About Us)
- Barbershop Harmony Society
- Our Director (Who He Is)
- Availability (What We Do)
- Contact Information
- Chorus Pages
- Director (About Our Director)
- Tenors, Leads, Basses Baritones
- Rehearsal Information
- Quartet Pages
- Back Roads
- Other Quartets
- Yearly Chorus Events
- Krannert Performance
- Cabaret/Dinner Show
- Singing Valentines
- District Competition
- Behind the Scenes
- Director/Assistant Director
- President
- Board of Directors
- Music Committee
- (and much more!)

## **New Website Coming**

Thanks to the efforts of Steve Severinghaus, the Illini Statesmen will soon have a new presence on the Internet. We have secured the rights to the website [illinistatesmen.org](http://illinistatesmen.org) and Steve is in the process of building our new website. We're hoping to make this a more interactive web experience for our members and visitors to our site.

One of the first things Steve has done is set up a mailing list so we can communicate by email much easier. In the past we all had to keep track of everyone else's email address. Now an email to [members@illinistatesmen.org](mailto:members@illinistatesmen.org) will go to all chorus members that have email. Now when someone changes their email address it will be their responsibility to update their contact information on the email list so the rest of us don't have to worry about it. We will eventually be setting up other lists so, for instance, you can email all board members, or all music committee members with one email address and without worrying that you will leave someone off the list.

If you didn't get the email welcoming you to the new mailing list, please let Steve know so you can be added or he can correct your address if he doesn't have your current email.

Steve is trying to get the website up and running as quickly as possible. If you have suggestions, or would like to help, talk to or email Steve.

## **September Birthdays**

- 4<sup>th</sup> Tom Johnson
- 8<sup>th</sup> Ron Davis
- 15<sup>th</sup> Bill Severinghaus
- 28<sup>th</sup> Stewart Gardner

## **2006 Officers**

President, Vern Knapp  
Marketing & PR Vice President, Kevin Swartz  
Music Vice President, Bill Severinghaus  
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

## Fall Contest News

You can now register for the Illinois District Fall Convention!

The Illinois District Fall Convention will be held in Peoria, IL on September 29th - October 1st. Registration information is available at the Illinois District website at:

[www.harmonize.ws/ILL/contest/register.cfm](http://www.harmonize.ws/ILL/contest/register.cfm)

**News Flash:** On Saturday morning, there is going to be a special presentation made about the proposed contest changes that you read about in the last Attacks & Releases. This will be a clarification session where we will present the information and answer any questions you may have. This is NOT an open forum to debate the changes, but rather to give you a better understanding of exactly what is being proposed and why. Because of this, there will be no SMAG contest that morning.

Also, the HOD (House of Delegates) meeting has been moved to take place at the ILT (Illinois Leadership Training; formerly COTS) in November. There will NOT be an HOD meeting on the Sunday of the convention.

### **Additional convention information:**

Costs BEFORE 9/12/2006: \$30  
Costs ON or AFTER 9/12/06: \$35

Online and print registrations will be closed after 9/22/2006. After that time, you will need to register at the convention in Peoria.

You have the option of securely registering online for the convention with a credit card (VISA/MasterCard only). If you wish to pay by check, however, you can download the Convention Registration PDF, print it, and mail it in with your check to the Peoria Housing Bureau.

Convention Registrations and Hotel Reservations are SEPARATE. You will have to contact the hotels directly to reserve your room (contact information is below). Be sure to mention that your reservation is for the Barbershop Convention (Pere Marquette

and Holiday City Centre only). The Peoria Housing Bureau is ONLY handling convention registrations. They are NOT handling housing reservations.

### **Hotel Information:**

Hotel Pere Marquette  
501 Main St  
Peoria, IL 61602  
(800) 447-1676 or (309) 637-6500

Holiday Inn City Centre  
500 Hamilton Blvd.  
Peoria, IL 61602  
(800) 474-2501 or (309) 674-2500

*(ed. Note. There are many other hotels in or near Peoria. These two are close to the Convention Center and have set aside rooms for the convention, but you may be able to find a better deal somewhere else if you don't mind driving a bit.)*

## Quartet Corner

As you probably know, or should know by know, the Barbershop Harmony Society was formed many years ago to primarily encourage quartet singing in the barbershop style. The Champaign-Urbana Chapter has a long and proud history of producing quartets from our membership. Last spring at Krannert we had a large portion of our performing chorus sing in quartets either as part of a chorus number or for a whole song. Much of the past success of our chapter has been through developing strong quartet singers that become better chorus singers in the process.

As we prepare for the Cabaret Show, we are faced with only having one regular quartet available to sing on the show. Since we won't have a guest group other than the dinner music, we will need more quartets to get together for a song or two to help us fill out the show. If you would be interested in singing in a quartet, either put your own group together, or talk to Lee or Andy and we will help you find some other guys to sing with and pick out a song or two to start working on. If you've never tried it, you don't know what you're missing. If you have tried it, but aren't quartetting now, what are you waiting for?

## Vocal Production and the Barbershop Quartet

By Ben Ayling, Bass of the 1991 International Quartet Champion, The Ritz.

As both a university teacher in choral music and a gold medalist, I'm often asked how the vocal production in barbershop quartet singing is similar or dissimilar to that of choral vocal production for the concert stage. Possibly, the better question may be whether it should be similar or dissimilar.

Once, I had the pleasure of spending a few days with the late Moses Hogan. At that time, he was 43 years old, the conductor of the most respected performance choir of spirituals, and the foremost living arranger of spirituals in America. I asked him about his view of vocal production as it applied to his style of music. He said, "We have become more sophisticated over time. We've learned so much about how to sing better so why shouldn't we incorporate this better technique into our style of singing?"

I came away from that conversation thinking about how the same is true in singing the barbershop style. We have learned so much and to not use this knowledge to make better sounds would be cheating the style of becoming a more viable art form. I am the first in line to want to keep it barbershop and I am also most excited to hear better quartets sing with better technique with each passing year.

Technique is technique. It is to be learned so as to add to one's palate of colors and skills. As performers, we need to be willing to stretch ourselves so as to create skills that allow us to sing in different ways for varied situations and styles. As a studio singer of commercials and jingles, I found that there was no such thing as too much technique. Listen, listen, listen! Learn from those great singers from other quartets as well as those from other styles. Be the best kind of vocal thief by stealing from the best and making it your own. Take voice lessons and above all, practice.

## Story Behind the Song

Stars Fell on Alabama

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"Stars Fell on Alabama" is the title of a 1934 jazz standard composed by Frank Perkins with lyrics by Mitchell Parish.

It is also the title of a 1934 book by Carl Carmer in which he recounts the time he spent traveling through Alabama in the late 1920s as a professor at the University of Alabama. The book was republished in 1985 and again in 2000 with a new introduction by Howell Raines.

Sections of this book were adapted by Brad Vice in his short story "The Bear Bryant Funeral Train." His failure to acknowledge his debt to Carmer led the organizers of the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction to revoke the prize he was given in 2004.

The titles of both works refer to a spectacular occurrence of the Leonid meteor shower that was observed in Alabama on November 12-13, 1833. As reported by the Florence Gazette: "[There were] thousands of luminous bodies shooting across the firmament in every direction. There was little wind and not a trace of clouds, and the meteors succeeded each other in quick succession."

The song was later performed by Ella Fitzgerald together with Louis Armstrong.

In 2002, The phrase "Stars Fell on Alabama" was added to Alabama's license plates and the familiar "Heart of Dixie" emblem reduced to a much smaller size. (A 1951 law requires Alabama license plates to display the words "Heart of Dixie" within a conventionalized heart shape.)

### References

\* Hall, John. (Winter 2000) "The Night the Stars Fell." Alabama Heritage Magazine No. 55

\* Code of Alabama: Section 32-6-54 (1951) and 32-6-54.1 (1997). The amendment removes the requirement for special-purpose plates.