



C-U Re-CHORDer

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Andy Isbell, editor

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Great Show! Busy Month

Wow, February was a busy month for the Illini Statesmen! We sang for the Schnuck's Sweetheart Breakfast, delivered over 50 Singing Valentines, had a reunion chorus party/installation dinner, and held our 60th Anniversary Show at Krannert.

Singing Valentines were definitely interesting this year. With a blizzard dumping a foot of snow in the area on the 13th, we had to push our delivery schedule back a couple of days. Nobody seemed to mind that we were delivering them on the 15th and 16th this year, although I'm hoping for better weather next year.

We had a great Illini Statesmen Reunion weekend. We had a great party Saturday night before the show and had several former members come for the dinner and rehearsal (including some that couldn't make it for the show on Sunday.) I think we had 12 former members join us on stage for the second half of our Krannert Show. It was great to see all of them again and sing with them.

As busy as February was, we're not slowing down much in March. We have a performance in Tuscola, we'll be answering phones for WILL TV's fund-drive (and they'll be giving us some publicity), and we're having our biggest membership campaign in years with March Madness Membership Month. We'll be learning some new music as part of our efforts to have fun and interesting rehearsals for our membership drive. Oh yeah, we'll also be preparing for our District Contest coming up in April. So, you won't want to miss a Thursday night, or you'll miss all the fun.

Thanks to several people submitting articles, we've got a pretty full bulletin this month, so you're all in luck. You won't have to read nearly as much from me.

See you on the risers.

PR Report

By Paul Stansberry, Marketing & PR VP

In brief, as most of you already know, we had a really nice story in the News-Gazette, thanks to the cooperation of reporter Melissa Merli. It was well done, and was so nice to have it for our 60th Anniversary. We had a quartet, featuring Lee Reifsteck, Kevin Swartz, Stewart Gardner, and Denny Mulvany, appear on the WCIA morning show to promote our Singing Valentines and 60th Anniversary Concert. This spot, plus the many calls and emails to WCIA's Amber Jenne and Blake Wood, paid off immensely. They advertised SingingValentines.com during this spot, after which I found out we were not listed. Thankfully, neither was anyone else, so I put our information in, and since we were the ONLY advertised Singing Valentines in our area, it generated quite a few calls. You can bet we will be listed there again next year and sooner this time. We posted our event information on WICD, WCIA, News-Gazette, & Daily Illini "Calendars". We also sent our information to several radio stations that said they would broadcast it.

Like Matt said in a recent email to all members, we need to keep the pedal to the metal, and just keep moving forward. We've had a great burst of energy these past two months, and it would be awesome to keep at least some of that energy going. This chorus has SO MUCH POTENTIAL!

On another note, I will be the first to admit, I am in no way, a PR or Marketing type of person. So, I need your help. If anyone has any ideas of what you think would be good PR, or a good marketing idea, please email them to me at pr@illinistatesmen.org.

One last thing, I raise my glass in honor, and appreciation, to be able to call myself an Illini Statesmen. I hope you will raise your glass with me.

2006 BOTY

By Lee Reifsteck, 2005 BOTY

(This was delivered by Lee as a melodrama, and has been edited somewhat from the original.)

Let me say congratulations to the BOTY for 2006. This is the highest honor to be given at the chapter level and this year's recipient has more than earned this award. This year's recipient grew up in central Illinois on a nice farmstead. He has two older siblings and he is the baby of the family. His mother says he was the ideal child to raise. He never gave his parents any problems and even though his siblings would often blame him for things, his parents knew he didn't have anything to do with it. He never got into trouble in school either. At least he never got caught. And of course he is forever hooked on singing and that Barbershop sound. He will do whatever it takes to help make this chapter something you can be proud of.

He does have an ornery side. For example, at the age of 5 he lied to his best friend Glenn and told him that there was no Santa Claus. He again lied and told him that all those presents under the tree were really from his mom and dad. You see, Glenn was an only child. He didn't have a mean older brother or sister to tell him these things and this year's recipient thought it proper to try to steal the innocence away from this child. Despite this, Glenn continued to be, and still is, one of his best friends. You know, Glenn sings too and we have never met him. Hmmm.

Our BOTY got an early start in music. At the age of 4, after his older sister got done with her piano lessons, our BOTY would climb up on the piano bench and play part of what he had heard. He would pick it out, by ear. His mother was amazed at the talent this child displayed and signed him up immediately for his own lessons.

As a child, this year's recipient seemed drawn to the stage. His mom and dad got him a magic set with the big hat and cane, and he would gather the family around and wow them with his magic tricks. When a magician came to perform at a school assembly and asked for a volunteer, who do you think was the first to raise his hand? It was this year's BOTY!

Our young budding star came home from school one day and asked his mom for some sheet music. The school was putting on a Christmas show and was auditioning kids for singing parts the next day! Unfortunately, things didn't turn out quite like he had hoped. He didn't get a part in the play. The Wellington School district obviously didn't know talent when they heard it!

In High school he started playing the trombone in the band. I'm sure those long arms of his gave him an advantage over some of the shorter kids in the class. During High school he was in the production of "Harvey," the play about the 6' tall invisible rabbit. I'm not sure what part he played, maybe Harvey?

He has always been active in church. From his early childhood he attended Prairie Green Church of Christ, and always attended church camps. It was at church camp when his future wife first laid eyes on him, though they didn't meet until the summer of 1978 at the Milford swimming pool. He was taking classes to become a lifeguard and his future wife, Sue was already a lifeguard. They worked together for 4 years. Their first date was on Oct. 10th 1981. I never did find out when they first thought it necessary to practice "CPR" on each other. He later proposed to Sue and got married on June 22, 1985.

Our BOTY attended college at Illinois State where he played in the Pep Band and "Big Red Marching Machine". When he was in the band they were the largest in the state. One night on an overnight trip with the band, someone put soap in the hotel fountain. Our BOTY claimed he had nothing to do with it. He also sang in the summer Madrigals at ISU. I've been told you had to see those long legs in tights to get the real picture. He played in the handbell choir at ISU, and he auditioned and sang the National Anthem many times before the ISU men's basketball games over all 4 years.

Our BOTY was introduced to the Illini Statesmen in 1986. He and Sue were singing in the church choir. John Muir played piano and Debbie Muir directed. John brought him in and got him hooked on Barbershop! Sue said "I knew I had lost him to this singing group forever. After his first singout, it was like trying to calm down a 6-year-old boy who just got a new pony!"

His first quartet was Gentlemen's Choice, where he sang the baritone part with Neil Royse on lead, Tim Mahannah on tenor, and Andy Isbell on bass. He soon moved on and started singing lead with that fabulous, wonderful, outstanding, good looking, talented, quartet known as Timepiece. Timepiece sang for many years and was a main-stay with the chapter, not only singing but actively involved behind the scenes and even organizing the Fat I Am Golf outing.

He took a short hiatus from the chapter and during that time became the director of the First Christian Church Choir for 5 years. He rejoined the chapter with rejuvenated energy and a dedication to pursue excellence. He brought in Paul Stansberry for his first man of note award. He started singing in a quartet again, singing baritone this time. They just recently decided on the name Prairie Blend. He volunteered to be the PR officer for 2006 and proceeded to get the Illini Statesmen visible & started lining up performances. He got Timepiece back together to sing the Star Spangled Banner for the Champaign fireworks. When our President had back problems, he called a board meeting and laid out his plan to bring the yearbook back. He organized it, sold ads, pushed us to sell ads, gathered all the information, did all the graphics work, put the whole thing together, and took it to the printers. He also volunteered to be this year's president.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege to introduce to you our 2006 Barbershopper of the Year,

Mr. Kevin Swartz

Illini Statesmen Barbershopper of the Year Past Winners

1970 Skip Stall
1971 Warren Royer
1972 Jim Clark
1973 Jim Vliet
1974 Gary Nohren
1975 Gary Stamm
1976 Ron Davis
1977 Ray Shawl
1978 Dick Tarr
1979 Jim Graham
1980 Jack Haines
1981 Larry Peterson

1982 Gene McNish
1983 Vern Knapp
1984 Al Josephson
1985 Lee Reifsteck
1986 Bill Severinghaus
1987 Fred Turcott
1988 Dave Stewart
1989 Ken McKinzie
1990 Dave Sutton
1991 John Muir
1992 Andy Isbell
1993 Del Dahl

1994 Tim Mahannah
1995 Dan Terhune
1996 Jim McDonald
1997 Jim Kraatz
1998 Don Mosher
1999 Garry Schuyler
2000 Ken Steinsultz
2001 Bernie Donahue
2002 Morris Huck
2003 Hugo Feugen
2004 Bob Twardock
2005 Lee Reifsteck

From the Director

Where do we go from here?

Let's look to the future. What can we do to make this chapter better than it already is? What can I do? What can you do? I am sure all of you can answer those questions. Here are some of my thoughts. We just had a great show. Part of the credit goes to each man on stage for starting to buy in to what I am trying to sell, EXCELLENCE! Singing to the best of your ability. All of our abilities are different and I don't expect for you to all sing at the same level. That is unrealistic, but I do expect you to sing at your very best and strive to make your very best even better. I don't think you guys have any idea how good we are, and more important, how good we can be. Much like Kevin said in his speech at the installation dinner, just think how good we could be if we all put in a little more effort. When we are all in attendance on a Thursday night we make tremendous strides in our performance level. If we could make that the norm instead of the occasional, that would be such a huge step. Again, I am not asking everyone to have perfect attendance, that too is unrealistic, and I know all of us have other lives outside Barbershop. I am asking each of you to make an effort to not only attend but to be ready at 6:50. Some of you always email me or let me know when you are not going to be in attendance or a little late and that is so nice. It not only helps me plan out the evening's rehearsal schedule, but it let's me know that it is important to you, that you understand not being there doesn't only effect yourself but the group as a whole. With that

simple understanding many great things can happen. It is more important now than ever with March Madness Membership Month upon us. We also need to make new membership a priority. How about this? Each and every person you talk with you ask this question, "Do you know any men who sing?" I like that better than "do you sing?" because then they say "no" and the conversation is over. Try it and see what happens. Good luck men and full speed ahead.

Lee Reifsteck

Spring Show 07

Congratulations to all of us for putting on such a great show. You men make me proud to be your director. I had very many kind compliments about the show. Statements like, "Wow Lee, you have those guys singing so well" and "Stars Fell on Alabama was awesome" and "I thought you couldn't sing any better than last year's show, but this year was even better." Everyone I talked with had glowing things to say. Each member of our guest quartet made a special point to find me and tell me what a good singing chapter we have.

So, this is a special thanks to Kevin, Andy, & Vern. I get to stand out in front of the chorus and direct and receive all the public attention and credit for the chapter singing so well, but much of that credit goes to the three of you. I know I could not do what I do without the three of you. Now that sounds like a good country song if you ask me. ☺

Lee Reifsteck

March Madness Membership Month

With five Thursdays in March, we're trying to make this a big month to introduce people to the joys of singing with the Illini Statesmen.

So, invite your friends, invite your neighbors, heck, invite your enemies and they'll become your friends after they enjoy singing with you. We've each been asked to come up with five names of people we know that should be invited to visit us during March. Matt Carlen has offered to personally invite everyone that he gets contact information for. Better yet, you should invite your friends and then have Matt follow up with them.

As an added incentive, the Barbershop Harmony Society has extended their 100% Club to go through 2007. For each man you recruit, you get 20% off your Society dues for 2008. If you bring in 5 new members, your Society dues are paid for.

Not sure how to start? See the next article for suggestions.

Revelations of a Veteran Barbershop Recruiter

From barbershop.org, submitted by Paul Stansberry, Author Unknown

- Nobody, in the history of the world, ever walked up to a stranger and said, "Do you know any good groups I can sing with?"
- Potential singers are usually worried if they are good enough to sing with us while we are usually worried if we are good enough to invite potential singers into our group.
- A good demo tape is worth a thousand sales pitches.
- The majority of male singers don't read music... they just follow the notes up and down.
- Our music is our best advertisement.
- The busiest people are the best recruits; They're doers!!
- Don't oversell; Your only job is to get them there the first night - Let the chorus sell itself.
- International, Contest, District or Chapter "stuff" is meaningless to the new recruit. Sell good music and fellowship.
- Young guys want to know others their age participate.
- A good speaking voice is sometimes a clue.
- Very few guys will come by themselves the first night.
- Don't talk dues. They'll ask when they're ready.
- If a guy is sincerely interested, he'll be back. Don't badger him! His actions will tell you. Don't be pushy.
- As a general rule, recruiting "old barbershoppers" is a waste of time. Sell them a show ticket. If they want to come back, they will.
- Hang with your recruit at meetings. Make sure he meets the guys, gets music and, most importantly, is NEVER left alone.
- Never underestimate our music's ability to hook somebody.
- Don't oversell or undersell barbershop music. Most young guys have no idea what it is so it's no big deal either way. Sell the "all male" aspect when they ask, "what kind of music do you sing?" ... The answer is "all kinds", which is true. However, the best answer is to give them a practice tape and say.. "listen to this".
- Men who have sung in organized groups are usually our best bets. If the guy is over 50 and has never sung organized music, the odds are pretty long on him being able to do it. There are always exceptions.
- Don't make excuses for your group.
- Since the chorus is growing, reassure the recruit that there are other new men just starting.
- You have to be willing to go beyond your immediate circle to find new singers.
- You may have to ask ten or more guys to find a singer. Don't stop on number nine.
- ENTHUSIASM IS CONTAGIOUS!!!!!!

Spring Convention Update

You can now register for the Illinois District Spring Convention!

The Illinois District Spring Convention will be held in Peoria, IL on April 20th - April 22nd. Registration information is available at the Illinois District website

<http://www.harmonize.ws/ILL/contest/register.cfm>

If you know of members that are unable to register online, please help them register or print the form out for them.

Chapter Mission Statement

by Kevin Swartz

As President of the chapter and, more importantly, as a member, I strongly believe we need a mission statement that actively serves as the foundation of our chapter. The mission statement should be written in a practical and uncomplicated, yet comprehensive, manner. All decisions made by the chapter should be based upon, and reflect the values of, the mission statement. I also believe each member should be able to list the main points of the mission statement at any time. Otherwise, why come up with a mission statement nobody ever looks at or knows exists? A mission statement should be a valuable tool which is used by the chapter and its members all the time. It should not just be a one-time exercise in writing a mission statement.

In coming up with the following six points of the proposed mission statement, I carefully considered these three resources: 1) our current mission statement, 2) the Unified Chapter Mission Statement from the Barbershop Harmony Society, and 3) my own opinions and thoughts as to what our chapter mission should be.

The following is my proposed mission statement. I consider each bullet point to be very important to the mission of the chapter and none of the points should ever be excluded in our decision making. However, I've listed the points in order of priority (as I see it).

The mission of the Champaign-Urbana chapter is:

- To perpetuate the unique American art form, the barbershop quartet, and;
- To challenge the membership to grow in music education and skill level, and;
- To serve the needs of all members by providing fellowship, social activities, and a variety of barbershopping opportunities, and;
- To encourage and educate youth in the community to appreciate and participate in a cappella music, including the barbershop style, and;
- To promote public appreciation of barbershop harmony, and;
- To support community charitable projects.

An easier way to remember would be the following simplified version.

Encourage Quarteting - The barbershop quartet is why we exist. It is why the Barbershop Harmony Society exists. Keeping the barbershop quartet experience going is the mission of the Society. It is why the Society was started in the first place. Without this bullet point, we are just like any other a cappella

organization. It is what makes us unique. It is the center of what we enjoy.

Challenge Members - We need to be working at improving our craft. Members need to be challenged to continue to grow. Without growth in skill level and education, our only other option is to decline in skill level and to move backwards. You can never just maintain a certain level. You either grow, or you begin to lose what you have. By members being challenged to grow, the overall quality and enjoyment of the chapter will also increase. Growth in skill level is more attractive to prospective new members. I want to be a part of a chapter that's growing, a chapter that cares about what it's doing, a chapter that's excited to learn, not one that's declining.

Offer Variety - Each member is different. Each member is motivated by different events. Each member grows through varying activities. A member's interest is maintained if we don't just do the same things over and over. There are many ways to be involved in our craft through competition, concerts, quarteting, social activities, coaching, gang singing, woodshedding, sectionals, warm-ups, vocal lessons, administration, on the risers, off the risers, etc., etc., etc. We need to be sensitive to and continue to look for ways to motivate and meet the individual needs of our members. Work and play need to be in balance.

Involve Youth - The future of our organization and the perpetuation of the joy we receive in a cappella singing needs to be passed on to area youth. Children are the future of barbershopping. It's that simple.

Educate Public - Our community needs to know what we and our craft are all about. We need to make ourselves known in the community through a variety of public relation events such as advertising, community calendars, public performances, media events, word of mouth, flyers, etc., etc., etc. If we enjoy our organization so much, we need to make sure others in our community are also given the same opportunity. There's no reason for keeping barbershopping a secret.

Support Community - We are a non-profit organization. As such we need to be involved in supporting our community through musical as well as non-musical projects. Not only do such projects benefit our community in which we live, but they also help us in our goal of educating the public about our organization.

I have asked the chapter officers to consider these points. And, I am asking you as a member to consider these points. I (and the chapter officers) need to hear your thoughts and opinions as well. We will be discussing these points at our next board meeting.

We Get Mail

Hi Andy,

Ray, Butch, Dave and I of the "Chicago Times" Quartet would like to thank you for inviting us to be part of your chapter show and celebration yesterday.

We were able to listen to portions of the show via the sound system speakers in the dressing rooms, and were impressed with the selections and variety of music, and quality of the chorus and quartets.

The chorus is singing very well indeed, and a pleasure to hear.

It was our honor to be with you, to sing for your audience and members, and we wish you and the chapter many more years of performance celebrations.

Regards,

Dave Boo - Bass and Contact
Chicago Times Barbershop Quartet

Upcoming Events

10 MAR WILL Pledge Drive
17 MAR Douglass County Museum, Tuscola
20-22 APR Spring Contest, Peoria
1-8 JUL International Convention, Denver

March Birthdays

7th Morris Huck
8th Arlie Saldeen

Answer Phones at WILL-TV

WILL is giving us the opportunity to promote the Champaign-Urbana Chapter & the Illini Statesmen Chorus on **Saturday, March 10** by helping them answer telephones during their pledge drive for the PBS station at the U of I.

We need to supply at least 6 guys (or gals) during each of these times: 6:00pm - 8:30pm and 8:30pm - 11:00pm.

Please email president@illinistatesmen.org if you are available to volunteer your service for our Chapter. You are welcome to answer phones for either time or both. Just let me know your preference. It is an easy job. WILL provides all the training you will need. I have training handouts to pass out this Thursday.

This would be a golden opportunity to promote March Madness Membership Month.

The programs to be broadcast will be...

Ralna English musical special
Daniel O'Donnell (Irish singer)

My Music: The British Beat

Thank you for helping,
Kevin

2007 Officers

President, Kevin Swartz
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