## Harmonizer

BRINGING BARBERSHOP HARMONY TO LIFE • MAY/JUNE 2022



## **HEALING AT MIDWINTER**

The first in-person international event in two years previews all the singing, tagging, and hugging that's coming in Charlotte



DON'T MISS THE BIGGEST BARBERSHOP PARTY
OF THE YEAR







CHARLOTTE, NC JULY 3-10, 2022





There will be more singing, more fun, more festivals, more afterglow experiences, and more opportunities to participate than ever before!

Stay tuned for more details on all our exciting Harmony University Education in Charlotte offerings!

Mon July 4

Hotel venue spaces are open and available for gathering and tags. Come early and start the Reunion!

Tue

July 5

Education in Charlotte

Wed

July 6

Quarterfinals

Quartet Festival/ Quarterfinals

Festival/

Opening Night Reunion Parade of Harmony

Education in Charlotte

Festival/ Quarterfinals

NextGen Varsity Quartet and Chorus Festival

Jazz Band Afterglow and Singing Pub Crawl Thu

July 7

Education in Charlotte

Chorus Festival

Quartet Semifinals

Late Night Showcase Fri

July 8

Chorus Contest Session 1

Association of International Champions Show

After Party

Sat

July 9

Chorus Contest Session 2

MegaSing

**Ouartet Finals** and Finale

Chorditorium





The Epicentre is located conveniently right next to the Spectrum Center and is full of incredible restaurants and bars. Perfect for quick breaks between contests and shows!

(And Charlotte's No.1 tourist attraction, the NASCAR Hall of Fame, is just one block from the Westin.)

The convention area is very walkable with all venues easy to get to in a short amount of time, and for extra convenience, there is also the Charlotte Light Rail which runs directly through all the convention blocks and makes getting to and fro extremely easy.

**BARBERSHOP.ORG/INTERNATIONAL** 

## In This Issue

MAY/JUNE 2022 · VOLUME LXXXII · NUMBER 3

Jim and Judy Clancy address the Vocal Majority at the dress rehearsal for its 2022 Spring Shows. Jim directed the chorus to 10 consecutive gold medals, and for decades was the central figure in a rewarding chapter culture that continues to make fraternal connection the highest value of all.



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**On the cover:** Pacific Coast Harmony performs at Midwinter 2022 in Pasadena. *Photo by Lorin May* 

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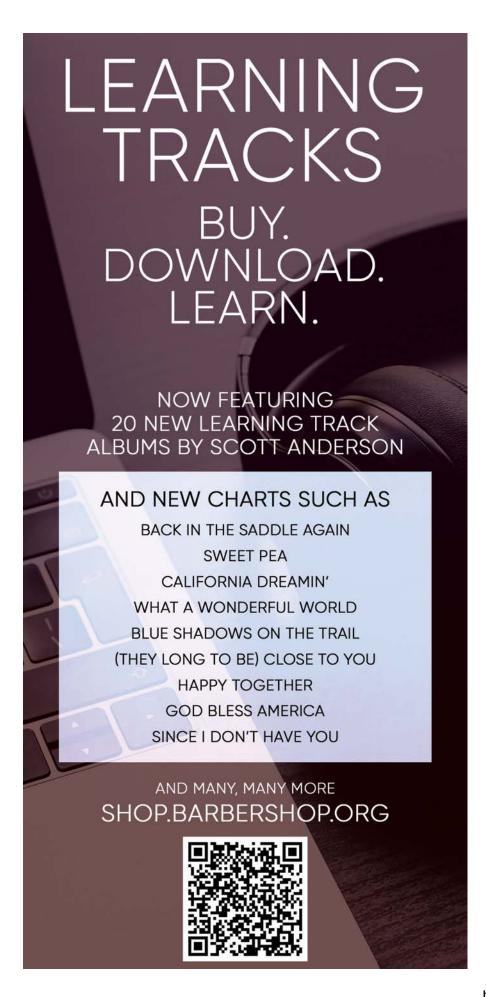
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#### Harmonizer

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**EDITOR** 

Lorin May

**OUR VISION** 

Everyone in Harmony

#### **OUR MISSION**

To bring people together in harmony and fellowship to enrich lives through singing.

#### **OUR PURPOSES**

To perpetuate the old American institution: the barbershop quartet and barbershop harmony

To promote appreciation of barbershop harmony

To initiate and maintain a broad program of musical education, contests, and appreciation in support of barbershop harmony and the allied arts

To establish and maintain foundations that support our vision

To initiate, promote and participate in charitable projects that support our vision

The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. (DBA Barbershop Harmony Society) is a non-profit organization operating in the United States and Canada.

#### May/June 2022

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# The value of both the local and the global experience

It takes both the ensure that today's and tomorrow's new Barbershoppers experience the music and the fellowship that brings us all together

MARTY: Right now I'm reading *The Road To Character* by David Brooks, which in the chapter "Self-Mastery (Institutions)" suggests the world has gone from an organization-based influence to this "Big Me" mindset, that everything is about the individual. We forget that the Big Me comes and goes, and it's our duty as individuals to influence, improve and preserve the institutions that shape our world.

JOHN: You're serving your duty to humankind when you deal with anything that's perpetuating something beyond your own immediate desire. Singing barbershop is great, and being a contributing part of our organization that helps create that experience and perpetuate it into the future is fantastic.

MARTY: We're in an era when you don't actually need a central organization to do anything, though. You can make a barbershop tags channel on YouTube and a group on Facebook and be done. There's as much or more energy taking place in people self-organizing in free channels like that, as there is in people showing up to be part of leadership in chapters or districts.

**JOHN:** It's why we are so grateful for the kind of volunteers we profiled here in *The Harmonizer* in January. It's a big open question, though, of how sustainable the mission of pre-

serving and encouraging barbershop harmony into future generations would be without the kind of coordinated effort the Society represents.

BRIAN LYNCH: If we shut the doors today, laid off the staff, dismissed the Board, barbershop would still go on, it just wouldn't look like this. It might look like a federation of many small singing communities loosely joined (or not), where today we have a sense of a single organization that's relatively homogeneous within a certain range. Is that what we're headed?

MARTY: We're working toward a goal of a million people involved and/or engaged in the BHS by 2038. However, there's not been enough validation or emphasis or understanding of the value of the big organization. Throughout our strategic planning process, it has always been about the local singing experience in chorus and quartets. That is where barbershop lives, it is the core value that has been consistent the entire way.



#### Get in Touch



John Donehower, Society President johndonehower@gmail.com Marty Monson, CEO/Executive Director CEO@barbershop.org Society Board of Directors societyboard@barbershop.org JOHN: Look at the massive changes within the Society across eight decades. There was backlash when chorus singing started, and folks wondered if we were going to lose something, and yet it probably led to the greatest expansion of the membership that we've ever seen. Most people are chorus singers—how is that a bad thing, if it led to a ten-fold expansion of people enjoying the art form?

MARTY: You can say the same for removing racial barriers, or the early days of women coaching and directing men's choruses, or high-quality music education, or the growth of premium choruses and quartets.

JOHN: Whenever there is a change, you can't know in advance with certainty whether it's going to be a good change. We make the best choice we can for the present and future that we can see. We've done it with Everyone in Harmony vision and the strategic plan, where everyone can be a member and we've opened the contest up. But because we're living in the moment, we can't know yet.

MARTY: We know that the great blue sea is vast, we know that there's lots of potential out there. I suspect that in 2038 when we have our 100th anniversary, this is just going to be another thing that we're going to look back at and say, "You know, that was a good idea that worked out well." I'm confident there is going to be a "later"—the Barbershop Harmony Society is going to be a force in 2038.

JOHN: When people say to me, "Yes, I recognize that we haven't been growing with our past model, but I still don't want anything to change"—to me, that's a suicide pact, and I don't sign on for that. If you know that things are going to turn out badly but you're still not willing to do anything about it, that's not acceptable.

**MARTY:** We're talking change and transformation, but it's still the same

"AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS 'JUST ABOUT SINGING'— WHOSE MEMBERSHIP CARDS FOR YEARS ENCOURAGED PEOPLE TO 'SEEK HAVEN FROM THEIR DAILY CARES, BY SINGING—IS ALWAYS ABOUT TODAY AND TOMORROW."

experience, right? It's still the music that brings us together and the joy of fellowship, regardless of the form of the organization.

**BRIAN:** The working definition of barbershop for most people is, "The way it was the day I first joined." People feel that first rush of enthusiasm and think, "This must be the golden era, because I'm sitting in the middle of it."

**JOHN:** That's great: you can only live in the time you live in, right? That's the sign of a living, breathing organization. The question is, how do you transfer that sensation into an obligation to make that space available for everybody long after you're gone?

BRIAN: People don't join Society as a cause. They start by exchanging a few irreplaceable minutes of their life for this great feeling of fulfillment. Hopefully, they catch fire and realize the continuity of the experience: "I love this, and it seems like I'm becoming a better person, or my broader community is becoming better because I'm doing this"—and they attribute that to the organization.

**JOHN:** How do we harness that into activity that makes them trade their minutes for barbershop, and then ultimately nurture them into a sense of purpose for the organization?

MARTY: It's about learning to em-



#### John & Marty are attending

1st Wednesday of each month: Strategic Planning Committee meeting (virtual)

Tuesdays, Weekly Sound of Illinois Chorus rehearsal (John)

May 15, Quarterly BHS Board Meeting (Virtual)

May 17-19 - All Staff Mtg, Nashville (Marty)

June 15-17 - Chorus America Conference, Baltimore (Marty)

July 3-10, BHS International Festival & Convention (Charlotte)

July 4th, Quarterly BHS Board Meeting (Charlotte)

July 24-31: Harmony University

#### **Marty is reading**

The Chorus Leadership Guide, Matthew Sigman (published by Chorus America)

#### John is bingewatching

HU ONLINE: History of Barbershop with David Wright

#### John is learning

"The Place Where The Lost Things Go" arr. Brent Graham

#### Marty is relearning

"Spoonful of Sugar," arr. Russ Foris

"THE QUESTION IS, HOW DO YOU TRANSFER THAT SENSATION INTO AN OBLIGATION TO MAKE THAT SPACE AVAILABLE FOR EVERYBODY LONG AFTER YOU'RE GONE?"

brace the ongoing experience stretching backward in our legacy, and forward for singers in the future. It's the fact that there is always a place to go anywhere to find a recognizable barbershop experience. It's not identical from place to place, but the core parts: singing together, the particular flavor of close harmony, the tight cooperation, the joy of fellowship, the specific endorphins derived from overtones—we'll always recognize those.

JOHN: Today's social media influencers—a kid on TikTok with a dance or a YouTuber with a hot take—may move individual people in large numbers to an opinion or even an action today, but they are not necessarily about tomorrow. BHS will always be about tomorrow. All the changes in the past, and all the changes in the present, all come from the same desire to make a better barbershop community tomorrow.

An organization that is "just about singing"—whose membership cards for years encouraged people to "seek haven from their daily cares" by singing—is always about today, and tomorrow.

**MARTY:** And that's why the organization's local singing communities—the quartets, the chapters, the districts—are the most important thing that BHS supports.

To always have that place, for tomorrow. ■

- Brian Lynch, blynch@barbershop.org



#### Reader Feedback

Let us know what's on your mind: Harmonizer@barbershop.org

#### A lot of positive response to the 1-2-3 Method article



The feedback I have received on the "123 Method" article on transforming music learning culture within a chapter is probably about five times as much as I've ever heard from a *Harmonizer* article. I'm hearing that it was a game changer for so many people. I am hearing from people that I have never heard from before or calls from other HU faculty members who are going to institute this approach/culture

and wanted to ask questions to ensure its success. I also have received calls about directors referencing me or the article in rehearsals. I think together we made quite a splash with this article, and I think we struck a "chord" with people and maybe even started a culture of returning to rehearsals while doing so in a kind and encouraging way.

#### **Paul Ellinger**

Ann Arbor, MI

#### Paul Ogle truly one of the greatest

A part of me always dreads getting to the Chapter Eternal section of The Harmonizer, learning that friends of mine at some point have passed. But in this past edition, I was happy to see that St. Louis #1 paid a well-deserved tribute to Paul Ogle. He was truly one of the greatest Joe Barbershoppers that ever was. As much as we pay tribute to giants in our society, it brightened my day to no end to see his contributions to our society celebrated. Everyone who knew him and was in his presence was blessed and always walked away smiling and laughing.

#### **Kevin Keller**

St. Charles, MO

#### **Gather to celebrate Joe Liles**

It had been noted that a more formal celebration of the life and the music of the great Joe Liles (*The Harmonizer*, Nov/Dec 2021) would take place at a later date. That date has now been determined. "Joe Liles: A celebration of his life and music" • Saturday, May 28, 2022 • Social hour 1pm, Program 2-4pm + • Delta Hotel by Marriott • Racine, Wisconsin • (262) 886-6100.











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Barbershop.org

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## HARMONY MARKETPLACE HAS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

The Harmony Marketplace is your one-stop-shop for all of your Barbershop needs, featuring the largest collection of custom merchandise, and the largest catalog of Barbershop music in the world.

### Barbershop TOP SELLERS

	ТТВВ	ARRANGER
1	The Bells of Notre Dame w/Out There	A. Dale
2	When I'm Sixty-Four	Gentry
3	The Longest Time	Gentry
4	You've Got A Friend in Me	Wessler
5	Go the Distance	A. Dale

SSAA	ARRANGER
1 I'm Into Something Good/Happy Togethe	r A. Dale
2 Come Fly With Me	Keller
3 Deed I Do	A. Dale
4 Seven Bridges Road	Johnson
5 Somebody To Love	A. Dale

SATB	ARRANGER
1 Africa	Morris
2 You've Got A Friend in Me	Wessler
3 Seven Bridges Road	Johnson
4 A Whole New World	Hicks
5 Hooked On A Feeling	Nicholas



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2022 CONVENTION

## Charlotte will be a massive return to live barbershop

After three years away, possibly the biggest-ever competitive field of quartets and choruses is only one aspect of our big four-part harmony reunion

ore singers in more combinations in more venues than ever before—a MASSIVE return to barbershop—are the promise of the Barbershop Harmony Society 2022 International Convention and Contests.

"No matter how you love to barbershop—as a performer, fan, learner, tagger, whatever—you'll find the people and activities to refill your barbershop tank," said Dusty Schleier, BHS Director of Meetings and Conventions.

At *Harmonizer* press time in April, 44 choruses were registered to compete, and quartet preliminary contests were on track to qualify upwards of 60 quartets for the international contests. Additionally, 25 quartets were queued up for the Next Generation Barbershop Varsity Quartet Contest, and potentially two choruses for the Varsity Chorus Contest.

And on top of that ... a new offering, the **Quartet and Chorus Festivals** will give ensembles a chance to perform for international audiences in a non-competitive setting.

Add in Harmony University education programming and casual opening night parties and parades on Monday and Tuesday of convention week, and you have a reunion of landmark proportions.





(top left) After three years, 2019 champion Signature will finally be singing away the trophy to a new champ. (top right) The first-ever Quartet and Chorus Festivals allow any group to perform for an international audience. (below left) The EpiCentre, across the street from the contest venue, is expected to be filled with barbershop diners and taggers.

It's all part of an ongoing effort to expand the programming variety for guests, and accessibility for performers—hallmarks of the Everyone in Harmony Strategic Plan. "Barbershop conventions are about celebrating harmony in every form, with all people," said BHS Market-





ing Director Devin Anna Bradford. "We've expanded access to our biggest stages, not just by gender, but by more ways to participate. Everyone will feel right at home at the Charlotte convention."

"The city of Charlotte itself will really enhance that reunion feeling," said Dusty. "All our convention hotels are within walking distance of all convention events, with FREE light rail connecting the headquarters hotel and events spaces at the convention center to the contest site in the Spectrum Center. Great dining and entertainment options are directly across the street in the EpiCentre. Charlotte will be the barbershop party you've been aching for!"



**MORE ONLINE** For registration and housing options, competitor lists, schedules, and more, go to *barbershop.org/charlotte*.

#### Danbury Mad Hatter Society receives \$5,900 grant

The **Danbury**, **CT Chapter** received a \$5,900 operating support grant from the Connecticut Cultural Fund Operating Support Grant from Connecticut Humanities, a statewide non-profit affiliate organization of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grant will assist organizations as they recover from the coronavirus pandemic, and maintain, and grow their ability to serve their community. The chapter's support of music education was cited. The chorus will use the funds to purchase music, improve technology for virtual meetings and performances, increase its marketing, and public relations reach, and grow membership.



#### Barbergators donate show proceeds to shelter

The Gainesville, FL Chapter donated 100% of its 2022 Christmas show proceeds to Grace Marketplace homeless shelter. After resuming in-person rehearsals in a parking garage on the University of Florida campus, the chorus staged the performance as free to the community, underwriting all production costs from chapter funds. The audience donated \$1,146 at the door.

#### Southerntiersmen earn \$2000 grant to feed community

Across 17 years, the **Southerntiersmen Chorus** in Binghamton, NY has raised more than \$35,000 to support hunger relief in their community through CHOW (Community Hunger Outreach Warehouse). Last fall, the chapter added in a \$2,000 grant from a local business, Upstate Shredding, through an ongoing philanthropic venture called Southern Tier Tuesdays.

#### BHS/NAFME AWARD

#### KATY DANE HONORED AS MUSIC EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR



In recognition of her broad influence on close harmony and a cappella singing, Katy Dane of Benold Middle School, Georgetown, TX, has been named the 2022 recipient of the Music Educator Award by the Barbershop Harmony Society and NAfME, The National Association for Music Education.

The award was announced in a surprise school visit by CEO Marty Monson on Feb. 2 with some of Katy's friends, family, colleagues, and chapter members present. Her impact on music students in the School District extends across multiple ensembles and schools, including choirs, a cappella ensembles, orchestras and vocal soloists. Link to video at *barbershop.org/harmonizer*.

#### WEIRD AL, QUORUM COLLABORATE ON BIRTHDAY GREETINGS



he voices were top tier, but the faces were apparently too good-looking for American Greetings. The company tapped parody music video legend "Weird Al" Yankovic for a slick, high-production online birthday card. Recipients see a full-fledged musical production of



"Happy Birthday" that incorporates the recipient's name and age into a high-end production with quartet, and later a gospel choir. In August of 2021, 2019 Bronze Medalist **Quorum** provided the voice of the quartet used at the beginning of each video. They loved working with Al, and are probably grateful they didn't have to record all 220,000 possible combinations. Preview your own custom video at *americangreetings.com*, and cheer on Quorum this summer in Charlotte!

#### ASK A STAFF MEMBER

#### TOOLS TO DO MORE ON MEMBER CENTER

HOW AND WHEN CAN I RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP BY MYSELF? AND WHAT IF I REQUIRE A PHONE CALL?



You can renew your own membership 60 days before the renewal date and 30 days after. Thirty days after your membership lapses, you lose access to the Member Center (*members.barbershop.org*) and will need to be reinstated. Chapter leaders and the staff Communi-

ty Care Team) can help you!

Fortunately, the Member Center search tool now displays helpful knowledge articles and How-To-Tutorials as well as information on all BHS members. You can now choose what contact information is displayed publicly. Search "Contact" to see the new search tool in action via a helpful tutorial.

The best and fastest way to contact our small but knowledgeable Community Care Team (Luke, Carmel, Sean, and myself) is via email. We are gradually getting back to answering live calls. If you know a phone call is needed, schedule a call with us at *calendly.com/bhs-ccc*.

- Kelli Vitt, CustomerService@barbershop.org

#### AS SEEN ON TV



#### "QUARTET" EXPANDS THE BARBERSHOP CATALOG

In February, after Neil Young and Joni Mitchell left streaming platform Spotify in protest over a prominent podcaster, *The Late Show's* Stephen Colbert joked that a barbershop quartet might now be the only way to stream the famous songwriters' music. Cue **The Chordon Bleus**, a one-off quartet featuring members of the **Westchester**, **NY** and **Five Towns**, **NY** chapters as they reimagined some of the singers' most famous works.

There is long tradition of TV satire that juxtaposes wholesome olde-tyme barbershop style with contemporary music. Forerunners include Jimmy Fallon's **Ragtime Gals**, *The Simpsons'* **B-Sharps**, and *Mad TV's* **Gangsta Shop Quartet**, among many others. (L-R) Steve Delehanty (T), Steve Marrin (L), Keith Harris (Br), Alan Fennell (Bs). Link to the performances at *barbershop.org/harmonizer*.



#### AN 8,600-MILE SINGING VALENTINE

Florida State graduate music student Timothy Yu, a tenor with Tallahassee's **Capital Chordsmen**, was all about boosting the chapter's Singing Valentines program this February. There was one Valentine he wanted to deliver most, but his only concern: She wasn't in Tallahassee—she was in Hong Kong! Chapter quartet **4 Oysters in Search of a Pearl** invited Tim to sing with them on a very long-distance delivery.

During the chapter's regular 8:30 p.m. break (9:30 the next day in Hong Kong), Timothy called his sweetheart, who had no idea that this phone call included three special guests. The quartet then sang, "Heart of my Heart," "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," and a short Valentine's tag to end our set. The three non-Cantonese speakers had no idea what she said in response ... only that she smiled a lot and said she liked Tim's outfit! An 8,586 mile Valentine delivery—can any other BHS group top that?

#### COMING SOON: SCHMITT BROS STAGE

A new stage to be built as part of the Central Park West 365 project in Two Rivers, WI will be named in honor of four hometown heroes: the widely beloved 1951 champion **Schmitt Brothers**, who performed on all of America's major stages over 35 years.

The extended family of the Schmitt Brothers, including former Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt, are donating \$100,000 to name the stage in honor of the Schmitt Brothers. The \$1.6 million overall development has a planned dedication for summer 2023.





#### What's Happening

International **Convention 2022 Iuly 3-10** Charlotte, N.C.

Live and in-person, with many exciting new activities! barbershop.org/international

Midwinter Convention 2023 Feb. 7-12 Daytona Beach, Fla.

Seniors & Youth contests, casual vibe, great shows!



2022 International Charlotte 2023 International Louisville 2024 Midwinter New York 2024 International Cleveland



#### **Harmony University 2022 July 24-31**

Sing and learn in a live setting from the best instructors in the barbershop world—and this year, we're doing it in New Orleans!

www.barbershop.org/hu



HU 2022

#### Check out the Harmony U Faculty for 2022

After two years of online learning, our first-ever Harmony University in New Orleans will feature an all-star faculty

oin us on the beautiful Loyola University New Orleans campus in New Orleans, LA July 24–31, 2022 for an experience you will never forget! Whether you're a music educator hoping to learn more about sharing a cappella with your students, a long-time Barbershopper, or even a person brand new to the style, we've got options for all ages ranges and experiences. Attend as an individual or with your quartet or chorus for our daily coaching sessions. Hone your director, arranging, or coaching skills. You can even learn how to add barbershop harmony to your music curriculum and earn Graduate or CEU credits while you're at it!

You'll learn, be inspired, and walk away with friends from around the world who all have one thing in common: the love of a ringing barbershop chord! Come learn why Harmony University is more than a week-long music conference: it's a week of smiles, joy, singing, fun, inclusion, harmony, and love in the barbershop bubble!

#### DIRECTING

Don Campbell, Dean Ron Black Larry Bomback loe Cerutti lay Dougherty Theo Hicks Glenda Llovd Rob Mance Ravi Raghuram Timothy Workman Kirk Young

#### **ARRANGING**

Steve Tramack, Dean Steven Armstrong Anthony Bartholomew **Jake Bartlett** Adam Bock Mo Field Tom Gentry Rafi Hasib Clav Hine Glenda Lloyd Gus Sterneman David Wright

#### **COACHING**

*Jill Rodgers, Dean* Andrew Carolan Anthony Colosimo Charlotte Murray

Sandi Wright

#### **LEADERSHIP**

Rob Macdonald, Dean Greg Caetano Maria Christian Elizabeth Davies Manny Lopez Terry Reynolds Steve Wyszomierski

#### MUSIC EDUCATOR

Katv Dane, Dean Anthony Bartholomew lav Butterfield Theo Hicks Daniel Rohovit Tessa Walker

#### **VOICE & PERFORMANCE**

Nicky McGrath, Dean Iono Bligh Chad Bennett Lucas Bitzer Blair Brown Peter Cunningham Paul Ellinger Philip Grant Ben Harding Joseph Hunter

Donya Metzger Allen Otto Amy Patterson Manoj Padki Lee Powell Ben Shively Gene Spilker Larry Triplett

#### **NEXT GEN CHORUS**

Katie Macdonald, Dean Director: Melody Hine Section Leaders: Ali Hauger Kohl Kitzmiller Kim Newcomb Jake Tickner

#### **CHORUS AND OUARTET COACHES**

Patrick Brown Alan Hughes Kevin Keller Will Lagos Marty Lovick Alex Morris Brian O'Dell Nathan Ogg Stuart Sides Renee Tramack Tim Waurick



### TIP SHEET Norbert Hammes, Audiologist, 2x quartet gold medalist in BinG! ☑ norbert.hammes@gutzuhoeren.de

HEAR BETTER, SING BETTER

## You may have a hearing loss—sing and tune well anyway

You may have a hearing loss and not even know it. The upper frequencies are usually the first to go, and your ability to understand speech and tune chords can diminish years before you notice.

bout 1/3 of people over the age of 60 (and many under age 60) have hearing loss. Many do not yet know it. In Germany, where I am an audiologist, the average visit to an ear/nose/throat doctor (ENT) or audiologist comes about 11 years after the patient's hearing loss started. The loss happens so slowly that few realize it until they have a significant inability to understand the spoken word.

Loss of upper frequencies usually happens first, and an inability to hear these frequencies limits your ability to sing in tune and to lock WHEN YOU HAVE A HEARING LOSS, YOU MAY STILL ENJOY MUSIC BECAUSE IT REQUIRES LOWER FREQUENCIES; BUT TO INTONATE, YOU NEED TO HEAR THE HIGHER FREQUENCIES.

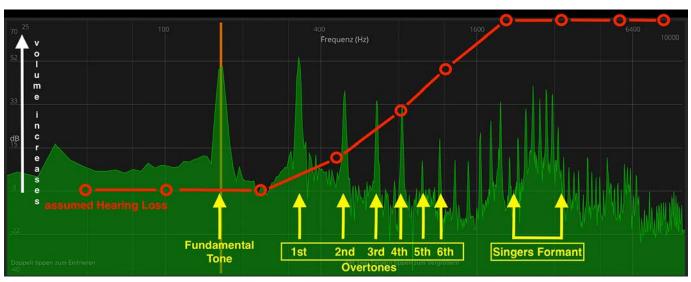
chords. A good hearing aid with the right settings may help you sing, blend, and tune better.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF HEARING OVERTONES

Barbershoppers use the term "overtones" in a group context, but a single human voice produces plenty of overtones by itself. When you have a hearing loss, you may still enjoy music because so much of it uses lower frequencies; but to intonate, you need to hear the higher frequencies. Especially if you are a novice singer, it will otherwise be much more difficult to match pitch, match vowels, and blend with other voices.

The graphic used in this article represents the sound I produced

A computer app's visual representation of the sound waves generated while the author sings an "ee" vowel on the E below middle C. From left to right are the sound frequencies perceivable to the human ear, from lower frequencies to higher. From bottom to top are their volumes, from softer to louder. The red line represents a person's possible hearing loss; any sound at a frequency below the red line is heard more softly or not at all. Note that the chart is logarithmic—each solid line doubles the value of the previous line.



while singing a single note. That note's fundamental tone is at about 165 Hz, but my voice naturally produced six additional overtones, each at higher frequencies. A person with a hearing loss (represented by the red line) would hear both my fundamental tone and first overtone clearly; they would hear my second overtone more quietly than normal hearing, hear the third overtone about 20 decibels lower than normal. and the fourth overtone 33 decibels below normal hearing. They probably would not hear the fifth or sixth overtones at all. Due to missing overtones, this person will have a difficult time understanding a lot of spoken language and will find it difficult to tune their voice when singing.

#### HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER I HAVE A **HEARING LOSS?**

Usually, your family mentions it first. Maybe you hear lower frequencies as well as you could in the past, but you may have difficulty hearing the higher frequencies—the explosive sounds, the sibilance of the consonants that are transmitted at higher frequencies. Everything sounds duller to you other's voices and your own voice.

Online tests may help discover an overall issue, but a hearing test from an ENT or audiologist will be more accurate. Like many audiologists, my tests are free and require only 10-15 minutes to take, plus another 10 minutes or so to discuss the results.

#### **CUSTOMIZE YOUR HEARING AID FOR SINGING**

All modern hearing aids have a variety of settings depending upon your circumstances. When singing, the following adjustments are highly recommended:

· Select the right hearing mode. Many feature listening modes that can be adjusted on the device or via phone app according to your

USUALLY, YOUR FAMILY MENTIONS IT FIRST. MAYBE YOU HEAR LOWER FREQUENCIES AS WELL AS YOU COULD IN THE PAST. **EVERYTHING SOUNDS DULLER** TO YOU—OTHER'S VOICES AND YOUR OWN VOICE.

situation. When singing, a music or singing mode is recommended.

• Switch off limiting systems. These include compression, frequency modulation, noise suppression, and automatic feedback suppression. (Turn them back on again when

you are not singing.)

- · Reduce gain broadband.
- Fine-tune amplification. Singing is considerably louder than speaking, so the amplification of the devices must be reduced in parallel. It will take a while to achieve a good compromise between the sound of your own voice, the volume at which you must hear other singers in order for you to intonate with them, and understanding your chorus director's instructions.

Finally, especially if you are a singer with hearing aids, safely keep your ear canal as open as possible. You will likely need professional help to do so effectively and to not risk serious injury to your eardrum.





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## IT FELT SO GOOD TO BE BACK TOGETHER





from any past Midwinter, Pasadena felt like old times

ealing was the most common word used by in-person attendees to describe the 2022 Midwinter Convention—the first International BHS event in the two years since the coronavirus first took away in-person gatherings.

A lot—a lot—of people modified their plans after the Omicron variant peaked in the U.S. at the same time as the convention. But sitting in an auditorium filled with fellow Barbershoppers from all over was a cathartic experience. Proof of vaccination, masks, and social distancing seemingly had no effect on the high that attendees felt—post-event surveys showed the highest satisfaction levels in many years.

Who wouldn't feel extra satisfied after getting to hug and sing tags with friends they hadn't seen for at least two years, and probably more? Who couldn't help but go home on a high after days of hearing their voices join a large four-part choir of audience members, or perform for fellow Barbershoppers for the first time in years?

Amidst all the casual reunions and budding friendships were plenty of educational offerings and some great shows and great contests.



ost of the scheduled headliners for the three Pasadena shows never got to share what they had worked so hard to prepare. BHS show producer Chad Bennett saw lineups seemingly change by the hour, while the remaining headliners and several last-minute substitutes saved the day.

Many performers were unavailable due to the ongoing pandemic, but by early November we had 12 quartets confirmed for the three Midwinter shows. We assumed a couple of groups might need to withdraw due to COVID and other circumstances. It didn't take long to find out that we were right.

Two weeks before Midwinter, **Double Date** needed to cancel. No worries, we still had 11 performers ready. Then, three days before the Thursday Night Show, **Singing Double, Love Notes, Nightlife** (1996 champ), and **Crossroads** (2009 champ) were no longer available. The next day, **Duly Noted** had to pull out. In addition, the AISQC could no longer host a full chorus. All of the groups that were forced to withdraw were heartbroken, but each call was completely understandable.

Thankfully, we still had **Westminster Chorus**, **Hearsay**, **St. Croix Crossing**, **The Newfangled Four**, **Wildfire**, and **Signature**. We just needed to find a few more performers to round out the shows. The

brand new Seniors Quartet Champs would perform on Saturday, but what about Several Festival participants agreed to perform on various shows: Re[Choir]ed, Anna Coyotes, Georgia Spirit, Pacific Coast Harmony, and First Class. But we still needed another performer to complete the Thursday show.

Bank of Harmony, a quartet of current and former Dapper Dans of Disneyland, joined us on short notice. It finally seemed like the shows were good to go; however, there was one more blow coming. Reigning champ Signature was scheduled to perform a short set on Friday and headline the Saturday Night Show. As they made their way to Pasadena on Thursday morning, they got the news that one member could not attend. The other three tried to find a last-minute substitute but eventually had to cancel as well. Fortunately, 2019 Next Gen champ Wildfire stepped up to become the MVP of Midwinter, sharing several full sets and anchoring both the Friday and Saturday shows.

Despite all the challenges, Midwinter shows were well-received and few knew what had happened behind the scenes. Thanks again to all the amazing performers that helped bring us together as one community to experience the joy and wonder of barbershop harmony sung live and in person.

- BHS Show Producer Chad Bennett







#### One Foot in the Stave

t a British Quartet Champions' Chorus rehearsal back in November 2017, four experienced singers found themselves asking, "What is left to achieve?" Aha! A seniors quartet—and a few years later, here we are.

We returned from the 2020 Jacksonville Midwinter as silver medalists. We chose a new ballad for Midwinter 2021 in NYC, then COVID hit and we had no more rehearsals for 15 months! Weekly Zoom chats full of banter enabled us to maintain enthusiasm and focus. What does this

quartet have if not friendship and maturity?

Rehearsals resumed in May of 2021, and 13 rehearsals, one sing-out, four coaching sessions and the maintenance of good health, found us in Pasadena with six days to go until the contest of a lifetime. We took with us the pearls of performance wisdom from Kirsty Williams and the discipline of duetting from Ron Black. We rehearsed every day and used the keen ears and eyes of our own Gaynor Schofield (chief resident coach) and Monica Funnell, who knew just how much to influence our efforts and build our confidence.

A barbershop audience that brings out the best in each competitor. We had a standing ovation for each song—and it was over. We



Rod Bucher (T), Pete Nugent (Br), Andy Funnell (Bs), Brian Schofield (L). Tip to North Americans: in Great Britain, "stave" is a common term for "music staff."

faced the long wait ahead for the results.

"And with a score of 80.8%, your 2022 International Seniors Quartet Champions—One Foot in the Stave!"

Imagine our delight as we made our way to the stage to receive the medals and get a really close look at that magnificently large trophy. Words are inadequate to express the warmth and generosity of the AISQC's welcome to us. It was later that we noticed our score. Wow!

We are already planning for 2023 Midwinter in Daytona Beach when we hand over the new medals.

So, who are we? In ascending order of age: Andy Funnell (Bs) joined the British Association of Barbershop Singers (BABS) in 1994, has three BABS gold medals, and has sung with Pete and Rod before. He achieved the first BABS top 20 international quartet finish with **Reckless**. His wife, Monica, also a quartet gold medalist.

Brian Schofield (L) joined BABS in 1989, has won a record six BABS gold medals, and has sung with Pete before. A regular international quartet competitor, he is a two-time member of the "22nd Place Club." His wife, Gaynor, is also a quartet gold medalist.

Pete "nooj" Nugent (Br) found BABS in the mid-1990s. A perpetual quartet man at home and in Europe, he has three BABS Quartet Gold Medals and has sung with Brian and Andy before. He's a sound engineer and occasional mailman. His partner, Alison, is also a quartet gold medalist. He's an active learning track producer.

Rod Butcher (T), a 44-year member of BABS, three times gold medalist, and has sung with Andy before. A one-time member of the "International 22nd Place Club," he has directed four choruses, was a judge for 37 years, and has been to all 42 BABS Harmony Colleges. His wife, Chris, is not a barbershop singer.

– Andy, Brian, Pete, and Rod 2022 International Seniors Quartet Champions

## Chorus and Quartet Festival & "Mass'ked Sing"



### In a post-convention survey, 85% of 2022 youth participants said they plan to continue with barbershop after high school

It was a memorable trip and getting recognized by the Performance judge for having the ability to draw his attention by my emotions made me think that this is something that I was made to do.

Barbershop is a bonding activity! I made friends from a completely other group and we bonded over our love for barbershop.

It's an environment I feel welcome in, and a style of music I enjoy. I have really enjoyed singing with my friends and others at tag zones. This is a very fun and welcoming community so I definitely want to stay in it!

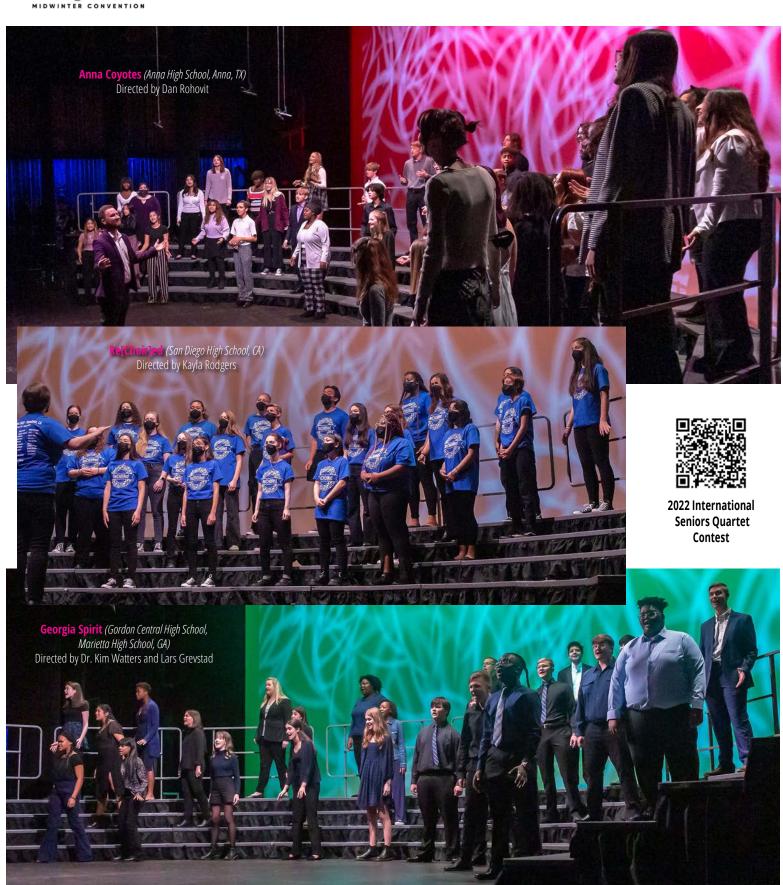
I have always been a really nerdy and awkward person, and at the barbershop convention I noticed I could be myself, and I really loved everything.

Being a part of barbershop since my freshman year has brought a lot of joy in my life. Being connected with other schools, and kids my age, has made a very big impact on my life. I love barbershop and would love to continue to make it a part of my life.





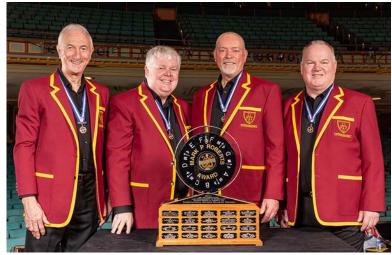
#### **NEXT GENERATION JUNIOR CHORUS FESTIVAL**



#### **SENIORS QUARTET CONTEST**



Quartet members names listed tenor, lead, bari, bass, regardless of standing order



**1. One Foot in the Stave** (BABS) **80.8** Rod Butcher, Brian Schofield, Pete Nugent, Andy Funnell



**2. cityScape** (CAR) **78.3**Al Reynolds, Howard McAdory, Paul Gilman, Jay Hawkins



**3. Up All Night** (JAD) **75.2** John Ward, Cecil Brown, Joe Hunter, Dan Rowland



**4. Wow! Time Flies (CAR) 73.9**Steve Shiveley, Marco Crager, Bayard Pelsor, Paul Ellingson



**5. Aspire (NSC) 71.4** Ted Leinbach, Wally Miles III, Rob Hopkins, Tom Parker



**6. Bagatelle** (BABS) **70.8**Aidan Brand, Martin Proctor, Andy Rzysko, Andrew Balchin



#### **SENIORS QUARTET CONTEST**



**7. Trade Secret (NED) 69.7**Jerry Xavier, Bob O'Connell, Rick Wright, Mike Maino



**8. Gang Busters** (FWD) **68.3**James Thompson, Brad Kelso, Dan Jordan, Geoff Wilson



**9. Abilene Paradox** (ILL) **66.4** Michael Schnitzler, Joe Gurreri, Brandon Tanner, Glenn Mills



**10. Off The Chart (NED) 65.5**Neal Kellogg, Dick Moriarty, Craig Minor, Rich Tatem



**11. Midwest Connection** (FWD) **65.3** Grant Fox, Curt Struyk, Brion Grant, Bill Shaw, Jr.



**12. Duly Noted** (NED) **65.2** Steve Horhota, Bill Selander, Craig Graham, Buzz Beausoleil

#### **SENIORS QUARTET CONTEST**





13. Six Feet Off Bass (FWD) 65.0 Eric Emmons, Lenny Jensen, Mark Travis, Willie Daw



14. Four Love or Money (FWD) 63.1 Shel Givens, Jim Schumacher, Corley Phillips, Richard Kaiser





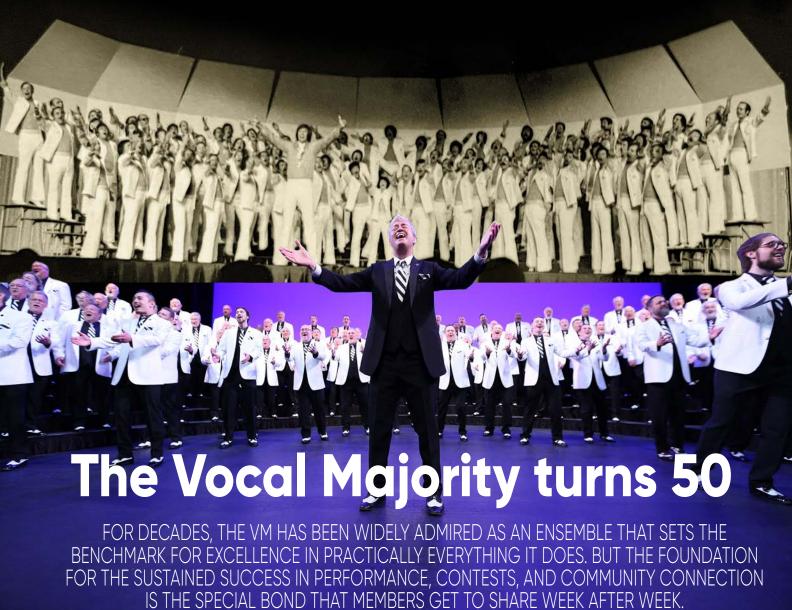
Saturday Night Show

Of the 12 headliner quartets that were scheduled for Midwinter's three shows, seven fell like dominoes in quick succession after a member was put on Covid protocol. While 2019 Next Generation Quartet champ Wildfire ended up brilliantly headlining the evening entertainment all weekend, major props also belong to 2018 Seniors Champion St. Croix Crossing and 2020 Seniors Champion Hearsay. The veteran quartets did more than fill the time with multiple performances each—their highly entertaining show sets were often a clinic in the kind of polish and top-level audience connection that less senior groups can only hope to achieve someday.









sk any of us who perform in the Vocal Majority if we could imagine life without being in the VM, and to a guy you'll hear him say he can't.

Whether it's the joy of singing four-part harmony, performing for audiences, brotherhood, friendship, or community, for 50 years the chorus has maintained and grown in ways that couldn't have been imagined when the chapter was chartered in 1972.

I've had the privilege of being in the chorus for nearly 30 years. From where I stand on the back row middle section, I've had a birds-eye view watching Jim Clancy and Greg Clancy as they lead and inspire. I have observed them as role models and how they reflect a work ethic woven in with encouragement and excellence directed to the chorus ... and how in return, the chorus reflects back to them their energy. It's an awareness of knowing how singing inspires members and audiences alike. And it's

that awareness that opens all in the room to love, dream, to thrill and fill with pride, and to comfort those in need of reassurance, all with a desire to contribute to a greater good.

Week after week, the VM membership comes to rehearsal to sing better and share the brotherhood of fraternity. It's a paradox that members give so much individual emotion we are often drained of energy, yet the emotional bank is filled after every rehearsal and performance.

#### **Impacting Lives**

The famous Maya Angelou quote "I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel" has been a mantra for the chorus.

"There is an 'aura' or 'atmosphere' that distinguishes the VM from other groups and makes the experience very special," said John LeBlanc, who joined the chorus in 2020. "This



**Gary Hennerberg** has been the Marketing Director for the Vocal Majority for more than 25 years gary@hennerberg.com



(Opposite) The Vocal Majority wins its first international gold in 1975; Greg Clancy directs the VM's spring show in April, 2022. From 1979-2006, the chorus won 10 consecutive gold medals. In Jim Clancy's last two contest sets (2009 and 2010), the VM set scoring records only to see their record topped the same day by the Ambassadors of Harmony and Westminster Chorus respectively. After 2010's silver medal performance in Philly, Jim directed the chorus, family, and friends (above) in a hymn, followed by a scene of tender emotions among all present that was worthy of the City of Brotherly Love.

isn't just a place where 'guys can get together and sing'; it includes the desire to make the world a better place through harmony, the camaraderie and support of fellow members and mentors."

Born to compete in international competitions in 1972, the chorus has evolved over the years. Mike Borts, a member since 1989, reflects that "there's been a shift from the VM being a competitive chorus that also entertains, to an entertaining chorus

that also competes."

John Hubbard, a 20-year member, puts the evolution this way: "The chorus has shifted to an emphasis of 'winning the hearts of our audience' from winning chorus medals."

#### Firing On All Cylinders

The music and audience experience are essential to maintain and grow the Vocal Majority brand. It's hard work. Gary Parker, who joined the chorus in 1972, long ago coined the

"THERE'S BEEN A SHIFT FROM THE VM BEING A COMPETITIVE CHORUS THAT ALSO ENTERTAINS, TO AN ENTERTAINING CHORUS THAT ALSO COMPETES."

- MIKE BORTS

phrase "hard work is fun when improvement is evident," and it's stuck for good reason.

Leadership and support from our Music Staff and Board of Directors has been essential to dream and to financially find a way to support those ideas. Plus, volunteers from throughout the chorus along with family members who are eager to help where needed enables the chorus to fire on all cylinders. Volunteering is a privilege where members and their families contribute quietly behind-the-scenes.

Even with so much that goes on inside the Vocal Majority, the heart and soul of the organization comes back to ensuring the membership is nurtured so that we can impact our audiences and community.

"I come every week, driving nine

#### **Vocal Majority Milestones**

- 1972 Dallas Metropolitan Chapter charter signed
- 1980 first Performance with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in Salt Lake City
- 1986 2nd Performance with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir along with the Utah Symphony and at BYU
- 1987 Two sell-out performances with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for over 25,000 people at Reunion Arena in Dallas
- 1995 Performance in England for BABS
- 1996 3rd Performance with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in Salt Lake City
- 1996 "Voices" documentary released
- 2001 Performance in Scotland for BABS
- 2016 "Hallelujah" video viewed by 8.5 million on Facebook

- 2019 4th appearance with Tabernacle Choir at Temple Square in SLC
- 2020 Virtual Christmas Show with 30,000 viewers from all 50 states plus 26 countries
- **2022** 50th Golden Anniversay

#### **Gold medals**

1975 Indianapolis, 1979 Minneapolis, 1982 Pittsburgh, 1985 Minneapolis, 1988 San Antonio, 1991 Louisville, 1994 Pittsburgh, 1997 Indianapolis, 2000 Kansas City, 2003 Montreal, 2006 Indianapolis (10th consecutive), 2014 Las Vegas, 2018 Orlando

#### Silver medals

**1978** Cincinnati, **2009** Anaheim, **2010** Philadelphia, **2017** Las Vegas

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2024 Junior Chorus Invitational at New York City Midwinter

Louisville, KY July 2-9, 2023

Midwinter in New York City, NY January 9-4, 2024

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(Right) Traditions matter, even little ones. Here's one of many: Mike Thomson offers the entire chorus a selection from four Altoids boxes before every performance. (Below) In March, Greg Clancy directed the chorus in a performance of the Ukranian national anthem that was widely viewed on Facebook.

hours round trip from San Antonio, to experience the thrill of a barbershop chord in its purest and most beautiful form," says Tommie Young, who joined the Barbershop Harmony Society in 1974 and the Vocal Majority in 2016. "Nowhere else but with the VM can I experience such beauty. It is as if the angels themselves were adding their voices to our sound."



#### By the numbers

- 343 songs recorded including individual songs within medleys
- 618 members have won a Gold Medal
- **30.000** Facebook Followers
- **1,100,000** Views of "A Million Dreams" with Voctave on YouTube
- **2,250,000** Views of VM's YouTube Channel (excludes "A Million Dreams")
- **69,900,000** Streams of VM's recorded songs



#### **EVERYTHING REQUIRES PURPOSE**

ifty-years ago, the Vocal Majority was founded with the aspiration of being the best men's choral group on the planet ... that was literally the goal. Coming from barbershop roots, the founders believed that a solid measurement of success was to join the Society and try to win its competitions. Winning the international championship would certainly be a way to prove worth and create a foundation upon which to pursue goals of excellence and recognition.

But soon after taking the reigns as Musical Director, Jim Clancy learned there was more to the chorus than the desire for sheer excellence. He learned that winning the audience was the way to win contests, and he realized if we could move the audience, gold-medals would become a by-product of our performances. He recognized how deeply the Society would become entrenched in our DNA. He understood that the objective was to make great music and touch people who heard the VM sing. His evolution of the craft and of life itself was not lost on the men of the chorus or me.

I spent most of my tenure in the VM

as a front-row singer. But since turning around and facing the men as Musical Director, here is what I have learned about the VM.

The Vocal Majority is a group of people who wants to make a difference in the world. Our mantra is to "put harmony in a world that needs more harmony." The members want to be part of something bigger than themselves and achieve things collectively that they can't on their own. They want to touch lives and inspire humans. Each man is grateful that the VM is a massive family willing to be present for anyone in need.

VM members will give just about anything for the good of the chorus, if they are receiving what feeds them in return. If their souls are being fed, they

**Greg Clancy** is director of the **Vocal Majority** and tenor of 2007 quartet champion Max Q. He has been with the VM since almost the very beginning. greg@tmstudios.com

#### **Discography**

**1976** Standing Room Only

1976 Champs Back to Back with

the Louisville Thoroughbreds. The Thoroughbreds were "This Side" and VM was "That Side" of the album

1979 With A Song In Our Hearts

1980 Here's To The Winners

1981 From Texas With Love

**1983** A Decade of Gold 1972-1982

**1983** All The Best featuring a Tribute to O.C. Cash Performed live at the 1983

contest in Seattle

**1985** The Secret of Christmas – The first all-Christmas album although a cardboard single version of the

song Secret of Christmas had been released previously.

1987 Voices in Harmony with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir on Columbia Records.

1988 For God Country & You

**1990** I'll Be Seeing You

1992 Best of the Early Years

1992 Alleluia

**1996** The Music Never Ends

1997 How Sweet the Sound

1998 The Vocal Majority with Strings (bestselling CD in North Texas in summer of 1998)

1999 White Christmas

**2000** *20th Century Collection* 

**2000** *Twelve Days of Christmas* 

**2002** Freedom's Song

**2003** Love Songs by Request

2003 VMX

**2005** The Vocal Majority with Strings Volume II

**2006** You Raise Me Up

2007 Believe

**2009** *Something's Coming* 

**2011** *VM Bandstand* 

**2012** *The lim Clancy Collection* 

**2015** Then Sings My Soul

**2015** The Spirit of Christmas

2016 Comfort & lov

2018 A Million Dreams

will be there to support the chorus and do what is needed to propel it forward. As my buddy Phil McShan says, "Guys vote with their attendance." And if the men of the VM are present and inspired, they can inspire each other and their audiences.

As Director, my role is to lay out a creative vision that has maximum purpose. This alone ensures success. But there are several keys that are vital to sustain interest and enthusiasm.

Pace is paramount to the success of the vision. I generally always have a three-pronged agenda. If one element goes awry, we lean into the others. This year we: 1) celebrate our 50th Anniversary, 2) create a new inspirational album entitled Imagine, and 3) launch a third leadership team alongside our Performance Team and Board, called the Imagination and Implementation Team. As we work to attain goals attached to our vision, it is my job to monitor the intensity and frequency of the workload. If we are not having FUN, let's go home.

Creating a safe space is also key to the chorus. The guys know that our leadership will always be thoughtful and honest with them. In a time of such disparate world views, we simply want to pour harmony into a world fraught with suffering. We consider ourselves above the fray of politics and look to sing. From a performance standpoint, mistakes are forgiven, and members are allowed to be vulnerable. We have a

In 2000, 11-year-old Bryan Ziegler (bari of 2018 champ After Hours) directs the VM in "Keep the Whole World Singing." For decades, being a guest at a VM rehearsal has been a bucket list item for many Barbershoppers.

"FROM A PERFORMANCE STANDPOINT, MISTAKES ARE FORGIVEN, AND MEMBERS ARE ALLOWED TO BE VULNERABLE. WE HAVE A MUTUAL TRUST THAT IS VITAL TO OUR SUCCESS."

- GRFG CLANCY

mutual trust that is vital to our success.

Finally, a technical musical standard must be set to maintain the performance level of the chorus. It is hard to inspire anyone if the performance platform is not elevated.

Recently, the VM decided to perform the Ukrainian National Anthem in English on Facebook. Within 24-hours, we had it arranged, made learning tracks, taught it, and sang it live at our rehearsal. We decided it was worth the effort, even if just one person was moved or gained a greater understanding of the suffering of the Ukrainian people. Amongst other interest, there were thousands of views from people inside Ukraine and Poland, many thanking us for our gift of their song.

This is one of many examples that illustrates our sense of purpose that has held us together and allowed us to create the sustained joy of harmony for 50 years. As we head into our next 50, we will constantly search for ways to impact more people with the gift of harmony and music ... for this will be our legacy.





## Give the gift of barbershop to young singers

Thanks to the incredible generosity of our Sponsors and Donors, we were able to bring over 100 young singers from across the U.S. to the Next Generation Barbershop events created by the Society at the Midwinter Convention in Pasadena. These young singers brought original arrangements, an eagerness to compete, and a love of ringing chords. Many others are scheduled to participate in alternate spring 2022 BHS events.

Each year, we watch these young singers perform their favorite barbershop tunes on the Midwinter stage. With your support, their energy brings joy and hope for the future of barbershop.

Our gifts change lives. We create the future by giving to the Barbershop Harmony Society. Please consider supporting the BHS today and help give the gift of barbershop to the Next Generation of singers, leaders, and mentors!



Georgia Spirit from Atlanta, GA rehearses for the Chorus Festival at the Pasadena Midwinter Convention.

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arbershop has made me a better opera singer. I will not apologize to my classical colleagues for saying that. The skills I learned in music school and over several years of private voice instruction were mostly made clearer to me in the barbershop world. I will add that classical singing techniques have helped me and long helped other Barbershoppers sing better four-part harmony.

Barbershop skills are invaluable both to the hobbyist and to the professional singer. There are more similarities than differences between classical and barbershop singing—and the differences help the singer! For these reasons, I wrote my doctoral thesis about comparing the two art forms. If you would like to read more on what I discovered, my document can be found here: https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/26439

**Singing.** Classical singers can learn many valuable concepts from barbershoppers. Barbershop helps singers understand their "primal" voice. By

singing all four barbershop voice parts and experimenting with them, I believe singers (especially operatic) can get to know their own unique "primal" voice better. In my own experience, singing barbershop helped me discover exactly where my tessitura was. Each barbershop voice part works specifically on a different register of the voice:

- · bass: mostly chest
- · baritone: chest and head voice
- lead: chest and head voice
- tenor: head and falsetto

Also, woodshedding as an improvisatory barbershop practice can benefit the opera or classical singer by showing them how to sing what they have

"ONCE MY QUARTET SANG WITH OUR FULL VOICES, WE WERE BLENDING BETTER; WE ALSO RESONANCE-MATCHED BETTER." learned in a more spontaneous and thrilling way.

Barbershoppers can learn valuable concepts from classically trained singers as well.

Full Voice: The idea of singing with your full voice—where you are fully open and free and then you adjust your dynamics around that fullness—is present in both classical and barbershop singing, but I think more so in the classical world. Once my quartet sang with our full voices, we were blending better; we also resonance-matched better. Similarly in opera, singing with your full primal voice is how you thrill an audience member and how you are remembered.

### Barbershop and opera are mutually reinforcing

Paul Ellinger is an example of how both styles of singing are mutually reinforcing. He is a barbershop coach and HU teacher from Michigan that taught me and my quartet important (Left): The author in the role of "Elviro" in Handel's Opera "Xerxes."

singing concepts like "Wave box singing"—reinforcing concepts I learned in the classical world (rounded phrasing). This is his idea of legato phrasing. He also uses this concept to teach smooth shifting between voice registers and not being able to hear any shift occur. These ideas and techniques are present in classical singing, but Paul just presented them in a new and interesting way—one that stuck with me.

Concepts I learned in the bel canto (Italian) school of singing were reinforced by what I learned in the Barbershop Harmony Society, concepts like:

- chiaroscuro (the balance of light and dark) compared to resonance-matching techniques taught to me by BHS coach Scott Kitzmiller.
- appoggio (full body engagement with the breath) coinciding with "wave-box" singing (fully supported, free and open singing)

The author sings with his **Jordan River Crossing** quartet in an Indiana University production of *The Music Man*.

- taught by BHS coach Paul Ellinger.
- Barbershoppers can learn this from classical singers: securing *tessitura* (part of the singer's voice that is most comfortable and pleasing to hear) for the voice type or *fach* (a contractual specification for an opera singer that showcases the singer's skills at singing certain operatic roles so that he or she does not damage his or her voice singing roles outside of that voice designation).
- woodshedding is a concept where classical singers can learn from barbershoppers an improvisatory barbershop practice that can benefit the opera or classical singer by showing the singer how to sing what they have learned in a more spontaneous and thrilling way.

Bel canto. I think that barbershop is the perfect analogy for the bel canto term *chiaroscuro*—the balance of light and dark or brilliance and depth. In classical singing, especially opera, this quality is sought after in all registers of the voice to achieve evenness of sound. This evenness makes all the registers sound to the listener as if it is one voice and not many different voices; in barbershop, the goal is the same. We want

"THERE ARE MORE SIMILARITIES THAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CLASSICAL AND BARBERSHOP SINGING—AND THE DIFFERENCES HELP THE SINGER! "

four unique singers to sound like one voice on four parts. First, we must find the singer in the quartet who possesses the best chiaroscuro quality of voice and then we build the foundation of the quartet sound on that person's quality of voice. The other three voices should be resonance-matching that foundation.

Here is an example of where barbershoppers can learn from classical singers; the differences between the two art forms can only help the performer make better informed artistic decisions. For instance, because the medium of barbershop is a capella, the sound quality is more forward because its singers are more concerned with generating overtones for every chord. Compare this to the sound quality of bel canto opera singing, the perfect balance of brilliance and depth or chiaroscuro. Barbershop singers who understand how to individually create chiaroscuro sound will sing with more equally balanced voices (same amount of upper and lower partials present in each voice part) and can then generate more overtones.

Vibrato. Both styles are mutually reinforcing in that barbershop and Early Music groups do not use much vibrato. Like many classical singers, I am a church musician who finds much use in the skill and manipulation of vibrato. In opera, a solo voice often competes with a large orchestra, and vibrato ensures the voice can be heard in a large space.

Barbershop has taught me how to use vibrato depending on what the sit-



uation requires. This is an instance of where Barbershoppers can learn from classical singers. Not all performances require projection, but in all situations, I ensure that the vibrato never completely leaves. Dr. Philip Grant's discussion of switching from classical technique to barbershop (Grant, Philip. "Barbershop and the pro-level singer: transitioning between techniques," The Harmonizer, March/April 2020, 26-27) elaborates on this critical point regarding vibrato: the higher degree of vocal fold closure in opera creates more vibrato than typically heard in barbershop. However, high-level singers generally agree that singing with vibrato for a long period of time puts less stress on the voice than singing with minimal vibrato.

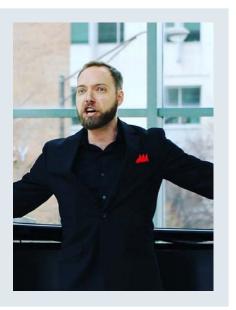
Stamina. The body and vocal stamina required for singing opera has been useful for me in my quartet (Jordan River Crossing)—especially when we have sung hour-long outdoor concerts. Singing with full-body engagement (the bel canto term *appoggio*) also helps the barbershop singer put less stress on the voice. This is an instance where barbershoppers can learn from classical singers.

Classical singers can learn from Barbershoppers that building strength in each of our registers helps singers easily transition through them with confidence, and then our voices can sound even from top to bottom.

Tuning. We know that in many classical performances today equal temperament provides an approximate tuning system where several different kinds of instruments and singers

"LEARNING TO BE A
BETTER COLLABORATOR IN
BARBERSHOP HAS HELPED
ME LISTEN MORE AND
BLEND MORE WITH MY
CLASSICAL COLLEAGUES."

Lyric baritone Daniel Thomas Lentz is equally at home in the repertoire of I.S. Bach, Mozart, Donizetti and Sondheim. He was an assistant director for the **Sounds** of Indiana chorus in Bloomington. In 2009, Daniel sang the role of Count Almaviva in Le nozze di Figaro with the Bay View Music Festival in Michigan. Also with BVMF, Daniel sang the role of Papageno in *Die* Zauberflöte in 2010. An internationally award-winning classical singer, he studies with emerging Verdi baritone Jason Duika. Daniel has a bachelor's degree in vocal performance from The College of Wooster, and both a Masters and Ph.D. of music in voice from Indiana University.



can collaborate in the same key while being able to modulate to different keys as well. This is an example where classical singers can learn from Barbershoppers. With just intonation, barbershoppers aim to be more precise and acoustically pure especially with the perfect fifths and major thirds.

Here is an important difference between the two styles of singing: most opera singers today are dependent on the equal temperament tuning system and collaborate with outside musical forces. The use of microphones in barbershop shows and competitions is more integral to performances compared to opera, where its use might be episodic at best. Additionally, opera singers are trained to be their own amplification systems.

Resonance-matching. The skills I learned in barbershop coach Scott Kitzmiller's resonance-matching classes have helped me sing better not only with other classical singers, but with accompanying instrumentalists. For example, in a recent Bach cantata project, I adjusted my bass aria to match the basso continuo player's frequency and resonance, which helped create a more balanced sound and put both musical partners on the same wavelength. Classical singers can benefit greatly

from this barbershop skill.

**Improvisation.** There are limited opportunities to develop improvisation skills in classical singing, but improvisation is a frequent and fun part of barbershop singing. In barbershop, singers at conventions or afterglows frequently switch voice parts especially when singing Barberpole Cats. This is of enormous value in ear training. Knowing how your voice part normally behaves or is written makes you a better collaborator in the quartet and helps you listen more. Both opera and barbershop require a nimble and flexible voices, and an agile voice tunes better as well. Learning to be a better collaborator in barbershop has helped me listen more and blend more with my classical colleagues.

Learning music/warm-ups. Learning music in layers is the best way to learn a piece of music—another barbershop skill that informs the classical world. This idea is present in both classical and barbershop singing. Barbershop arranger Jay Giallombardo's method for learning a song presented a new and interesting way for me to learn my solo classical repertoire. His three-step method of pitches, silent audiation and integration have helped me learn opera arias in languages that are not

my native tongue. For example, in the Count's aria from Mozart's opera Le Nozze di Figaro, I would follow Giallombardo's method by first singing through the aria on a neutral vowel, then I would do a dramatic recitation of the Italian, either in rhythm or not while paying special attention to the running translation in my head. Finally, I would sing the text with character and intention. Giallombardo's idea that the brain records each task of the song learning process—makes it easier and simpler for a singer to memorize a song for performance versus trying to memorize the song in multiple layers all at once.

Warm-ups. In both worlds, we can benefit from the idea of choosing warm-ups to fit the repertoire we're about to sing. It saves a great deal of time. You can work on your emotions, character, and any troublesome spots of a song or aria. In the classical world, I have used the more strenuous parts of an aria and made exercises out of them. The last phrase of the Count's aria is an example. I would also divide it into layers from Giallombardo's song learn-

"BY SINGING ALL FOUR BARBERSHOP VOICE PARTS AND EXPERIMENTING WITH THEM, I BELIEVE SINGERS (ESPECIALLY OPERATIC) CAN GET TO KNOW THEIR OWN UNIQUE 'PRIMAL' VOICE BETTER."

ing method. In barbershop, we have a variety of up-tempo charts and ballads to choose from that are in the same key as songs in our concert repertoire. We can also find difficult parts of a song and make exercises out of them for the chorus or quartet to sing. By studying crossover disciplines of singing, I have discovered new and interesting warmups, especially barbershop warm-ups that I use to this day before singing my solo classical repertoire.

**Performance.** Barbershop really taught me to be vulnerable on stage with my quartet mates. I learned to

trust them, let go of any distractions and trust that my technique would work without me trying to control it. We should never show the audience how we feel (contrived), instead we should *feel* our emotions! That is being genuine. Audiences pick up on that and respond. I learned this concept from barbershop coaches and have brought it with me into the classical world. In the present moment, the audience experiences an intimate bond with the performer. What more could we want?!

Social. Barbershop reminded me of the fun of singing. After being in the classical competitive world for several years, I had unknowingly acquired a cut-throat attitude towards performing that was neither helpful to me nor my colleagues. When I was first introduced to life-long Barbershoppers, they took an interest in me and my growth as a musician that I found less often among my opera colleagues.

Paraphrasing Scott Kitzmiller, "In what other art form will you find competitors helping each other and having fun doing it?!" I believe this is a teaching tool for classical singers as well. Being receptive to our colleagues makes our time together more productive and we all become better performers. My time spent singing barbershop reminds me to enjoy working with others. I believe any classical singer can benefit from the practices of barbershop, including listening, blending, and the courtesy of being collegial.

Most importantly, barbershop has taught me how to be a better colleague in the world of opera. Barbershop taught me to reach out and be vulnerable to my colleagues. We are all in it for the same purpose—the joy of singing. We should not expect anything else. Our singing is our gift to the people living in our communities. Ten years ago, I went from an immersion in opera to a new discipline. Little did I know that this new discipline would be teaching me familiar techniques in new, fascinating ways.





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The Stone Mountain Chorus, BHS Greater Atlanta Chapter is looking for a full time director to lead weekly rehearsals and prepare the Chorus for fall and spring shows, other public performances, and contests. Requirements include conducting skills, knowledge of proper vocal

technique and music theory, and ability to motivate and inspire chorus members to improve in singing and performance. The director has input on matters of music selection, arrangement, and stage presence. Compensation offered. Contact Lynn Trapp at Itrapp1950@yahoo.com.

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#### All Aboard

once had this great idea for a contest set. The first song is the 1920 tune "All Aboard for Slumberland," which has to do with putting a little boy to bed for the night. The child is portrayed by the bass, with the other three singers being his favorite toys—a soldier, Raggedy Andy, Jack-in-the-box, cowboy, action figure and such. They sing the lad to sleep.

Between songs the toys lovingly turn him into a young man by removing his cap, rolling down his shorts into long pants, putting a jacket on him, etc. They also age themselves by disheveling each other in various ways.

As the now young man awakes, the three quickly become motionless. He eventually notices the toys, with which he has not played in years, and starts paying attention to them, whereupon they happily come back to life.

The quartet then sings "The Little Boy," after which the young man heads off. The toys are again forgotten but feel more nostalgic than sad about it. Nice, eh?

Basses, your star turn comes in measures 3-5, with the (mostly) chromatic downward line that represents the child nodding off. You other three parts, be sure to portray the same feeling as the basses. Tenors, you take on the role of train conductor, as well as the melody, from 5 until the end, so sing with loving sweetness.

The full "Slumberland" arrangement should be available as a free download on the BHS website by the time you read this (link at barbershop.org/harmonizer) so you might want to enjoy the whole song. But the hope is that just this tag will give you a lot of enjoyment!

#### All Aboard for Slumberland



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This was such an awesome

This was such an awesome opportunity."

