

Mid-Atlantic District Association of Quartet Champions



October 15, 2019

Dear Quartet Champ,

This year's **Mid-Atlantic District Fall Convention** was held in Reading, PA on October 4-6 at the Santander Performing Arts Center and marked our 21st years as an association. As usual, our performance on the **Saturday Night Show of Champions** was fantastic and a highlight of the weekend. Attending the convention were **48** champs representing **36** foursomes spanning 6 decades ... from the **Out-of-Towners** (1960, Bob Parry) to **Midtown** (2019). I hope that you enjoy this brief recap.

First, to the end with the quartet results:

2020 Mid-Atlantic District Quartet Champions

PRATT STREET POWER

Ed Schubel (L), Darren Schmidt (Bs), Ben Hawker (Br), and Vince Sandroni (T)
Hershey, PA

Pratt Street Power sang *"Cry Me A River"*, *"A Thousand Things"*, *"It's All Right with Me"*, and *"Losing My Mind"* to earn a score of 3,071 (85.3%) and were 1st in both rounds and in all three categories. The quartet is now the **75th champion** since 1945 for a total of 233 men to have earned this high distinction. All four men are new to our close fraternity. **CONGRATULATIONS and welcome, fellas!**



Now, starting near the beginning of the weekend ...

✚ The Presenter for the 1st half of the **Friday Quartet Semifinals** was District VP-Membership **Christian Hunter**. The always dynamic **Neil “Pookie” Dingle** handled the 2nd half ... getting everyone to clap and stomp for each quartet competitor (ala Queen’s “We Will Rock You”).



Our current **2019 M-AD Quartet Champs, Midtown** (**Anthony Fortino** (L), **Christian Diaz** (Bs), **KJ McAleesejergins** (Br), and **Nich Gordon** (T), served as the Mic Tester and Mic Cooler quartet, setting the tone and the bar for the entire weekend.



Midtown

The Quartet Semifinals featured **24** competitors including **9** foursomes containing **14** past M-AD quartet champion singers: **Rick Savage** and **Will Cox** in **Silver Alert**; **Bob Ramsey** and **Kevin King** in **Even Money**; **Rick Taylor**, **Tom Halley**, and **Steve Kirsch** in **Taylor Made**; **Mike Wallen** in **Quirks of Art**; **Nicky Aiuto** in **Sympatico**; **Mike Kelly** in **Persuasion**; **Thomas Moyer** in **The Element**; **Rich Gray, Jr.** and **Jeff Gray** in **Studio 4**; and **Larry Bomback** in **Next Stop**.



Silver Alert



Even Money



Taylor Made



Quirks of Art



Sympatico



Persuasion



The Element



Studio 4



Next Stop

✚ About half of the **MADAQC Chorus** met on Friday evening after the quartet session for a quick rehearsal. **Kevin King** ran us through our paces and we really sounded good.



✚ **Roxanne Powell** (Publications, Mid'l Antics Editor) and **John Wernega** were the Presenters for the **Saturday Chorus Contest** which had a very early start for many and was an incredibly busy day. There were 9 MADAQC members directing competing choruses: **Joe Servidio, Jr.** for the **Dapper Dans of Harmony**, **Jeff Glemboski** for the **Long Island Sound**, **Kevin King** for the **Chorus of the Chesapeake**, **Larry Bomback** for the **Voices of Gotham**, **Rich Gray, Jr.** for **The Pine Barons**, **Jay Butterfield** for **Parkside Harmony**, **Mike Wallen** for the **Virginians**, **TJ Barranger** for the **Sons of the Severn**, and **Will Downey** for **East Coast Sound**.



After the chorus contest, **Ron Knickerbocker** and **Rich Gray, Jr.** gave out **Chorus Directors Service Recognition Awards** to front-line directors of 10 years or more (in 5-year increments). This recognition program was established by Ron in 2002. This year, 5 men and 2 women were recognized including our **Rich Gray, Jr.** for 10 years, **Richard Lewellen** for 15 years, and **TJ Barranger** for 20 years.



Gary Plagg was recognized by the **BHS Contest and Judging Committee** for his more than 20 years of service as a certified Presentation Judge. **Steve Armstrong** presented the award. Well done and thanks, Gary!

✚ **Mid-Atlantic District Hall of Honor** members (several of whom are quartet champs) lined up on the stage for the induction ceremony for this year's recipients of the District's highest award. HOH Selection Committee Chair **Oley Olson** read the individual biographies and the recipients were presented with commemorative engraved silver plates and name badges. The distinguished honorees were **Dennis Ritchey, Robert (Bob) Hastings, Jr.,** and our own **Richard Lewellen** who are also all DELA members. Each man received a well-deserved standing ovation from the audience for their service and contribution to barbershopping in our great District.



✚ The **2020 Mid-Atlantic District Chorus Champions ... PARKSIDE HARMONY!!!**



1st Place – Parkside Harmony (Hershey, PA)

Under the co-direction of **Sean Devine** and **Jay Butterfield**, they staged 53 men, sang ***“Sittin’ on the Dock of the Bay”*** and ***“I’m Alright”***, and scored 1,656 (92.0%). Parkside will represent the M-AD at the 2020 International Chorus Competition in Los Angeles, CA next summer.



2nd Place – Voices of Gotham (Hell’s Kitchen, NY)

Under the direction of **Larry Bomback**, they staged 44 men and earned a score of 1,549 (86.1%). With this score, they too will be competitors in LA.



3rd Place – East Coast Sound (Caldwell, NJ)

Under the direction of **Will Downey**, they staged 23 men and earned a score of 1,358 (81.2%).



Filling out the Top-5 choruses were **The Pine Barons** (Cherryhill NJ) in 4th place staging 39 men and earning a score of 1,358 (75.4%) and the **Most Improved Chorus Award** (pictured left is Rich Gray receiving the award on behalf of his chorus), and **The Virginians** (Richmond, VA) in 5th place staging 52 men earning a score of 1,330 (73.9%). Note that all 5 top choruses were directed by quartet champs.

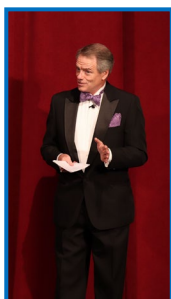
- Immediately following the chorus competition, **Ross Trube** again coordinated the ever-popular **Tag with the Champs** event in the Santander lobby to support the District's **Youth in Harmony** program. **Midtown** was the featured champ (pictured right singing with **Brad Brooks**). The event generated a lot of enthusiasm ... and \$375 for a great cause. Thanks to all who participated.



- The MADAQC display table in the lobby attracted many folks who were interested in viewing the slide show of champs from 1945-2019 and seeing the quartet trophy up close (pictured right with KJ).



- The Presenter for the **Quartet Finals** was the ever-dapper **Dennis Ritchey** (Immediate Past M-AD President). **Dick Powell** (BHS President) was the Presenter for the **Show of Champions** which kicked off with performances by the Top-3 finishing choruses. 50-year membership awards were also presented and included our own **Craig Odell**.



Parkside Harmony then gave an amazing performance including **"Tribute to World Peace"** that featured soloists, **Pratt Street Power**, and the **Parkside Women's Ensemble**. Awesome! **Sean Devine** and **Jay Butterfield** offered a few heartfelt words of appreciation to the District.





Steve White emceed the **MADAQC** finale segment by first introducing our 2018 M-AD Champs, **Gimme Four** (**Dave Ammirata, Will Downey, Joe Servidio, Jr., and Paul Franek**) who wowed a cheering audience with 2 songs. Then **Midtown** took the stage to close out their incredible championship year which included an International 5th Place Medal. They crushed it and the audience was ecstatic, especially after “The Theme from Spiderman”. Thanks, and keep up the good work, fellas! You have shown yourselves to be true champions and gentleman.



Gimme Four



Midtown



As the **MADAQC Chorus** took the stage, Steve commented on the 48 champs attending the convention and read the names of the 36 quartets they represented as the audience gave a synchronized clap for each. He then recognized our International Quartet Champions present, **Ron Knickerbocker (1974 - Regents)** and the 2 International Seniors Quartet Champions present, **Mark Sanders (2014 - Faces 4 Radio)** and **Ross Trube (2017 – Party of Five)**.

It was the start to the **25th anniversary** year for our **1995 M-AD Champs, BSQ** with **Kevin King (L)**, **Al Mazzoni (Bs)**, **Jack Pinto (Br)**, and **Rob Seay (T)**. Kevin, Al, and Rob were present and took a bow along with **Rick Taylor** who sang with them in later years to earn several International Medals.



It was the start to the landmark **50th anniversary** year of our **1970 M-AD Champs, the Union Jacks** with **Forrest Williams (L)**, **Barry Brown (Bs)**, **Bob Disney (Br)**, and **Kurt Brown (T, deceased)**. None of the members were present, but the audience gave a big round of applause in recognition.



THE BIG FINALE:

As the Top-10 quartets huddled nervously back stage, anxiously waiting to hear what could be for each a “momentous moment”, **Gary Plaag (DVP-Contest & Judging)** announced the results as **Gimme Four** and **Midtown** stood at-the-ready to award the lapel pins and congratulate the Top-3 finishers.



3rd Place (2,803, 77.9%) – Taylor Made
Tom Halley (L), Steve Kirsch (Bs), Doug Beach (Br), and Rick Taylor (T)



2nd Place (3,014, 83.7%) – Studio 4
Rich Gray, Jr. (L), Dan VanWetering (Bs), Jeff Gray (Br), and Eddie Mejia (T)

Also, in the Top 10 were **Next Stop** (4th with **Larry Bombback**), **Persuasion** (7th with **Mike Kelly**) who were winners of the **District Seniors Quartet Contest** and will go to the BHS Mid-Winter Convention in January, and **The Element** (9th with **Thomas Moyer**).

Pratt Street Power was then crowned **2020 District Quartet Champions** and awarded the traveling **MADAQC/Oriole Four Trophy**, individual **James E. Grant Award** trophies (provided annually by **Bob Disney/Arcade** in memory of Jim), and blue 1st Place lapel pins.





Kevin King then directed the **MADAQC Chorus** in singing our traditional song of celebration and congratulations, ***"This is the Moment"*** (arranged by **Freddie King**), as **Pratt Street Power** stood embracing each other – their pride of accomplishment showing proudly.

Rick Taylor then led the entire audience in ***"Keep the Whole World Singing"*** ... bringing to close another fantastic barbershop convention as only the Mid-Atlantic District can do. Every champ then congratulated **Pratt Street Power** on stage with handshakes, hugs, and slaps on their backs.

Immediately following the close of the convention, we all moved to the Dasani Lounge in Santander for a **Quartet Champion's Reception** where MADAQC toasted and welcomed **Pratt Street Power** into our fraternity.



Toasting our new Champs ... and toasting themselves for a job well done!

Midtown offered their hearty congratulations and gave a personal legacy gift that went down smooth. Pratt Street Power thanked MADAQC and then entertained everyone with a song.



Afterwards we all enjoyed cake and more champagne. Many of the guys and gals remained for a while to chat, dance, and sing tags before heading off to the afterglows.



✚ Numerous champs have held M-AD leadership roles throughout the year and for that we are all so very proud and appreciative: **Gary Plaag**—DVP-Contest & Judging, C&J Committee Chair, YIH/Student Activities Team; **Bill Colosimo**—Nominating Committee, HCE Committee, Chorus Director Development Team; **Chuck Lower**—Coaching Coordinator; **Jay Butterfield**—Hall of Honor Team; **Brian Schreiner**—Executive Vice President, Program Book Coordinator, Marketing & PR Team; **Rich Gray, Jr.**—DVP—Chorus Director Development Team; **Steve Kirsch**—Quartet Development & Assistance; **Rick Taylor**—Hall of Honor Team, Leadership Development Committee; **Will Downey, Joe Servidio, Jr., Paul Franek, and Dave Ammirata**—YIH/Student Activities Team; **Steve White**—MADAQC Wrangler; and **Mike Kelly**—Chief Information Officer, District Communications, Photographer/Videographer, Marketing & PR Team, Webmaster, Advanced Technology, Team, HCE Committee, and DELA President.

Note: Most of the photos in this recap are a direct result of Mike and his team's efforts at the back of the auditorium. A BIG thanks to all.

Finally, **Harmony Foundation International** was represented throughout the weekend by **Rick Taylor** who discussed the organization's purpose and mission and encouraged contributions that will be matched up to \$50,000 with funds provided by **Sharon and John Miller** (International Quartet Champion; 1979 - Grandma's Boys and 1985 - The New Tradition).



Well, my good friends, that does it for the annual recap. My apologies if I have left anyone out, made an error, or missed highlighting something important. I look forward to seeing you all again very soon, especially fall **2020 at the Lancaster Marriott Convention Center**. Please stay healthy, happy, and keep singing.

Yours in friendship, service, and close *championship harmony* ...

Steve



... always remembering our dear Freddie



Mid-Atlantic District Quartet Champions, 1945-2020

1	1945	NY City Police Department Quartet
2	1946	Harmoneers
3	1947	Four Chords
4	1948	Potomac Clippers
5	1949	Columbians
6	1950	Melloaires
7	1951	Volunteers
8	1952	Jerseymen
9	1953	Ryth-O-Mats
10	1954	Play-Tonics
11	1955	Easternaires
12	1956	Hometown Quartet
13	1957	York-Aires
14	1958	Oriole Four (1970 International Quartet Champions)
15	1959	Checkmates
16	1960	Out-Of-Towners
17	1961	Rocket Tones
18	1962	Main Street Four
19	1963	Yankees
20	1965	Townsmen
21	1966	Hallmarks
22	1967	Continental Four
23	1968	NOVA Chords
24	1969	Classics
25	1970	Union Jacks
26	1971	Exclusives
27	1972	Regents (1974 International Quartet Champions)
28	1973	Fifth Edition
29	1974	Friends of Yesterday
30	1975	Reign-Beaus' End
31	1976	Sound Revival
32	1977	Sussex Counts
33	1978	Baltimore & Ohio Connection
34	1979	Four Cracker Jacks
35	1980	Keystone Congregation
36	1981	Vaudeville
37	1982	The New Yorkers
38	1983	Curtain Call
39	1984	Pros 'N Cons

40	1985	Alexandria's Ragtime Band
41	1986	Four Under Par
42	1987	Northeast Extension
43	1988	Copyright '86
44	1989	Tradewinds
45	1990	Broadway
46	1991	Untouchables
47	1992	Arcade
48	1993	Doubletake
49	1994	Bingo Brothers
50	1995	BSQ
51	1996	The Bay Rum Runners
52	1997	Premiere
53	1998	Free Trade Agreement
54	1999	Hijinx
55	2000	Casino
56	2001	Runaway Sound
57	2002	Reveille
58	2003	Wheelhouse
59	2004	Phat Cats
60	2005	Iguanas in Flight
61	2006	Four Aces
62	2007	Ringers
63	2008	New Release
64	2009	Old School (2011 International Quartet Champions)
65	201	'Round Midnight
66	2011	Touchstone
67	2012	M-AD Hatters
68	2013	Frank the Dog
69	2014	Mayhem
70	2015	Last Men Standing
71	2016	Route 1
72	2017	Da Capo
73	2018	Gimme Four
74	2019	Midtown
75	2020	Pratt Street Power

Note: Represented in Reading this year.

Note: No living members.

Note: Due to a change in accounting, there was no 1964 champion.

Note: We celebrate quartet anniversaries based on the Fall Contest date.

Note: The **Garden State Four** were the 1946 International Champions, but never M-AD champs.