



Watch out, Nashville . . . H-e-e-e-r-r-e comes MAD!

Alexandria, Hell's Kitchen, Hershey, Hamilton Square
. . . all will cross International stage in July

Volume 46, Issue 4 • WINTER 2015
A BULLETIN FOR EVERY BARBERSHOPPER IN THE MID-ATLANTIC DISTRICT



Route 1 crowned 2016 Champs! --- Alexandria wins 26th District title



*Bass Tom Moyer proudly
hoists the traveling trophy.
Route 1 is the District's 71st
quartet champion.*



STAR-STUDED PERFORMANCES AT DISTRICT
4 MAD choruses qualified for the 2016 International
Contet in Nashville, July 3-10.
AND 5 quartets scored above 76 percent!

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To perpetuate the old American institution, the barbershop quartet, and to promote and encourage vocal harmony and good fellowship among its members throughout the Mid-Atlantic District by the formation in every city, town, and hamlet, of local chapters, composed of members interested in the purposes of this corporation, which shall be the same as the purposes of the Society; to hold annual, local, and district contests in quartet and chorus singing, to encourage and promote the education of its members and the public in music appreciation; to initiate, promote, and participate in charitable projects; and to promote public appreciation of barbershop quartet and chorus singing by publication and dissemination thereof.

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WOW!
DOUBLE
DOUBLE
WOW!



4 MAD choruses qualify for 2016 International Contest in Nashville

5 MAD quartets score above 76%

New Hall of Honor members Mike Kelly, Terry Reynolds, and District President Ig Jakovac accept their silver trays from HoH Chairman Steve White and Chuck Lower.



This year's Mid-Atlantic District Fall Convention was hosted by the Hamilton Square, N.J. Chapter in Ocean City, Md. October 23-25. Here is a weekend recap.

First, to the end with the quartet results:

Our 2016 Mid-Atlantic District Quartet Champions ... Route 1 – Scott Disney (L), Thomas Moyer (Bs), Brandon Brooks (Br), and Brian Schreiner (T). They sang You Brought a New Kind of Love to Me, The Party's Over, I'll Get By (As Long As I Have You), and I Love Being Here with You to earn a score of 2,905 (80.7%). The quartet is now our 71st champion since 1945 for a total of 220 men to have earned this distinction. Thomas and Brian are new to MADAQC, but this is Brandon's second and Scott's fifth championship. CONGRATULATIONS, fellas!

Now, starting near the beginning of the weekend ... The Friday evening Quartet Semifinals featured 19 quartet



2016 Mid-Atlantic District Quartet Champions ROUTE 1 – Scott Disney (L), Thomas Moyer (Bs), Brandon Brooks (Br), and Brian Schreiner (T)

competitors (plus 3 scratches) including 7 foursomes containing 9 past M-AD quartet champion singers: Jack Pinto (BSQ, Old School), Mike Wallen (Alexandria's Ragtime Band, Copyright '86, Casino), Pookie Dingle (Mayhem), Bob Ramsey (Runaway Sound), John Ward (Reveille), Joe Hunter (Four Under Par, Reveille), Matt Fellows (Mayhem), Scott Disney (Casino, Phat Cats, Ringers, MAD Hatters), and Brandon Brooks (Wheelhouse)

Honorees

Starting at the crack of dawn, Saturday was a marathon 22-competitor chorus contest. At the conclusion of the chorus contest, DVP-Chorus Directors Development Glenn Phillips gave out several Director Service Recognition Awards. Including: Pookie Dingle (15 years), Bob Ramsey (30 years),

Roger Crist (13 years), Brian Allen (17 years), Mike Feyrer (35 years), Leroy Scheffler (35 years), Joe Malafarina (40 years), and Bob Wachter (40 years). These gents are the backbone of our society and we honor them as such.

All Mid-Atlantic District Hall of Honor members were invited to the stage for recognition and to join in the induction ceremony for this year's distinguished recipients of the M-AD's highest award. 2015 District HoH Chairman **Steve White** (Copyright '86, The Bay Rum Runners, Phat Cats, Touchstone, MAD Hatters) described the criteria for consideration and read detailed biographies for each recipient. As the recipients came to the stage, **Chuck Lower** presented commemorative silver plates and name badges while the District audience acknowledged them with prolonged applause in appreciation and thanks. The honorees were **Mike Kelly, Terry Reynolds,** and District President **Ig Jakovac.**

Chorus contest

The 2016 Mid-Atlantic District Chorus Champions, the **Alexandria Harmonizers** under the direction of **Joe Cerutti**, staged 97 men and earned a score of 1,636 (90.9%), seeding them 4th going into the Nashville International Contest. They sang Someone like You and Me 'Ol Bamboo to a standing M-AD ovation. This was their 26th District Chorus Championship since 1977.

Voices of Gotham under the direction of **Bill Stauffer** placed 2nd, staging 47 men and earning a score of 1,556 (86.4%).

See CONVENTION, continued on next page

CONVENTION

Continued from previous page

They are seeded 8th for Nashville.

Parkside Harmony, under the co-direction of **Jay Butterfield** and **Sean Devine** (OC Times, Throwback), placed 3rd, staging 40 men and earning a score of 1,550 (86.1%). They are seeded 9th for Nashville. This was their first time competing at the District level having only been formed in the last year.

Filling out the Top-5 were the **Brothers in Harmony** who under the direction of **Jack Pinto** placed 4th staging 96 men, earning a score of 1,544 (85.8%), and seeding them 10th in Nashville; and the Big Apple Chorus who also under the direction of Jack Pinto placed 5th staging 46 men and earning a score of 1,421 (78.9%).

That makes 4 M-AD choruses in the International Contest next summer.

Quartet finals

The Quartet Finals were exceptional with 5 quartets scoring International qualifying numbers ranging from 76.4 to 80.7%. Add **'Round Midnight**, **BSQ**, **Last Men Standing**, and possibly others to mix at Prelims and the M-AD is going to send a lot of quartets to the Big Show this coming year.

Show of Champions

The Show of Champions featured great performances by the top three choruses: the brand new Parkside Harmony chorus, the Voices of Gotham, and our new champs, the Alexandria Harmonizers.

Last Men Standing crushed their swan song package to close out a great championship year. Thanks, guys, and keep up the good work.

Steve White was the emcee and introduced a new MADAQC feature segment on the Show of Champions by showcasing an active past champ quartet ... this year it was 'Round Midnight (2015 International 11th Place Semi-finalists) who wowed the audience with their high-energy and highly entertaining set.

Then the MADAQC Chorus took the stage as their championship quartet names were read (Ye Emcee is sorry to have accidentally skipped over Runaway Sound). Co-Directing our motley, (**ED. NOTE: but handsome**) crew were again **Kevin King** and **Rick Taylor**. As the chorus stood in silent reverence, Steve noted the absence of three outstanding quartet men who passed away this year, our old pals:

See CONVENTION, continued on next page



VOICES OF GOTHAM



PARKSIDE HARMONY



THE BROTHERS IN HARMONY

2015 DISTRICT CONVENTION, OCEAN CITY

CONVENTION

Continued from previous page

- **Kurt Brown**, tenor of our 1970 champs, the Union Jacks, and brother to quartet champ Barry, left us in December.
- **Bo Deibel**, bass of our 1975 champs, the Reign-Beaus' End (International Semi-finalists), left us in March.
- **John Hohl**, baritone of our 1981 champs, Vaudeville (International Silver Medalists), and the second baritone of the NOVA Chords (International 3rd Place Medalists), left us in August.

On a brighter note, it was now time to acknowledge some BIG quartet anniversaries:

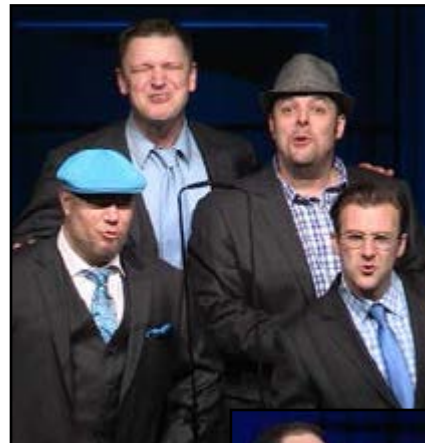
- 25th anniversary of the Untouchables** with Kevin King, Bret Pryor, Mike Sotiriou (d), and John Brohan. Kevin was there to represent.
- 35th anniversary of Keystone Congregation** with Les Adams, Doug Watson, Mark Sanders, and Hal Kraft who were all in attendance.
- 50th anniversary year of our 1966 champs, the Hallmarks** with Roger Ruhren (d), Artie Dolt, Bart Plescia, and Frank Tortorelli (d). Artie and Bart were there; they have been best friends for 55 years (can ya tell?).

Two other best friends were with us again, **Larry Reagan** and **Bob Parry**, celebrating their 55th anniversary of the **Out-of-Towners**.

Big Finale

As the Top-10 quartets huddled back stage, anxiously waiting what will be for one foursome a "momentous moment", DVP-Contest and Judging Gary Plaag (Hijinx) announced the much-anticipated results. Frank the Dog, Mayhem, and Last Men Standing stood ready to award the lapel pins and congratulate the Top-3 finishers:

- 3rd Place – Brothers in Arms:** James Isley (L), Jordan Dubois (Bs), Mike Duca (Br), and Kevin Juliana (T)
- 2nd Place – Gimme Four:** Dave Ammirata (L), Will Downey (Bs), Joe Servidio, Jr. (Br), and Paul Franek (T)
- 1st Place — Route 1** was then crowned champions



2010 CHAMPS 'ROUND MID-NIGHT — Wayne Grimmer (L), Jeff Glemboski Bs), Larry, Bombback (Br), and TJ Carollo (T)



2ND PLACE – GIMME FOUR
Dave Ammirata (L), Will Downey (Bs), Joe Servidio, Jr. (Br), and Paul Franek (T)



2015 CHAMPS LAST MEN STANDING — Drew Feyrer (L), Mike Kelly (Bs), Ed Bell (Br), and TJ Barranger (T)



3RD PLACE – BROTHERS IN ARMS
James Isley (L), Jordan Dubois (Bs), Mike Duca (Br), and Kevin Juliana (T)

and awarded the traveling MADAQC/Oriole Four Trophy, individual James E. Grant Performance Award trophies (provided by Bob Disney on behalf of Arcade), and shiny blue 1st Place lapel pins.

Kevin King directed the MADAQC Chorus in singing the traditional song of celebration and congratulations, This is the Moment (arranged by Freddie King) as Route 1 stood embracing each other – their pride of accomplishment showing. Welcome to the special fraternity, Champs! [Link to Finals Call-off and the MADAQC performance of This is the Moment http://134.192.106.36/v_files/MAD/2015/Fall/Jamboree/MADAQC~MD71J.mp4]

Rick Taylor led the audience in singing Keep the Whole World Singing and bringing to a close another fantastic barbershop convention. Every champ then

personally congratulated Route 1 with handshakes, hugs, and slaps on their backs. Now it was off to the hospitality rooms for more singing and camaraderie.

Start making your plans now to join us next year in Lancaster, Pa. on September 16-17 (yes, a date shift).

— By Steve White, MADAQC Fall 2015 Recap



Kevin King directs the MADAQC Chorus in singing the traditional song of celebration and congratulations, This is the Moment (arranged by Freddie King) as Route 1 stands embracing each other.



Hugs for Tom from Dr. Jay

Quartets

(in order of appearance)



FOR THE TIMES
mic tester



OASIS



ATLANTIC HARMONIES



THE WEEHAWKIN WONDER BOYS



YOUTH RECLAMATION PROJECT (M-AD rep to Seniors Qt. Contest in Reno)



RIVERLINE

Check out the many, many more quartet photos at
<http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

Contest score sheets may be found at
<http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/scores>



29 SECONDS

Quartets

(in order of appearance)



RAZZMATAZZ (M-AD rep to Seniors Qt. Contest in Reno)



HERSHEY TRANSIT CO.



SOUND SQUAD



THE FOURCE



UP ALL NIGHT



BRAVADO



FLASHPOINT

Check out the many, many more quartet photos at
<http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

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Quartets

(in order of appearance)



LOCO4



SPRUCE STREET



FORECAST



BROTHERS IN ARMS (MAD Most Improved Quartet)



ROUTE 1



GIMME FOUR



HALF AND HALF
2015 M-AD Mixed Quartet
Champions, Mic Coolers

Check out the many, many more quartet photos at
<http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

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Choruses

(in order of appearance)



SINGING CAPITAL CHORUS
mic tester

Check out the many, many more District Convention photos at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

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HARRISONBURG HARMONIZERS



SONS OF THE SEVERN



THE PINE BARONS

Choruses

(in order of appearance)

Check out the many, many more District Convention photos at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

Contest score sheets may be found at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/scores>



CHORUS OF THE CHESAPEAKE



THE NORTH PENNSMEN



THE BIG APPLE CHORUS



THE DAPPER DANS OF HARMONY

Choruses

(in order of appearance)

Check out the many, many more District Convention photos at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

Contest score sheets may be found at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/scores>



CHORUS OF THE OLD DOMINION



BAY COUNTRY GENTLEMEN



RITTENHOUSE SOUND



WESTCHESTER CHORDSMEN

Choruses

(in order of appearance)



LEHIGH VALLEY HARMONIZERS



THE MAINLINERS



COUNTRY GENTLEMEN



PRIDE OF DELMARVA

Check out the many, many more District Convention photos at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

Contest score sheets may be found at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/scores>

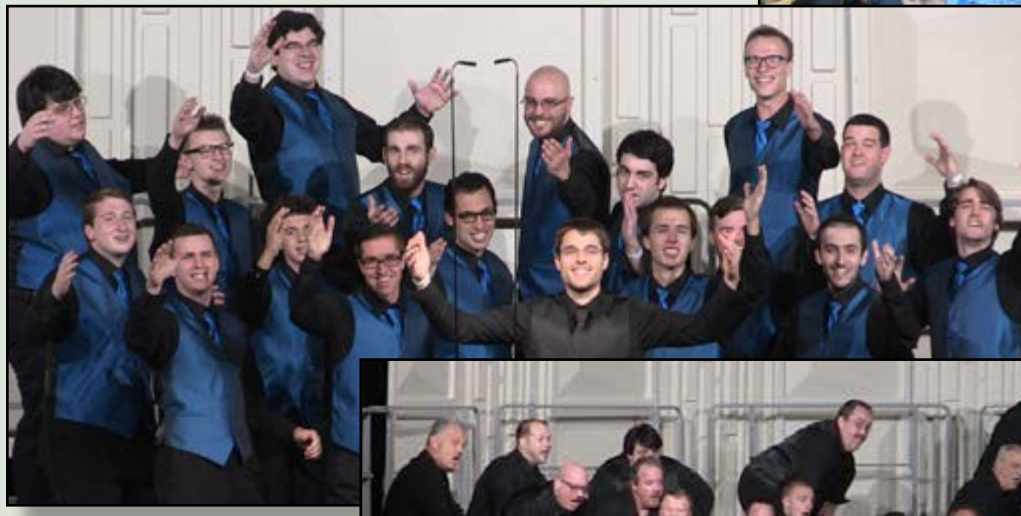
Choruses

(in order of appearance)

Contest score sheets may be found at
<http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/scores>



THE VIRGINIANS



EAST COAST SOUND



PARKSIDE HARMONY



LONG ISLAND SOUND

Check out the many, many more District Convention photos at <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/photos>

Choruses

(in order of appearance)



ALEXANDRIA
HARMONIZERS

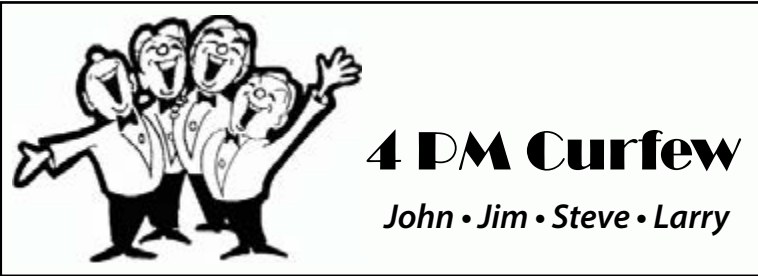


VOICES OF GOTHAM



THE BROTHERS
IN HARMONY

Contest score sheets
may be found at
<http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/scores>



Barbershop TidBits

Gentlemen's Agreement were innovators

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the Sept. 3 issue of In Tune, a weekly newsletter for the Hunterdon Harmonizers edited by Linda Williams, we found an account of a New York Times article we thought would be of interest to our readers, as well.

An article in the New York Times (Neil Genzlinger, Critic's Notebook) details a reviewer's earlier encounter (at 19 years of age) with a Barbershop Quartet in 1974.

The quartet was Gentlemen's Agreement and their performance blew his mind.

His uncle Larry (a barbershopper) provided tickets to his chapter show, and all was OK until the headliners sang. The reviewer was astonished by the seamlessness, the intricacy, and the investment in the song.

At this point, Gentlemen's Agreement had won gold (1971), and were taking songs like Everybody Loves a Lover, and Hush to new levels. Try to Remember gave the author a new appreciation of barbershop.

Drayton Justus, Al Rehkop, Bob Whitledge, and Glenn Van Tassel were "pushing the envelope" and struck this youngster right between the eyes.

The author of this article had this to say: "I had what for me was the ultimate arts-consumer experience: going into a performance expecting nothing, coming out transformed. It's an experience I've rarely had since, though I've written more than 1,500 reviews."

The Gentlemen's Agreement was "pushing the envelope" 40 years ago performing contemporary songs in a barbershop genre. Some of them worked, some probably didn't, but the opportunity to deeply connect with our friends and audiences has existed for many, many years.

Let's keep open minds and enjoy the artistry that our society is nurturing.



Quartet rescues emotional dad

At the end of May, my daughter got married. It happens.

She thought it would be a good idea to ask me to sing in her wedding service. Uh-oh.

Knowing full well that I would be unable to get through any song without being overcome by emotion, I declined. Besides, I sing baritone. What bride *really* wants a baritone solo?

However, without her knowledge, my quartet, 4 PM Curfew, rehearsed a song that was in the Lancaster Red Rose Chapter's repertoire: *Daddy's Little Girl*.

I figured that with a little help from my friends, I could be a part of singing a song at the reception.

Just before our father/daughter dance, I called the quartet up to help me perform our surprise. As you can see by the picture, the bride was touched by the performance. (And yes, the father of the bride was in tears by the end, too)

— By Steven D. Sturgis

4 PM Curfew serenades the bride.



The new Mrs. Beth Gable greets her dad, Steve Sturgis.

New Champs give thanks

Dear Friends & Fellow Barbershoppers:

What an incredible weekend! We are truly honored to be named the 2016 Mid-Atlantic District Quartet Champion. We have such an amazing District Events Team that goes out of its way to give the audience a wonderful show and the competitors a flawless experience.

We thank the Brothers in Harmony for selflessly hosting the event; they were true gentlemen and a testament to what brotherhood is! We also thank every person that made the trip to Ocean City. Your support was felt by every member of every ensemble that took the stage. To see so many talented men cross that stage was awe-inspiring. Gimme Four, Brothers in Arms, Forecast, and Up All Night all had International level performances and we are humbled to be included in that list with them! We congratulate the Alexandria Harmonizers for another inspiring performance as well as Voices of Gotham, Parkside Harmony, and the Brothers in Harmony who will ALL represent the MAD in Nashville!

We tried to make it to as many rooms Saturday night as we could, but evaluations, and distances kept us from making it to everyone. To those we missed, we are truly sorry. We plan to visit Chapters throughout the year and hope to see you all soon! We pledge to represent the Mid-Atlantic District to the best of our abilities and be ambassadors for the hobby everywhere we go.

When we had the idea of putting this quartet together we never imagined we would be where we are today. We made the commitment to each other to strive for excellence and enjoy the friendships we have. Singing with some of your closest friends makes for a lot of laughs and memories. Our coaches Ig JaKovac, Anne Bureau, Jay Butterfield, and Sean Devine were truly instrumental in shaping the path we are walking down. We can't thank them enough for their guidance and talents.

We cannot wait to see what this year holds for Route 1. This is just the first mile on our trip we are excited to see what the next 1,000 hold!

In Harmony,

Brian, Scott, Thomas, and Brandon

717-659-7470 • Info@route1quartet.com • www.route1quartet.com

Take-aways from the 2015 District contest

What an amazing chorus and quartet contest in Ocean City this past October! Every competitor came prepared and ready, and the audience was treated to some remarkable singing. Directors know how much hard work goes into learning how to sing and perform at a high level, and we strive every week to help our men grasp and hone additional skills on the path to getting better. Given that I direct two M-AD choruses, I make it a point to watch every competing ensemble (once my choruses are off-stage, of course!) so that I can learn as much as possible from their performances. Along these lines, here are some key points that I took away from this fabulous contest and convention:

1. **More air** – Once again the Alexandria Harmonizers delivered a championship performance, and a significant feature of their superior musical command is a solid wall of air in their sound. Make no mistake; the Harmonizers do not achieve this dynamic quantity of air in their tone merely because they place a lot of men on the risers. The air must be consistent throughout the tone, it must be focused appropriately, and all of the men must maintain a steady flow of air through each complete phrase with a minimum of ‘decay.’

If your chorus isn’t singing with the amount of air you prefer, have your singers place an open palm in front of their mouths and sing into their palms. If they cannot feel a steady stream of warm air on their palms while they sing, then they are not sufficiently harnessing enough air or pouring enough air into their sound. Want to sing like the Harmonizers? Increasing air capacity is a good place to start!

2. **Strict tempo** – Audiences love to hear up-tunes in strict tempo because they can tap their toes along to the beat. So if your musical

plan aims at singing in strict time, you must ensure that your singers are ever-aware of the tempo. If not, then some or all of your singers will add “extra time” to the measure when they breathe for the upcoming phrase, resulting in your chorus being musically out of sync with each other. The chorus may also start subtly slowing down the tempo in order to “be more comfortable”, especially if the song contains a lot of lyrics. The Brothers in Harmony Chorus clearly understands how to keep strict tempo, delivering a wonderful performance of “Get me to the church on time.”

If you want your chorus to improve at singing in strict tempo, have your singers tap the beat with a hand or foot while they rehearse the song. This will help them sync up the beat with their singing.

3. **Sing without your director!** – It is the responsibility of the chorus to know the musical plan of each song. The director gives musical cues that keep everyone on track, but it is NOT up to the director to tell the chorus what they should already know. The Parkside Chorus delivered one of the most stunning packages of the contest by electing to use no director at all, turning 100 percent of the musical responsibility over to the chorus as a unit. I must caution that this high-level skill embraces great risk and reward, so most choruses should not attempt it in performance, unless, perhaps, when singing a song in strict time. However, this is a terrific rehearsal technique that will help you and your men determine if they know the musical plan or not.

In rehearsal, give the downbeat and then allow the men to sing and perform the song on their own. The results may surprise you! ☺ Making this technique a regular part of your rehearsal schedule will help your chorus grow in musical confidence.

4. **Standing farther apart on the risers**

can be a good thing – There is a lot to be said for standing close together on the risers: the singers can hear themselves better, they tend to sync better, and they feel the strength of the group as they perform. But standing farther apart on the risers adds new spice and opportunity, as the Parkside Chorus effectively demonstrated at the contest.

When standing farther apart, each singer must be more reliable and committed to his role in the performance. Simply put, this means that every singer must know each song inside and out as well as the entire choreography package. One cannot “lean” on others for help when standing somewhat isolated on stage. These are some of the pitfalls of this technique. For the groups that can handle performing this way, however, this allows each singer more freedom to pour himself into the music, and it also forces everyone to listen better and trust each other to hold up their share of the performance. The judges recommended to me and my Pride of DelMarVa Chorus that we consider adding space between singers on the risers, and we are eager to explore this idea and see if it works for us.

5. **Make the words sound like the way they make you feel** – Certain words seem to speak to us in a personal way. Consider how the following words make you feel: love, gentle, tender, warm. The audience wants your chorus to be “believable”, and a large step forward along this path is to learn to sing those special words in a uniquely special way. You can imagine that a word such as “tender” should probably be sung softly and intimately. Yet a word like “loud” should probably be sung at a higher dynamic volume and with more authority.

Many choruses at the contest demonstrated this technique in at least a couple of instances, but the Voices of Gotham Chorus must be especially commended for the incredible way

that they sang their lyrics with great sincerity. I urge you to explore the opportunities that song lyrics afford your musical delivery. Your audience -- and the judges! -- will appreciate it very much.

6. **Learn from watching good directing techniques** – My favorite part of the chorus contest is sitting in a place with a good view of the directors in order to develop and refine my directing techniques. This contest afforded me some great learning opportunities:

- good examples of crisp cut-offs from Jeff Glemboski (Long Island Sound);
- smooth, effortless, and connected directing patterns from David Ammirata (East Coast Sound);
- excellent examples of directing precision from Bill Stauffer (Voices of Gotham);
- how to establish a full and consistent chorus sound, care of Jack Pinto (Brothers in Harmony); and
- a terrific demonstration of sound, choral directing techniques by Joe Cerutti (Harmonizers).

If only my competing chorus had sung earlier in the contest so that I could have watched more performances! ☺

There was a lot of great singing and performing going on in Ocean City, Md. a few weeks back, and so many things to learn along the way. I strongly encourage all District directors to attend our conventions as often as possible, whether or not your chorus is competing in the contest or ever goes to competition at all. This is a precious window of opportunity for us to get better at our directing craft and to witness a myriad of musical possibilities that we may never have seen or heard before.

Glenn Phillips directs the Patapsco Valley and Queen Anne’s County Chapters in the Mid-Atlantic District.



by Glenn Phillips, VP
Chorus Director Development



At Harmony University this summer, one of the esteemed presenters stood on the stage during warm-ups and said, "We should all be singing *bel canto!*"

I believe he was referring to the definition of the phrase, which means 'beautiful singing,' keeping our full resonant quality in our sound at all times. But what if the *bel canto* approach offers us a deeper understanding of how to sing with that quality through its orientation to air control?

Considered the standard of vocal production in Italy from 1800 to 1840, *bel canto* predates what we now recognize as a more vibrato-laden operatic sound. This earlier orientation produces clear, concentrated quality with absolute tonal accuracy, heightened harmonics, minimal vibrato, relentless legato, and extended breath control, fully supporting the rigorous demands of great barbershop sound.

As we all know, in our unique style, one of our most consistent challenges is air management for our longer than normal phrasing. This often occurs even when we do our best to "tank up." As counterintuitive as this is, taking in that huge amount of air, sometimes exacerbates the very issue we are trying to solve.

When we think about the singer's breath, we often talk about airflow or moving lots of air across the vocal folds. This is supported by later classical orientations, as they were designed to do exactly that – move more air and create more power. However, just think of the difference between a Puccini or Wagnerian operatic aria and your barbershop repertoire. It is possible that the phrase "less is more," will apply here in a profound way.

When we look to *bel canto* thinking, we find an interesting piece emerges. In Wikipedia, several principles of *bel canto* are discussed and one of them is the "avoidance of aspiration." This one concept can be confusing. How can less air across the vocal cords produce clearer sound? How is it possible to sustain longer phrases without a huge quantity of air?

This conversation rests in how we think about approaching our breathing process and how the vocal mechanism actually works, which for *bel canto* becomes more about gentle, consistent air pressure versus noticeable air flow.

As a side note, Steve Scott's recent article in *The Harmonizer* speaking to the scientific understanding of the voice is well worth digesting, as we now talk about the breath orientation of a singer.

As we take a natural breath, our bodies inhale and expand, then, exhale and collapse. When a relaxed "in and out" breathing orientation like this is used in singing, without any understanding and attention to air regulation across the vocal cords, we may start to notice anomalies in our overall sound quality, the most obvious of which, is a diffused or breathy quality of tone.

Sometimes we will hear or feel a rattle or unevenness in the sound, and with that, the potential for inconsistent sustainment of vowel targets and the potential collapse or inconsistency of intonation. Pushing or pressing can also be indicative of air management-related issues and often emerges in the challenging transitional, or *passaggio*, areas of our vocal range, where it sometimes feels like we need to get louder just to sing the notes.

So it does seem pretty far-fetched that a small amount of air, controlled by gentle, steady air pressure, sustained by our energized and engaged body, will automatically regulate our air for us, without any force, manipulation or press. Needless to say, to feel the ease associated with this kind of vocal production can be life-changing.

Many coaching experiences stick out in my mind within this area of breath control. But, the ones that have impacted me the most are with men who think they need to leave the risers, due to age and vocal ineffectiveness. The aging voice can show signs of vocal deterioration that are frustrating to the singer and aggravating to the overall sound, when we as barbershoppers and directors desire complete control of our tone and quality. I believe that these issues are not only reversible, but that complete rejuvenation can occur, where a singer feels their voice return to the control they had twenty years earlier, once we are re-trained to work in alignment with the mechanism.

When shown how to engage and sustain core energy, men are often



INSTANT CLASSIC — A few years back, just prior to their first International Collegiate competition, these young men integrated the *bel canto* principles into their vocal approach. The underlying effect of this training can be heard in the quartet's free, effortless tone; precision onsets; relentless legato control; energized releases; sustained ring and the expanded harmonics of their synchronized singing.

See **BEL CANTO**, continued on next page

Bel Canto for Barbershop Singing

By Debra Lynn

We exceeded our goal! District barbershoppers generously open wallets



Your District Board has agreed that we, as a District, will be a sponsor of the 2016 Youth Festival that will take place at the 2016 Mid-Winter Convention in Reno, Nevada. To do so requires a donation to Harmony Foundation of at least \$10,000. I recently sent a note to all chapter presidents, treasurers and secretaries providing some details and also asking for their support.

[See the letter by clicking here.](#)

We believe that it is reasonable, and worthy of support, with a value proposition which includes:

- Visibility of our art form to a broader community – ACDA and others
- Involvement of music educators (attract one educator and potentially get many students exposed to and involved in singing/performing barbershop harmony)
- The District and our chapters continue our strong reputation as a leader in youth singing and outreach
- Opportunity for youth to sing/travel/experience barbershop harmony with their peers and men of all ages
- Lives have been shown to be changed through exposure to ringing chords, quartet and chorus singing, and the resulting camaraderie

Please help by working with your chapter's leadership to facilitate a donation or consider donating yourself. Send donations made out to Mid-Atlantic District and mail checks to:

Bob Eckman
4 Tara Ct
Palmyra, VA 22963-3331



**by Bob Eckman,
M-AD Treasurer**

BEL CANTO

Continued from previous page

able to sing through entire phrases without having to sneak or take additional breaths. I am then greeted with looks of amazement and the immediate response that singers felt more ease with the overall process. How can this feeling of holding steady without pushing or consciously moving lots of air, actually control the phrase more effectively?

The simple answer is that the vocal cords are designed to phonate clear tone when kept together. The small amount of air needed to make sound is almost imperceptible. I feel vibration in my mouth as I resonate, but not air. Pushing too much air through the cords, especially in jerky or inconsistent ways, is like John Wayne striding through a set of saloon doors. They, like your vocal cords, will take a while to stabilize.

Recently at the Pittsburgh convention, many of us were privileged to witness Instant Classic quartet's Gold Medal win, a culmination of all the various components of great barbershop presentation and singing. A few years back, just prior to their first International Collegiate competition, these young men integrated the bel canto principles into their vocal approach. The underlying effect of this training can be heard in the quartet's free, effortless tone; precision onsets; relentless legato control; energized releases; sustained ring and the expanded harmonics of their synchronized singing.

My Dad being a baritone in the small man chorus called The Coastmen, directed by The Suntone's in the early 60's, instilled in me a love for the style early on. Recordings of ringing chords were heard in my home throughout my childhood. Year's later, when I came to the awareness that my bel canto training and vocal understanding could benefit barbershoppers, even I was amazed. It never occurred to me that my 10,000 hours of practice to become a professional singer, after taking a U-turn from the Opera world, would come full circle and be applied to helping singers worldwide.

When working with barbershoppers, I light-heartedly refer to myself as an acoustic structural engineer, helping to demonstrate stabilized singing using very simple body mechanics. As we become the optimal resonating instruments we are built to be, our bodies become effective amplifying stereo speakers, without any need to push or press to make sound.

Pure bel canto training is quite rare and some would say almost extinct. We are called Direct-Line Scholars, because we can trace our teaching lineage back 200 years to the founder, Manuel Garcia. This work can transform a singer into a professional able to maintain a

rigorous schedule of singing performances with consistent accuracy, even when dealing with the occasional fatigue or health-related issue.

When bel canto is used as a vocal production foundation, we discover a classical technique that wholly supports healthy contemporary singing, adding this possibility of vocal rejuvenation for the aging voice. When these principles are applied to the demands of our unique and challenging barbershop style, effective synchronized singing can become as simple as setting the structure on each inhalation, engaging the core and adding the full measure of desired imagery and artistry for winning results!

The discovery of the dovetail between the barbershop style and the enhanced results achieved using *bel canto* (beautiful singing) principles was outlined in *The Harmonizer* articles, "Sing Like An Italian," which appeared in the Nov/Dec 2010 and Jan/Feb 2011 issues. Debra's book, *The Bel Canto Buzz: Beautiful singing made simple!* followed in the Spring of 2012 and has received numerous five-star reviews on Amazon.com.

Debra Lynn, professional singer and vocal instructor, graduated with her B.A. in Voice Performance from Florida State University and the College of Charleston, with four years of post-graduate work in bel canto with Edward Sayegh of Los Angeles. She has performed in concerts and festivals throughout Europe, the United States; principle Soprano with the Maui Symphony; founder of Maui Civic Light Opera; and currently maintains a private voice studio, while creating bel canto programs to support Music Educators and her vision for children never being told they can't sing. Recently made Director of the BHS G20 Youth Chorus in Fall River, Massachusetts, Debra is a vocal production coach for barbershop choruses, quartets and individuals throughout BHS, SAI and HI. She has presented for HU at the Men's International Conventions since 2011. Her new website, www.debralynnmusic.com, offers various support tools for singers who desire more ease with their craft. Feel free to contact Debra through Facebook or her website with any vocal production questions or to inquire about coaching in your area.



Youth In Harmony Outreach Guidelines

Many of our chapters, quartets and choruses are eager to engage music educators to get involved in a barbershop outreach program at their local schools. This is a good thing! That said, it's critical to the success of our outreach efforts that we always leave the music educator with the best possible impression of the barbershop art form and how it can enhance/augment the teacher's music education program.

Music educators serving in schools in the M-AD (and across the world) are predominantly smart, well-educated teachers AND musicians. They know good quality music and performance skills when they experience them. To enhance/augment their music education programs they are often eager to expose their students to music-based performances from various genres of music (rock, a cappella, classical, barbershop, etc.) that demonstrate good quality singing and performance skills. Quality musical performances by outside groups can serve as valuable role-model experiences for new, young musicians who are just building their skills through their school's music program.

With this in mind, below are some guidelines for ensuring a positive experience for the music educators and the students that leaves them with a very good impression of barbershop whenever they are serving as "visiting artists" to the school music program. For additional information and guidelines about building/enhancing a strong chapter- or quartet-based YIH program please check out the BHS Youth In Harmony Resource Guide (available at this link: <http://www.barbershop.org/resources/document-center/youth/>).

Mid-Atlantic District Guidelines:

- Only groups (quartets, ensembles, choruses) that perform/score in the 65% or above range at our BHS contests should be visiting schools. Why? See paragraphs 1 and 2, above. Teachers know what's good and what's not. If we show them weak performances that would score less than a 65% in a BHS contest it is likely they will not be interested in having that group coach the school groups OR even trying barbershop in the first place. Many music educators have told me this over the 20 years I've been working with them and their groups.
- If your chorus, quartet or ensemble does not perform at or above a 65% level, either use DVD's of quartets that DO (the BHS International quartet and chorus contest DVD's meet this criterion) as examples of good barbershop or secure a quartet or ensemble that does perform at that level and take them with you to the meeting with the music educator. There are also many such performances available on YouTube.

Thanks for following these guidelines as you head out to do your "cathedral building" work of sharing what barbershop can do to enhance and augment a school vocal music program. If you have any additional question, please let me know.

2015 Youth in Harmony Update

by Gary Plaag,
VP Youth in Harmony



Plan Now to Attend Leadership Academy

All new chapter officers should take advantage of the training available at our annual leadership academies. Courses taught by experienced instructors cover every aspect of chapter administrative and musical leadership.

Learn the secrets of success and then apply them in your own chapter! Connect with successful chapter officers and great instructors to provide a network of friends you can turn to for free advice whenever you need it.

The cost of attendance is a legitimate chapter expense so you won't be on the hook.

Find a chapter officer with a van and sing all the way there and all the way home. It is a day you won't forget and will never regret.

Check the M-AD Web site (www.midatlanticdistrict.com/) for registration information. See you there!

January 9, 2016 – CLA – Newark, DE

Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association/Pioneers (BQPA)



Treat yourself to a four-day, do-it-yerself quartetting festival. No assigned music, no pre-requisites.

We sing all the old songs you already know and love in quartets that form, melt away and re-form.

The emphasis is always on the fun of barbershop quartet singing.

Both guys and gals are welcome.

Spring Festival - Tempe - 2016

April 6-9, 2016.

info: www.bqpa.com

Great way to contribute to Harmony Foundation

There is a great new (easy) way to support the Harmony Foundation International.

If you shop at Amazon, as most of us do, just go to smile.amazon.com and select Harmony Foundation Intl. (Not Harmony Foundation).. Make sure it's the one in Nashville, and 0.5% of every purchase goes to support Barbershop Singing through the foundation. It takes less than a minute to do.

AmazonPrime purchases (subscription, videos, etc.) also are included in this promotion.

70TH ANNIVERSARY TRIBUTE TO THE BLUE CHIP CHORUS

The Township of Teaneck, paid a wonderful tribute to the Teaneck Chapter Blue Chip Chorus Sept. 9. The reason for the celebration? The Teaneck Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, was chartered 70 years ago - June 22, 1945.

All through those 70 years, the chapter has only had one home, Teaneck, New Jersey.

Coordinated by the Township Recreation Director, Glenna Crockett, and her staff the tribute took place in the lovely Richard Rodda Community Center which is also the chorus' rehearsal location. The chapter was presented with two excellent

proclamations: the first, by the Teaneck Town Council; the second, presented at the anniversary tribute, by State Senator Loretta Weinberg.

In attendance were past and present members of the chorus and their wives as well as friends of the chapter.

As an added point of pride, the Teaneck Chapter is the oldest continuously operational barbershop chapter in the state of New Jersey!

— By Chapter Membership VP, Mark Axelrod
201-836-7753 / mark@benchmarkrsi.com



New Jersey State Senator Loretta Weinberg presents a proclamation to the Teaneck Chapter Blue Chip Chorus honoring their 70 years of harmonizing in the Township of Teaneck.

Hunterdon successful with Ready, Set, Sing

The leadership of the Hunterdon County Chapter can't thank our friends the Morris County Music Men enough. Not only did they share your Ready, Set, Sing success story and teach us how to run such a program, they inspired us. (see "Ready, Set, Sing Road Show . . . in Summer-Fall 2015 Mid'l Antics, page 26)

Through the program we had 18 different men attend and had an astounding 13 of them graduate. We expect more than half to audition, perhaps 10 or so. Keep in mind we have a roster of 42 right now. We held an impressive graduation in October with a huge audience, gifts and diplomas for each singer and a great social reception that we hated to end so we could continue the rehearsal.

The keys to success were massive free publicity via our established network of the press, an incredible director/teacher Don Reckenbeil and top notch administration of

the program thanks to the prep from Morris. We spent nothing outside of our normal membership budget, which included new business cards for RSS and a handful of flyers. That's it.

This has breathed incredible life into the chapter and I can honestly say each of these men have a high likelihood of passing audition. The audience was floored when we sang Hallelujah for them (Clancey arrangement, NOT terribly easy). Now we have the challenge of getting through so many auditions and on boarding of new members. Aw shucks!

We now have a compendium of files that may be of use to other chapters starting out: press release, attendance sheet, weekly program plan, graduation letter, Don's weekly emails to the students, etc. and are happy to share to make the path to success a little shorter. Contact President Christian Hunter, njbslead@gmail.com.



Hunterdon shares the joy of barbershop harmony with a large class of new singers.

Don Reckenbeil directs the Hunterdon Harmonizers and guests in Jim Clancey's arrangement of Hallelujah.

Hunterdon Harmonizers hold an impressive graduation in October for 13 new singers attracted by the Ready, Set, Sing program.



Step Up and Sing!

by Brian Quinn, Board Member, Lansdale Chapter

Our First Guest Steps Up!



Now ring this!



The Quartet Set

What a Day!



On Saturday, September 19, the North Pennsmen took a bold step for a chapter faced with attrition and finding familiar ways to grow falling flat. Although personal invitations and local advertising yielded some singers recently, their numbers have been insufficient to replace those retiring or prioritizing other commitments. The time had come to try a different approach. Instead of bringing new singers to our rehearsal, the Pennsmen decided to bring our rehearsal to new singers!

We targeted September 19, when families would be home from summer vacation and back to school. The time and location would be 1 to 3 p.m., in the court by Macy's at Montgomery Mall, in Montgomeryville, Pa. We figured those families would need things for the school year, and they would see us as they shopped.

Enticing singers would require a clear message about who we are, what we do, and how Barbershop improves lives. That message also had to be simple:

Who are we? *We're singers.*

What do we do? *We step on the risers and sing.*

What do we want potential singers to do? *Step up and sing with us.*

What happens when more of us sing? *We step up our sound, our connection to one another and our level of satisfaction with life.*

Our branding for this event, and going forward, would crystallize these concepts as "Step Up and Sing!"

The Pennsmen brought that mighty message to Montgomery Mall using large easel boards, flyers, business cards and cool T-shirts. Chorus members wore the Tees, and we offered one as an incentive to sing on the risers. We also advertised free singing lessons in October and November.

So how did it work?

At first, the crowd hesitated. Shoppers on the second level watched from an overlook as an audience began to fill up the seats in the court. Anne Bureau, our director, explained the idea of an open rehearsal, and we began ensemble exercises. With voices warmed, we performed some repertoire, including music from our upcoming Christmas Show.

Folders containing sheet music for three popular Christmas tunes awaited our guest singers. The songs were The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting by an Open Fire), Jingle Bells and Winter Wonderland. Anne encouraged members of the audience to join us. Meanwhile, some chorus members fanned into the crowd to attract singers.

After some time, a brave recruit signed in, donned his T-shirt and stepped up – we were on our way. This gent stayed with us for a while, but eventually, he had to go. Later, we were successful in recruiting a young man, and then the flood gates opened. Suddenly, we were a singing sea of blue Tees. About twenty singers would step up, including men of all ages and even a young lady!

Judging by the faces of our guest singers and of the crowd, people had fun, which is essential to attracting new members. Our "mall promo" generated a lot of interest on Facebook, too. Over 1,400 people viewed the posts, and about 75 "liked" our page during the three weeks we posted about the promo. Considering participation at the mall and engagement online, the event was a big success.

How that success translates to new members will be seen. We contacted our guest singers following the big day, encouraging them to see us again and wear their T-shirts no matter what they decide. Of course, we hope they decide to "Step Up and Sing!"

Red Bank serenades at Harvest Festival

The Fall Harvest Festival at Longstreet Farm in Holmdel has become an annual affair for the Red Bank Chorus of the Atlantic. The big question is always whether the weather will co-operate, since it is a "rain or shine" gig. This year it did.

The chorus, eighteen strong, set up shop in its usual location, just outside the Visitor Center which also serves as the park entrance -- a good location which enables us to serenade those who are arriving or leaving. The gig called for two 45-minute sets.

Throughout the afternoon families, couples and individuals stopped to enjoy the singing and were enthusiastic in their response. As usual, a few small children were targeted with a dose of Honey Little 'Lize, and responded with varying degrees of shyness.

We distributed chorus brochures and business cards to all the men who stopped to enjoy the vocals. The audience seemed to enjoy the entire repertoire, and were especially responsive to In the Still of the Night, Coney Island Baby, and Hello Mary Lou.

Quartets also stepped out to sing a few songs, offering a little vocal variety. This even seems to offer closer contact and more interaction with the audience, which is always rewarding and encouraging. We look forward to being invited back next year.

— *By Bruce Hanson, editor, Atlantic Gazette, a monthly newsletter of the Red Bank Area Chapter in the Oct. 2015 issue*



Remembering 9/11

The Chorus of the Atlantic reached out to the Red Bank Elks to offer our vocal services in support of their annual September 11th ceremony rather than waiting to be asked. Thanks to this advance planning, 17 chorus members turned out on a balmy Friday evening for the program. During early warmups, the chorus sang to an appreciative audience of one, Red Bank Borough Councilwoman Sharon Lee (see photo). The program, with about 50 community members in attendance, was conducted by Elks' Exalted Ruler Rose Broccoli and featured remarks by Red Bank Mayor Pasquale Menna. The chorus sang its usual set of patriotic songs, closing the program with a heart-felt God Bless America. Following the ceremony, Exalted Ruler Broccoli invited the chorus and other program attendees to join the Elks for burgers and hotdogs.

The Virginians sing on a Trace Adkins Show

We knew something extraordinary was about to happen. Just after the Virginians were introduced as an opening act for a Trace Adkins show at the Dahlgren Naval Base on Oct. 10, one of our chorus members, Charlie Negri, was recognized as a surviving World War II veteran who had fought in the Italian campaign of 1943. Charlie, all 5'3" of him, walked smartly to the front of the stage and snapped a brisk salute. The 3,500 audience members had a virtual melt-down. And the Virginians, all 55 of us, had the first of many blood-freezing moments we would experience that evening. What a mix – a field full of zealous patriots and a famous country-rock artist bent on honoring military veterans.

Many months ago, when the Virginians got the invitation to participate in this show, Mike Wallen, Music Director, and Jerry Candrilli, President, instantly saw it as an opportunity for the chorus to experience something much more exciting than an "ordinary" barbershop gig.

One reason was the anticipated professionalism of the show. After all, Trace Adkins is a Grammy-nominated force in country music with millions of record sales and a number of Platinum albums to his name, a member of the Grand Ole Opry, and an American Red Cross spokesman for the Wounded Warrior Program. His lanky, 6'6" frame, ponytail, and astonishingly resonant voice that falls off the bottom of the piano, have been whipping audiences into a lather for over two decades. If you haven't heard him sing, then perhaps you've seen him as the host of the American Country Awards on FOX-TV, as a finalist on NBC's All-Star Celebrity Apprentice, or in his gritty role as an uber-tough biker in the movie "The Lincoln Lawyer." To say that the Virginians had stars in their eyes over this guy is a massive understatement.

Another reason to believe it would be an exceptional experience was that just about everyone in the Virginians had some connection to the military, either directly as a veteran or indirectly through family members or friends. Singing barbershop is always a thrill, but singing for our troops, both active and retired, is a special gift.

With the help of about twenty barbershop friends (either former Virginians or singers from the Alexandria, District of Columbia, James River, and Frank Thorne chapters, and the 550 Chord Vocal Quartet from Fort Lee, Va.), we worked hard to prepare five songs.

The first four were no-brainers for this audience: *The Stars Spangled Banner*, Freddie King's arrangement of five military service songs, a medley of four patriotic songs arranged by Mike Wallen, and Tom Gentry's *Let There Be Peace on Earth*. Our singing was excellent and the audience members went crazy with applause. It was just the warm up they needed for Trace's

dramatic entry.

But our fifth number, sung at the very end of the show, was the one that really choked most of us up. It was the song for which Trace is famous: *'Til The Last Shot's Fired* (check out a version of this on YouTube featuring the West Point Glee Club).

The verses of the song refer to famous American conflicts: Overton Hill at the battle of Nashville during the Civil War; Omaha Beach (the father of one Virginian had landed there in 1944 prior to being taken prisoner); the bloody fields of Viet Nam (several members of our chapter served); and the mountains of Afghanistan.

It was in the final chorus, however, that we felt the real power of the message. We performed it, a cappella, at the end of the song:

Say a prayer for peace, for our daughters and our sons.

Set our spirits free; let us lay down our guns.

Sweet mother Mary, we're so tired.

But we can't come home 'til the last shot's fired.

The Virginians sang these lyrics with more spirit and heart than just about any song they've ever tackled. Indeed, many of us were so caught up in the moment that the notes and words came rushing out without our sensing them at all.

When it all was over, Trace announced that "there's nothing more to say," which was his way of telling the audience that an encore would simply destroy the mood. He was right. It was magic.

But then the truly unexpected happened. Trace turned to the Virginians and uttered a most astonishing phrase: "Thanks. You guys really made my year."

There's a palpable aw-shucks honesty to this country boy, so when he complimented us in this fashion, we were half-inclined to believe him. After all, you don't survive a bullet to the heart (fired by an angry spouse), carouse as a roughneck in the oil fields of the Gulf, or hone your music skills in the beer-soaked roadhouses of West Texas simply to become a smoke-blowing sycophant. We wanted to believe him. We do believe him.

And then it ended. Surrounded by coterie of body guards, Trace slipped through the darkness into his plush trailer. He had intended to



'TIL THE LAST SHOT'S FIRED — Trace Adkins and the Virginians perform at Dahlgren Naval Base.

hang out and schmooze with the Virginians, but he was suffering from a minor infection contracted during a prior surgery and so was forced to retire early.

By then, we were freezing (northern Virginia got down to the low 50s that evening) but, to a man, elated. We had done what most chapters rarely accomplish – had sung on a big-time stage, performed exceptionally well, and had, at the very least, contributed meaningfully to a spectacular salute to our American military. Our role was, of course, only a small part of the overall effort, but the crowd reaction suggested that it had been a decidedly important addition. The chest-thumping country beat that's the trademark of Trace Adkins' music had been, for sure, elevated by the in-tune barbershop chords of the Virginians.

— By Roger Tarpay

Changes! We have changes!

Divisions reconfigured, spring and fall conventions re-scheduled and relocated (ain't we got fun!)

The 2015 Fall Convention was a great success. We sold over 1,500 registrations. And we are sending FOUR, count them – FOUR! – choruses to the Big Show in Nashville in July 2016.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, some changes have been put into effect for the next Division-District contest cycle.

Check below carefully, because this probably affects your quartet and chorus.

The District Board approved consolidating the number of Divisions in our District from four to three. We are now configured in three

north-south bands of roughly equal membership: Northern, Central, and Southern Divisions. Your chapter leadership has been notified if your designation changed from one Division to another. Former Western Division choruses, this affects all of you, as well as a few in other Divisions. ([see map](http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/?Code=ChapterMap) <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/?Code=ChapterMap>) (See [list of chapters by division](http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/?Code=Chapters) <http://www.midatlanticdistrict.com/?Code=Chapters>)

Please check the web site for the new divisions and locations as well as dates. Our contest cycle this year has been finalized as shown in the chart on the right.

District Fall Convention Date & Location Change

The dates and location have also changed for the District Fall Convention for 2016. **The convention will be held September 16 – 17, 2016 in the Lancaster Convention Center, Lancaster, Pa.**

Why the change? The original date posted by the Mid Atlantic District Events Team turns out to conflict with the Sweet Adelines International (SAI) Convention, says M-AD EVP Dennis Ritchey.

He also tells us, "The M-AD Board of Directors understands there are many people in our District who participate in SAI. Therefore having the 2016 Mid-Atlantic District Fall Convention on October 21-22, 2016 would present a hardship for chapters and families.

"Therefore the M-AD Board of Directors authorized a change to the date of our 2016 Mid-Atlantic District Fall Convention to **September 16-17, 2016**. The Board action was required because the M-AD Fall Convention Regulation states the District Convention *should be held no earlier than the last weekend in September and no later than the last weekend in October*. The new date selection was based on the limited availability of dates at venues suitable to hold the District Convention.

"Please be sure to make note of the 2016 convention date change to September 16-17, 2016 and the location to Lancaster. PA. The Events Team apologizes for any inconvenience this change may cause to our District members."

Spring Prelims Mixed Harmony Festival Youth Adjudications

April 15-17, 2016

This year, the Mid-Atlantic District will host FOUR events during our Spring Convention:

The **International Quartet Prelims** (as usual), the **Senior Quartet Competition** (as usual), the second annual **Mixed Harmony Quartet Festival**, AND the **Youth In Harmony Adjudications!**

For Quartets that would like to sign up for the Prelims & Seniors contest, see the latest information [here](#). Contest Registration deadline is March 13th.

For Mixed Voice Quartets, registration deadline for M-AD quartets is midnight, Monday, February 15, 2016.

Non-MAD quartet entries will be added to the "wait list" and will be notified of acceptance after March 16, 2016.

All quartet entries will be added on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information about the Mixed Harmony Quartet Festival, see our [Facebook page](#).

Download the [Registration Form here](#).

View the [Contest Guidelines](#).

Convention Info	Location	Contestant Entry Deadline	Program Book Ads Deadline
Spring Intl. Qt. Prelims - Apr 15-16, 2016	Reading, PA	Mar 13	Apr 2
Senior Quartet Competition	Reading, PA	Mar 13	Apr 1
Mixed Harmony Festival - Apr 15-16, 2016	Reading, PA	MAD-Q Feb 15 Wait list Mar 16	Apr 1
Youth Adjudication - Apr 16, 2016	Reading, PA	Apr 2	Apr 1
Central Division - May 13-14, 2016	Harrisburg, PA	Apr 15	Apr 30
Southern Division - May 27-28, 2016	Reston, VA	Apr 27	May 14
Northern Division - Jun 3-5, 2016	Cherry Hill, NJ	May 5	May 21
Fall District - Sep 16-18, 2016	Lancaster, PA	Aug 16	Sep 3



Walter L. Griffith Jr
M-AD VP Events

Join us in Lancaster

Sept. 16-18

Fall District Convention



by Roger Tarpy,
VP Music & Performance

DISTRICT COACHES

The following is a list of the official MAD District Coaches to date. I want to thank these men for being willing to share their considerable talents by becoming a District Coach.

- Dave Ammirata
- Jeff Glemboski

MAS

Most everyone knows that MAD subsidizes a coaching program (called the Musical Assistance Service – MAS) that serves both quartets and chapters. It has been very ably managed, for many years, by its coordinator Chuck Lower.

The idea is that a quartet or chorus arranges to meet with a coach of their choosing, after which Chuck reimburses the coach, up to \$75, for expenses.

Thanks to this District initiative, many groups have received some wonderful coaching.

Quality Performance is your #1 public relations tool

Impress the guests with your good singing, and make sure this happens at your public performances.

I've recently reviewed some material that BHS published on recruiting new members. According to their research,

- 54% of the new members joined because someone asked them
- 33% joined because they saw or heard a barbershop performance.

So much for all the money we spend on newspaper ads, radio and TV commercials, and grocery store posters. If we wish to recruit new members, apparently we need to ask them personally or confront directly them by singing for them.

(Just in case your publicity guy is feeling unappreciated, however, BHS does note that ads in the local media may well serve to raise awareness about our hobby, so don't give up on them entirely).

Anyone who has read articles in the *Mid'L Antics* over the past few years can surely guess that one persistent theme – *the greatest imperative for any chorus is to sing and perform at a high level* – applies quite directly to the issue of recruitment.

The first thing to recognize about recruiting is that the music is important. Think for a moment about the 54% who arrive at your rehearsal doorstep because they were asked by one of your members. They surely don't see your group simply as a vehicle for socializing. The primary "business" of the group is singing, and, presumably, that's why they attended your meeting and not that of a bowling league. What about the 33% who arrive at your rehearsal because they heard you sing in public? Same story. They obviously have an interest in singing (and were sufficiently impressed with your performance) or else they wouldn't bother showing up.

OK, they're interested in music, but do we have a say as to whether these folks return on the following week? Sure we do. I'm guessing that all of them, especially the good musicians and thus the more desirable candidates, are *much* more likely to vanish forever if we sing poorly.

So ... the best way to grow membership is simple and incontrovertible: *Impress the guests with your good singing, and make sure this happens at your public performances.*

That being said, here are a few BHS guidelines that will help us accomplish this latter goal more effectively.

First, the optimal situation for singing in public is when the audience members are sitting down and they're there explicitly to hear you. Sure, the performance may occur after a dinner has been served, or in an area that's been set aside from an otherwise unsuitable environment such as a local carnival, but sitting down and listening to you constitute the minimum conditions for giving a good show.

Second, the gig must allow you to sing at your best – on risers, with a full and balanced chorus (as opposed to "whoever can make it"), and in uniform. Anything less means that you'll not only deter a potential member from attending your next rehearsal, but also that you'll promote the general belief that barbershop singing isn't anything to admire.

If you can't meet these two fundamental requirements for a sing out then, according to BHS, you probably shouldn't be doing the gig at all – nothing really positive is likely to result from doing such a show. But, if you do meet these criteria, then your chances to make a good impact on potential members, as well as the general public, are enhanced.

Here are a few additional points to keep in mind.

- **Don't sing ballads.** Sure we love them, but most audiences don't have the intense focus that's required to appreciate a good barbershop ballad. Unless it's done exceptionally well, singing a barbershop ballad runs the risk of sounding very dated and even hokey.
- **Don't sing your "contest set" expecting that your audience members really care that you competed with these songs last Spring.** All that stuff is your priority, not theirs.
- **Involve the audience in a sing-a-long using familiar tunes.** This gives them a chance to engage in our hobby (sort of) and it provides you an opportunity to see which men are singing with gusto -- potential Barbershoppers!
- **Keep the patter to a minimum and make sure it's fast-paced.** Be careful about telling jokes; barbershop "in-jokes" are, of course, the worst.
- **Tell the audience about our hobby, but keep it brief.** Say it's an American musical art form, sung a cappella, scored in four parts, and maybe use a Barberpole Cat to illustrate, but do not bore them with details.
- **If you want to make a pitch, then stress that barbershop is easy and fun, and that the guys on stage are amateur musicians who can make terrific music when singing together.**
- **Above all, make sure that the music is, indeed, terrific.**

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Each of the more than 800 U.S. chapters of the Barbershop Harmony Society is a stand-alone not-for-profit charitable corporation in its own right. Accordingly, our chapter officers are charged with mastering a great deal of expertise in a wide variety of administrative skills.

Each chapter is required to have a corporate charter, corporate board meetings with financial reports and minutes taken, and there are quite a number of statutory filings which must be made correctly and on time. The Society gives plenty of guidance, but we have to know what they expect.

The good news is that the Society agrees, and they make available to us their best and brightest to train us in everything we need to know. Courses are also offered in our musical craft from some of the best barbershop talent in the world.

Until a few years ago, this training was called "COTS" which stood for "Chapter Officers Training Seminars," later modified slightly to "Chapter Operations Training Seminars" to emphasize that the benefit is offered to more than just the officers.

Now we call it "Leadership Academy."

When I attended my first COTS as a student, I got into a discussion with one of the instructors about how amazing it was to be able to present the training weekend for the then (2001) low cost of only about \$125 per student which included our hotels, meals, learning materials, and instructor salaries.

"Oh, we don't get paid," he replied, and I was floored.

A gift freely given is of course more valuable than one sold for money, and that was one reason I wanted to become an instructor. When the COTS training schedule was trimmed from a weekend-long affair to a single day, I originally didn't think we could pull it off, but we did, and the cost savings was huge. This year, we are sending students to Leadership Academy for only \$45 (with an escalating price break for each additional student from the same chapter).

If you enjoy learning more about a hobby you already love, why not give it a try? There's one more session this year: **January 9, 2016 (Central) in the vicinity of Newark, Del.**

By Steve Stojowski, from Toosday Tunes, a publication of the Nassau-MidIsland Chapter, edited by Bob Heim.

FILL OUT FORM FOR LEADERSHIP ACADEMY ON NEXT PAGE, PLEASE

Number Attending	Price Per Student	Total Cost
1	\$45.00	\$45.00
2	\$42.50	\$85.00
3	\$40.00	\$120.00
4	\$37.50	\$150.00
5	\$35.00	\$175.00
6	\$32.50	\$195.00
7 or more	\$30.00	\$210.00 plus

Personal Information	Festival Application					
First Name _____	Last Name _____					
Address _____						
City _____	State _____	Zip-code _____				
Phone number _____	Email Address _____					
School Information						
School Name _____	T-shirt size	S	M	L	XL	XXL
Music Educator _____	Grade _____					
What part do you think you sing? (Circle one)	Tenor	Lead	Baritone	Bass		
\$15 Registration fee must accompany application.						
Send application to: Rick Taylor PO Box 91 Hopatcong, NJ 07843 or register & pay on-line at www.highpointharmonizers.org						

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The *Mid'l Antics* is published by the Mid-Atlantic District of the Barbershop Harmony Society. It is for and about barbershoppers in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

Editor: Roxanne Powell, 1717 Sturbridge Pl, Crofton, MD 21114; 443-454-0604; editor@midatlanticdistrict.com

NEXT DEADLINE:
Feb. 1, 2016

Want to see your name in "print?" Have you or your quartet or your chorus had an amazing barbershop experience? Tell me all about it: editor@midatlanticdistrict.com

[LIKE US ON FACEBOOK](#)

Mid-Atlantic District 2015 Leadership Academy Registration Form

DATE and LOCATION OF LEADERSHIP ACADEMY PROGRAMS:

Central: January 9, 2016, TBD, Newark, DE vicinity

Mail this form and a check covering all fees to (or E-mail the form and send a check):

Rob France, 4803 Rush Dr, Pipersville, PA 18947

(home) 215- 766-8066 rob@soundkat.com

Fee includes course materials, continental breakfast, & lunch:

	Number Attending	Price Per Student	Total Cost
	1	\$45.00	\$45.00
	2	\$42.50	\$85.00
	3	\$40.00	\$120.00
	4	\$37.50	\$150.00
	5	\$35.00	\$175.00
	6	\$32.50	\$195.00
	7 or more	\$30.00	\$210.00 plus

Those who delay registration until later than two weeks before the scheduled LA start date will pay \$45.00 per student.

NOTE: You MUST Register EACH attendee in the following spaces - by CLASS

Classes	Name(s)
President/EVP	
Secretary	
Treasurer	
Music & Performance	
Chapter Development/ Membership	
Marketing & Public Relations	
Operation/Program (SLA & CLA Only)	

Number of attendees _____ at above cost each \$ _____.

Enclosed is a check in the amount of: \$ _____

PAYMENT MUST ACCOMPANY THIS FORM. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO MID-ATLANTIC DISTRICT

Name:	Chapter:
Home Phone:	Cell phone:
Email:	Date:

HOTEL: If you need hotel accommodations please contact the LA Coordinator, and he will provide hotel information to you.

Schedule: Registration: 8:00 – 9:00 Joint session: 9:00 – 9:15 Morning session: 9:15 – 12:00
Lunch 12:00 – 1:00 Combined sessions - 1:00-2:00 Afternoon sessions: 2:00 – 4:00
Closing: 4:00-4:15

6 reasons your chapter should host the next Division Convention:

1. you get to see *what really goes on* behind the curtain
2. you get *up close and personal* with quartets, choruses, judges
3. you can look important with a *walkie-talkie!*
4. closing doors in people's faces is *power!*
5. so is waving a *hush!* sign
6. And did we mention you get **PAID** for having all this fun? Yep. **\$\$\$** in your treasury.

Contact Walter Griffith, **NOW**, to tell him your chapter is ready to meet this challenge — and have all this fun!

imabari1@aol.com

**See you
(and your walkie-talkies)
in
Harrisburg, Reston,
Cherry Hill or Lancaster
in 2016!**



How about that!

By Bob Heim, Editor, Toosday Tunes, monthly publication of the Nassau Mid-Island Chapter

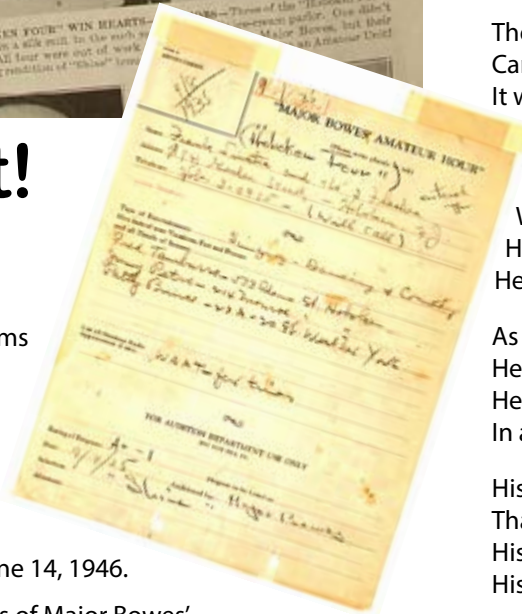
Major Bowes Amateur Hour, radio's best known talent show was one of the most popular programs broadcast in the 1930s and 1940s. It was created and hosted by Edward Bowes (1874–1946), who in his 50s became a national celebrity known as Major Bowes.

The show was broadcast on the CBS Radio Network from its inception in 1934 until Major Bowes' death on his seventy-second birthday, June 14, 1946.

In 1935, the first year of radio network broadcasts of Major Bowes' Amateur Hour, more than thirty thousand acts auditioned for the talent contest program. One of the successful acts (see application, pictured) was the Hoboken Four.

The vocal quartet auditioned as Frank Sinatra and the 3 Flashes, but was renamed, purportedly by Major Bowes himself.

The act won the competition of the September 8, 1935, broadcast and joined one of Major Bowes's traveling vaudeville units. Sinatra soon left the tour to strike out on his own.



Twas the Night (Barbershop Version)

Twas the night of the concert, and all through the quartet
Not a singer was singing: It wasn't show time yet!
The uniforms hanging, the makeup in sight,
The mics had been tested for later that night.

The bass was pacing and kept checking the time.
The lead was meditating, "I'm so sublime. I'm so sublime. I'm so..."
The tenor was writing their yearly Christmas letter.
The bari was wearing a real ugly sweater.

When, later, the curtain was ready to rise
Everyone backstage got quite a surprise.
The sound barrier broke, as in mortal combat;
The risers vibrated (of course, in B-flat).

Then a barbershop judge (with the telltale red face)
Came crashing a sleigh through the roof of the place.
It was pulled by the strangest octet ever seen
Wearing antlers and costumes from 1913.

He looked to be eighty-eleven or so
With ears that drooped down to his portly torso.
He was bent and he limped, any moment he'd fall;
He'd been drinking cheap wine mixed with stale Geritol.

As you'd guess he moved slow, like molasses in a freezer.
He epitomized clearly the concept of "geezer".
He was dressed like a bum, out of style years ago
In a burgundy sweat suit and sneaks with Velcro.

His shoulders were covered in white stuff like snow
That fell from above, but it was dandruff, you know.
His nose was grotesque, his glasses were busted,
His chapped lips were bleeding, his dentures looked rusted.

With eyesight and hearing and cognition departed,
He coughed and he gagged and he spit and he farted.
A malodorous aura surrounded his body,
As if he'd just emptied last year's porta-potty.

He had five or six piercings for studs in one ear
And his sweat pants hung way down south of his rear.
He was trying for "cool", but it was funny and sad.
Nobody'd be proud to call this man "Dad."

Both hands shook, one eye twitched, and his hair was odd colors.
His speech indicated he was duller than dullards.
He mumbled his words as if swallowing fudge
But who really cared what he said? He's a judge!

But a shock then ensued: he bore presents galore
(apparently contrite from the last contest score).
A pitch pipe, four derbies, and eight shoes with a spat.
An "Old School" CD? Even Santa can't do that!

GPS for the van and a gasoline card,
Four bottles of Scope and four cans of Right Guard,
Beef jerky and cheese, some Mylanta and Tums,
And Advil for when the next hangover comes.

There's a Tim Waurick learning track, (How he rumbles and squeals!)
And a free weekend of coaching, including sixty meals.
Here's a book that explains all that barbershop theory.
And four six-packs of Yuengling to make it more cheery.

Now, if you give him some holiday benefit of doubt,
If you're not jealous of his BHS clout,
If you ignore how he acts, and his looks, sound, and smell,
This dude is OK. Heck, this guy is swell!

Well, he jumped in his sleigh and told his octet, "Let's go!
We can prob'ly be first at tonight's afterglow."
Then the curtain went up (you know the show couldn't dally)
And the audience thought they were seeing the finale.

'Cause the man and his crew and the quartet and all
Joined in to sing as the sleigh left the hall.
They blended four parts, so sweet and so right,
"Merry Christmas to all, and to all
A good night, good night, good night, good night.....
To all, to all, to all, all, all..... a good.....
Good night!"

(Bari: Hey, let's sing that tag again!)

(Bass: OK, but match my vowels this time!)

(Tenor: We could move it up a half!)



— By Kurt Lemmert, Lead of Twang!