

The Pitch Piper

76 YEARS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY

OVER 714,089 SQUARE MILES

Volume 77, Number 5

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District November-December 2024

LO'L District's

Christmas Pitches

IN THIS EDITION:

LO'L LTA information



"The Guy Can Do"
featuring Lowell Bennes





Pitch Piper

The *Pitch Piper* is published bi-monthly by the Land O' Lakes District Association of Chapters of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.

Land O' Lakes Chapters are situated in the states of Minnesota, North Dakota, and Wisconsin, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario.

Office of Publication

Editor: Nate Peplinski

127 Rose St. N, West Salem, WI 54669
(715) 498-1198

Email: pitchpiper@loldistrict.org

Send address changes to: Pitch Piper, c/o SPEBSQSA Inc., 110 7th Avenue N., Nashville, TN 37203-3704. **All correspondence or copy should be sent to the editor.**

Land O' Lakes District Officers



President

Mike Lietke

3953 S. Camrose Ave.
New Berlin, WI 53151
(262) 893-0001
mikelietke@hotmail.com



Treasurer

Jack Edgerton

1804 Conant St.
Stevens Point, WI 54481
(715) 344-5746 or
(715) 340-3221
ragtime75bbs@gmail.com



Director Events

Jay Althof

4671 Lake Ave.
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
(651) 206-2686
althof@aol.com



Executive Vice President

Nate Peplinski

127 Rose St. N,
West Salem, WI 54669
(715) 498-1198
starquarterback14@yahoo.com



Director Chapter Support & Development

Jim Rasmus

1446 Gunnell Ln
Manitowoc, WI 54220
(920) 973-0010
pjras20@gmail.com



Director Contest & Judging

James Estes

(650) 686-1080
dir-cj@loldistrict.org



Immediate Past President

Jay Althof

4671 Lake Ave.
White Bear Lake, MN 55110
(651) 206-2686
althof@aol.com



District VP - East Region

Mike Ziegler

438 Sunset Dr.
Plymouth, WI 53073
(920) 918-7917
pjras20@gmail.com



Secretary

Bob Brey

1411 S. 31st St.
Manitowoc, WI 54220
(920) 973-4472
rbwrey1950@gmail.com



District VP - West Region

Justin McCullough

1939 50th St. S.
Fargo, ND 58103
(701) 640-3224
jumccull@gmail.com



Land O' Lakes District – State of The District



Dec. 26, 2024

Hopefully your Holiday Season brought you a lot of joy, continued health, and music.

Many chapters have held performances and shows, including ours. What a great opportunity each year to show our communities what we do best!

Rolling into 2025, there is an exciting trend we are noticing from Harmony Hall: though they have always been willing to do what they could to make Barbershop accessible and inviting to more singers, it seems that they are now doing that by dipping into the vast talents

of the membership for our best ideas on the subjects.

Three BHS projects come to mind:

The staff understands that call response times are sometimes lengthy and aggravating even to get simple answers. It is difficult to adequately staff for that in light of tight budgets. This said, Harmony Hall is trying to get a group of member volunteers to grab some of the hours that are unstaffed.

They will train people on the answers people are asking (over 80% of call time is regarding subjects listed in the FAQ section of the society website) and will happily accept any time you might devote to that cause. I believe I alluded to this in a prior article, and will be



glad to direct you to the right contacts if this sounds good to you.

You may have taken part in a survey that is attempting to define the “Brand” that is Barbershop music. Focus groups

(of which I was a part) listened to what it means to be in this great community of great musical people. From this has come a direction that you will hear a lot about shortly into the new year.

Part of the idea with the “Brand” definition is that all of our members should be able to use the verbiage that support it to describe our hobby to new people (ie potential singers, audience members, supporters...).

Our own Jay Althof has been working on a proposed new method of dues payment to modernize the way BHS is funded. There have been others working with him, and now BHS is ready to pilot a program based on some of the pillar ideas.

Here’s how it is proposed: there are three tiers based on membership of a chapter. Take the example of a large tier.

A. BHS will halve the amount of BHS portion of dues for members of the chapter. This would take full dues from \$180 down to \$90 for the year.

B. The Chapter would pay BHS \$6,000. (Lesser member-number tiers would pay at a smaller tier price point than the \$6000.)

It does not matter how that \$6,000 is raised. The

chapter could take it from chapter coffers; it could split it among the members - and still save the members money; they could have members who donate to the chapter pick up the cost. Many ways to skin the cat.

I am certain that the volunteer chapters will figure out what makes the most sense in their situations for making up the \$6,000 - and if it goes forward as a program, we will all learn from it. Regardless, the idea is that you take a lot of the bite out of the International dues portion of our dues for individuals. This should make membership more appealing by removing more of the cost barriers inherent to our sport.



I am currently in the process of speaking with some of our chapters who might benefit most from this experiment for 2025. Jay, Nate Peplinski and I have met to figure out who those first chapters might be.

Look for more information as we get it. 2025 will be a year of change. Let’s all work together to make it change for the better.

Yer Prez, Mike

LEADERSHIP WITH LARRY

Leaders don’t get the privilege of dealing with “should.”
Leaders have to deal with “is.”



CHAPTER SUPPORT REPORT

Jim Rasmus, VP of Chapter Support (pjas@gmail.com)



Here's wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! A great way to start out your barbershop New Year would be to attend the **Leadership Training Academy, January 10-11**, in River Falls! Larry Lewis and I will lead conversations on "Successful Visioning For Your Chapter" and "Reaching Out to New Members."

Justin McCullough (West Region) and Mike Ziegler (East Region) are currently seeking some new **District Liaisons**. If you would like to take on a new role as a communicator between the District and two Chapters in your area, please contact them. You can also just email me and I'll pass your interest along.

Larry and I have now completed three **Visioning Retreats**, and the District's fourth one will be done in Mankato in early January. This is an opportunity to survey the members of your Chapter and engage them in a three-hour conversation to develop goals to help your Chapter move forward toward growing in whatever way that will be beneficial. Contact me, or check out the information on the website (link below).

Once again, I remind you that **LOL Grants will continue in 2025!**

- **Chapter Show Grants** subsidize registered District Quartets to perform at your show for up to \$750 per Chapter per year.
- **Chapter Development Grants** provide up to \$1,000 per Chapter per year to help you promote yourselves in your community or provide resources for creative projects to help your Chorus in your musical development.

For more information about these and any other resources, go to the LOL website: <https://loldistrict.org/lol-grants-and-programs>. While you're there check out the resources that have been generated by the chapter development efforts of your brothers and sisters in harmony across the LOL and BHS! There are also numerous other files to support officers and others in their important tasks of leading their Chapters! We are constantly adding more ideas and programs from around the LOL and BHS, so check back there often.

PLEASE reach out to me if you have ideas to share or questions we can explore together! Be well!!

If you or anyone you know would like to receive the *Pitch Piper* in good old-fashioned print form, contact any board member or email pitchpiper@loldistrict.org



2025 LOL LEADERSHIP TRAINING ACADEMY (LTA)

JANUARY 10 & 11, 2025

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - RIVER FALLS

- Reasonable rates for LTA at two local hotels (Radisson and Country Inn)
- Tuition: \$75 for LOL singers & \$90 for those outside the LOL District
(Includes: 2 meals on Friday & 2 meals on Saturday)

EDUCATIONAL & FUN CLASSES FOR EVERY BARBERSHOPPER

- New ideas from experts, Amy Rose, Donny Rose (HFI) & Steve Scott (BHS)
- Friday night session on "The Barbershop Belt" with Sarah Wigley (Associate Professor of Voice at the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana)
- Saturday morning core classes for Chapter Officers & Directors, plus "Barbershop Smorgasbord" activities for everyone else
- A variety of additional classes led by fellow LOL barbershoppers

A SAMPLE OF ELECTIVE CLASS TOPICS

- **Learning Better Singing & Performance Techniques**
 - Develop Your Awareness of the Tonal Center
 - Basic Vocal Pedagogy
 - You've Been Singing Barbershop Incorrectly?
 - Performance 101: What They Are Looking For
 - Swing Concepts for Barbershoppers
 - Warmups & Vocal Technique
- **Improving Communication & Supporting Our Members**
 - Staying Connected: How Technology Improves Chorus Culture
 - Unlock the Power of Communication - Lead, Inspire and Engage
 - Reaching Out to New Members
 - Supporting Senior Singers
 - The Truth About Social Media
 - Successful Visioning for Your Chapter
 - Lost Singers - What You Can Do About It



REGISTRATION

- Check with your chapter President or Secretary
- Go to the District website: www.loldistrict.org
- Email **Brian Schultz** at SchultzBrian.LTA@gmail.com



LTA Student Schedule

11:30 – 12:20 pm - Lunch – Riverside Commons

CLASS # CLASS TITLE INSTRUCTOR ROOM

Friday Jan 10, 2025

12:30 – 1:50 pm - 80 Minutes classes

10101 You've Been Singing Wrong This Whole Time

Steve Scott

10102 Directing 101: For The Novice Scott Perau

10103 Swing Concepts for Barbershoppers Donny Rose

10104 Reaching Out To New Members Jim Rasmus/L

Lewis

10105 A NextGen Playbook Justin La/Jay Fahl

10106 How to Grab An Audience/Show Themes Bill Fricke

Friday Jan 10, 2025

2:05 – 3:25 pm - 80 Minute Classes

10201 Lost Singers - What You Can Do About It Steve Scott

10202 Basic Vocal Pedagogy Scott Perau

10203 Rehearsal Techniques for Chorus Members Donny Rose

10204 The Barbershop Paradox Nate Peplinski

10205 Ways to Improve Internal Communication Tyler Hall

10206 How to Breathe Life Into Chapter Meetings Bill Fricke

Friday Jan 10, 2025

3:40 – 5:00 pm - 80 Minute Classes

10301 Supporting Senior Singers Steve Scott/Jay Althof

10302 Warmups & Vocal Technique Scott Perau

10303 Develop Your Awareness of the Tonal Center

Donny Rose

10304 Successful Visioning For Your Chapter Jim Rasmus/L Lewis

10305 Communicating With Younger & Older Adults Justin La

10306 Performance 101: What are they looking for? Tim Milbrandt/M. Lietke

Friday Jan 10, 2025

5:00 – 5:50 pm – Dinner – Riverside Commons

Friday Jan 10, 2025

6:00 – 8:15 pm General Session & Mass Sing – Kinnic Theater

The Barbershop Belt Sarah Wigley Zoom

Saturday Jan 11, 2025

7:30 – 8:15 am Breakfast – Riverside Commons

CLASS # CLASS TITLE INSTRUCTOR ROOM

Saturday Jan 11, 2025

8:30 – 11:45 noon – Office Specific Core Classes

20101 President Jay Althof

20102 Secretary Tyler Hall

20103 Treasurer Matt Nagel/B. Schultz

20104 Membership/Chapter Development VP Jim Rasmus

20105 Music & Performance VP Donny Rose

20106 Chorus Directors/Ass't Directors Scott Perau

20107 Barbershop Smorgasbord Steve Scott/N Peplinski

Saturday Jan 11, 2025

11:45 noon – 12:30 pm Lunch – Riverside Commons

Saturday Jan 11, 2025

12:45 – 2:05 pm – 80 Minute Classes

20201 Lost Singers - What You Can Do About It Steve Scott

20202 Rehearsal Techniques for Chorus Members Donny Rose

20203 Warmups and Vocal Techniques Scott Perau

20204 Ways to Improve Internal Communication Tyler Hall

20205 How To Breathe Life Into Chapter Meetings Bill Fricke

20206 Reaching Out To New Members Jim Rasmus/L Lewis

20207 A NextGen Playbook Justin La/Jay Fahl

Saturday Jan 11, 2025

2:20 – 3:40 pm – 80 Minute Classes

20301 Supporting Senior Singers Steve Scott/Jay Althof

20302 Chorus Repertoire: Share Session Scott Perau

20303 Swing Concepts for Barbershoppers Donny Rose

20304 Successful Visioning For Your Chapter Jim Rasmus/L Lewis

20305 Communicating With Younger & Older Adults Justin La

20306 How to Grab An Audience/Show Themes Bill Fricke

20307 Performance 101: What are they looking for? Tim Milbrandt/M. Lietke

Saturday Jan 11, 2025

3:45 – 4:00 pm Closing Session – Kinnic Theater

Drive Home Safely!



NEXT
GENERATION
BARBERSHOP

2025 Youth in Harmony Festival

www.nextgenwi.org

100% PURE A CAPPELLA. NO TRACKS. NO AUTOTUNE. NO INSTRUMENTS.

Youth In Harmony Festival of Western WI is a one day Festival held in January for young men and women grades 6 through college. We sing in the Barbershop style and introduce the kids to close 4 part harmony.

INCLUDES Shirt, Lunch, Snack, Music & Learning Tracks

Free Public Concert at 4:30pm

Cost \$15.00 | Saturday - January 25, 2025 | Amery Wisconsin High School

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN (Individuals and Groups Welcome)

GUEST CLINICIANS



Jay Althof - Jay has been singing barbershop harmony his whole life and has been a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society for 39 years. He is currently the Artistic Director for the Croix Chordsmen from Stillwater, MN and loves sharing his experience and talents with such a fun group of men.

Many of you will recognize Jay as the tenor of Vocality, a Land O' Lake District champion and Hall of Fame quartet www.vocalityquartet.com. Jay recently completed three years as President of the Land O' Lakes District and received the Barbershopper Of The Year Award for 2023.



Brandon Galbraith - Brandon graduated from U of M Twin Cities with a degree in music education. In addition to the Valley de Croix Sweet Adelines he also directs two choruses in the Barbershop Harmony Society; the North Star Chorus, from Saint Paul, MN and International Medalist Chorus, the Great Northern Union.

He sings lead/baritone with his quartet Mixed Meter. Brandon has previously directed the annual NW Wisconsin Youth in Harmony Festival which attracts over 100 youths interested in singing. In addition to his barbershop singing, Brandon sings at Hamline Church United Methodist in St. Paul as a tenor section leader and works producing learning tracks for area groups.



Upbeat Quartet - Upbeat is an award winning a capella quartet from the Twin Cities. Their members are Karla Kalway (tenor), Val Salley (lead), Bonnie Plumley (baritone), and JoAnn Flanagan (bass).

They are all members of the City of Lakes Chorus of Sweet Adelines International and are the 2022 Northern Lights Region 6 Bonze medalists. Mostly, they are four great friends who love the opportunity to sing together and share their harmonies with you!



www.nextgenwi.org (651) 202-6056



District Directory NEEDS YOU!

District Directory Needs You...

MEMBERS!! We need you...Please make sure your contact information is up-to-date on the Barbershop Harmony Society website. If you have any issues, BHS has great resources to assist, or connect with your Chapter Secretary. This also helps to make sure Chapter Officers/Chorus/Quartet contact information is at hand and easier to update in District Directory when necessary.

CHAPTERS!! We need you...Chapter Officer updates in the BHS website is needed prior to January 1st so your Chapter can continue having easy access to the BHS website and updating your members information or add new members.

Please also make sure the contact information for your Officers are correct and complete. You can also send your updated Chapter Officer information to Angie Williams (District Directory) and Tyler Hall (District Secretary) who will update our District Directory.

CHORUSES!! We need you...Updating rehearsal locations, day & times, Chorus contact information, as well as any Director information is key.

QUARTETS!! We especially need you...We've found that a lot of our Quartet contact information is outdated, and we'd really like to have your Quartets listed in our District Directory. Please make sure your Quartets are updated on the BHS website and email the current contact information to Angie and Tyler for the District Directory updates.

Angie Williams, District Directory, Angie7267@gmail.com

Tyler T. Hall, District Secretary, secretary@loldistrict.org



ANYONE CAN GO TO LEADERSHIP ACADEMY!

submitted by Tom Arneberg

I am writing a quick article to tell you about my experience with the LOL LTA (Leadership Training Academy) last year. I hadn't been to a district educational weekend for decades, but thought I'd give it a try as a Joe Barbershopper *even though I'm not a chapter officer*.

I wasn't sure what to expect, but I loved it!

The first class I took was called Basic Vocal Pedagogy, by Scott Perau. This guy has a master's degree in vocal music education, and is a district champ quartet singer as well as the director of The Journeymen. He did an amazing job of explaining how vocal production works, and I remember thinking that I could've left after that first class alone and it would've been well worth it.

We also heard from Joe Cerutti, about how he integrated the Alexandria Harmonizers into his community in Virginia. There was an interesting class on



the changing demographics of barbershoppers. And I really enjoyed the General Sessions where we learned a new song from scratch. Above all, it was great to eat with and sing with fellow barbershoppers that I had never met before. I went to this all alone, but was never lonely.



And all this for only \$75, which includes all the meals. Register by December 30 – see you there!



TAKE THE COACH TO THE CHAPTER

Judd Orff

Have you ever wished you could get an outside opinion on how your chorus is doing, how the new songs are coming along or need a little polish on show songs? The District has provided a resource for you that will answer all your questions.



It will cost you \$0.00.

The ADC has given me a list of coaches, from their ranks, that are willing to come and coach your chorus. You need to pick a date and tell what your needs are. The coach will come to you and help answer questions about a single issue or more than one. **THE DISTRICT WILL PAY THE COACH'S MILEAGE AND LODGING IF NECESSARY.**

If there is a fee for the coaching or meals, the chapter needs to pay that.

All you need to do is contact me (juddorff3108@msn.com or 651-262-9843) and let me know what you would like as far as coaching and a date or two that works for your chorus. I will contact a coach and get it set up.

Don't be shy. Fill up my inbox!!

Juddorff3108@msn.com or text 651-262-9843



The Guy Can Do—Lowell Bennes

By Brent Gerber

I was in my early twenties when I joined the FM Ambassador chorus in Fargo. It was my first exposure to an active, active chapter. We sang out a lot, we held annual shows in front of audiences of 3-5,000 people (that's not a misprint). And we had very active programs including a lot of quartet promotion.

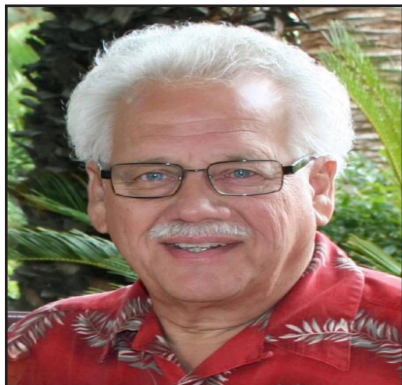
It was from those activities that I became curious about who this guy with the beautiful bass voice named Lowell Bennes was. I sang a few tags with him and soon Lowell, Ron Judisch (another now deceased member of the Fargo Chorus) and a friend of mine from college, Phil Vanyo started singing in a quartet—the Broadway Edition. (Later, Mark McLaurin joined in the Vocal Parade quartet.)

"Can we learn a song for the show?" I asked.

"Sure we can," said Lowell. And we did.

It wasn't easy; the learning process was slow in those days. But we did it. And Lowell never wavered. We wondered about competition. "Sure we can," was Lowell's response. And we competed in the Red Carpet Division contest. We also did a chapter show or two. We had lots of fun and got to know each other well through travels to all of these events and other chorus activities. The truth is that Lowell was a very big part of my early barbershop days.

Later, became the director of the Great Plains Harmony Chorus and my relationship with Lowell now centered around the technical production elements of our shows. Lowell took care of sound and lighting



for our shows and Gary Jacobson and I took care of writing scripts that were often rather technically challenging.

I remember Gary's 28 foot skeleton that needed to slowly be exposed during the song "Dry Bones". I used a lot of recorded sound effects, placed quartets and actors in unusual places within the theater. There was a time when we had to figure out how best to light the switch



from Elvis to barbershoppers in the Love Me Tender/Aura Lee Medley.

It didn't matter what goofy idea I came up with, Lowell's response to those plans was always the same. We can do that!

Eventually, Del Ryberg discovered that Lowell not only had technical skills but this "can-do" attitude. Think of how hard it is to get volunteers in any organization that you're a part of today. Lowell hardly ever said "no".

And that started decades of Lowell's involvement with District Convention activities. The number of hours he would put in during a contest weekend was staggering. He was a worker!!!

Lowell also assisted the District by teaching the Treasurer course at Chapter Officer Training School for many years. And he was qualified



because he was in the accounting business for over 50 years. He finally sold his practice when he turned 80! Did I mention that he was a worker?

But to limit a description of Lowell to show tech and accounting doesn't even scratch the surface of who Lowell was.

I recall a conversation with Lowell's first wife, Marlene, during a trip to Dickinson, ND to sing a chapter show. I asked Marlene how she and Lowell got together. She told me that they were high school sweethearts and that everyone new "the saxophone player from Fertile, MN with the broad shoulders and skinny butt."

Lowell and Marlene raised two boys that are fine men and of whom they were very proud. When Marlene passed away far too young of cancer, Lowell met Sheryl and, side by side, they worked and lived a full life. (In and outside of barbershop.) For those of you who attend

conventions, you have no doubt had interaction with Sheryl—she's the best. And I'm so grateful that he found someone as great as her to spend the rest of his life.

In Lowell's short retirement, he found himself landing in the kitchen as a cook at the American Legion in Moorhead, MN. I believe he cooked 2-3 nights per week. Again—he loved to work.

Lowell loved his families. His barbershop family, his Legion family, his campground family and of course his biological family.

Now let's pause for a moment of full-disclosure. Not all of those complicated technical plans we had actually came off without a hitch. And sometimes the dress rehearsals turned into marathons. There were equipment issues. Sometimes he forgot the words or his notes in the quartet. Not everything always went smoothly.

But you know what happened when things didn't go well? Nothing serious. Lowell shook it off and went on to the next thing. He didn't back away, he didn't become more selective with his projects. He smiled, packed up his cords, lights, microphones and risers and waited for the next time he could say, "we can do that!"

So, what can we learn from Lowell? I hope that message is pretty clear by now. Work hard. Love your families. And approach everything with an unending can-do attitude.

I will think of Lowell so often in the months to come just like of so many other of my barbershop heroes. I'll think of him when I hear a microphone squeal. I'll remember his Norwegian brogue, (What "meashure" are we on?)

But I am so grateful to him for cementing my own barbershop experiences and for just being my friend for 50 years. God Bless the memory of Lowell Bennes.



Ticket Sales In A Rut? Try *Not Charging*

Donation-model ticketing can increase both your show's revenue and audience over time

By Bryan Ziegler

Last year, Madison's **Capitol Chordsmen** were looking to shake up our model of show revenue. Like many chapters, we had experienced smaller audiences and more reluctant advertisers in the post-Covid era, and also like many chapters, we were looking for new ways to both expand our show revenues and limit our expenses.

On the urging of members **Ole Anderson** and **Lowell Peck**, we took on a model that they had reported drew success in the **Oshkosh** chapter: Rather than charging a set ticket price, we would allow entry for a simple goodwill donation. Some gave more, some gave less, and in the end our spring 2024 show ended up with roughly similar attendance-based revenues (ticket revenue vs. donation revenue) to our previously ticketed shows - but with more than double the audience.

**REVENUES
HAVE NEARLY
DOUBLED**

The benefit to our members was primarily in losing the pressure to sell tickets. Members felt they could talk about the show in more situations without the need to press ticket sales on the spot. We also offloaded the work of organizing, printing, and collecting tickets, negotiating group sales, and "box office" labor, replacing it with one person in charge of simply watching the donation bucket, greeting and thanking our patrons for their attendance and donations.

The long-term strategy was that some folks would be convinced to attend on the basis that there was no entry cost, then be so impressed that they would either choose to donate after the show, or be convinced to come to the next show and donate. Our Christmas 2024 show (a first for our chapter!) saw the **revenues** from donation **nearly double**, and the audience continued to grow as well.

In future shows, we're looking to add a QR code to our show program, which will facilitate easier donation both during and after the show. We're looking forward to continuing the experi-

ADC SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Did you know that the Association of District Champions has scholarships available for quartets or individuals?

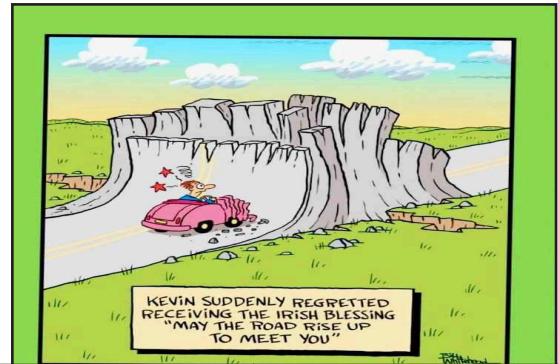
Scholarships for what, you ask?

Contact Leonard Huls at lensingstenor@gmail.com



unlabeled editor's notes

- My wife asked me the other day where I got so much candy. I said, "I always have a few Twix up my sleeve."
- If you think someone would be deserving of a feature in this publication, contact pitchpiper@loldistrict.org or Tim Milbrandt at tjmilbrandt@gmail.com.
- Where do pirates get their hooks? Second hand stores.
- Many thanks to the Pitch Piper staff: Tim Milbrandt, Brian Plehn, Brent Frankenhoff, Angie Williams, Tom Arneberg, as well as Todd Smith, and Bob and Bill Fricke.
- Competitive weightlifting is precisely so difficult because others set the bar too high.
- If you need learning tracks, check out www.choraltracks.com.
- What do you call a line of men waiting to get haircuts? A barberqueue.
- Get involved. Even if it's only thirty minutes every six months, that's still helping. Ben, I'm talking to you.
- The CB code for Urgent Business is 10-17. There. Now that's something you know.
- What do you call a beehive without an exit? Unbelievable.
- If I ever find the doctor who screwed up my limb replacement surgery...I'll kill him with my bear hands.



Thought I'd be trendy and try one of these 'Alternative milks'.



I don't know what a magnesia is, but it made my Cheerios taste horrible.



- Email for submissions is pitchpiper@loldistrict.org
- Reminder Choruses get show posters in for free!
- Reminder to quartets that ad space is available!

- Check out the website! www.loldistrict.org
- Special note of sponsorship to Matt Curtis and www.choraltracks.com



Choral Tracks

Practice Made Simple



Seven Habits of Procrastinating People

Nate Peplinski, Executive Vice President



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

SAVE THE DATE!!!!



Manitowoc County Chapter of Barbershoppers
80th Annual Show!

Two Shows:

Fri., April 11, 2025 @ 7pm

Sat., April 12, 2025 @ 2pm

***Tickets go on Sale
January, 2025***

Franciscan Center for
Music Education and Performance
6751 Calumet Ave., Manitowoc





Bo Gibson, Hero.

Submitted by Jim Franklin

Barbershop lost a friend and hero to many last summer. Bo Gibson passed Aug 10, 2024, at age 89.

A Celebration of Life was held Aug 26, where many BBS friends sang Irish Blessing. To honor and remember him, let's start with something Mike Lietke wrote to Greendale chapter members and family (edited):

"I never knew anybody to call him John in 35+ years of acquaintance. He was always Bo or Bobo. Bo drove a series of Saab cars with a Kmosabe vanity plate. Bo was funny. Bo was true. Bo was talented.

Along with Dennis Stern and Harry Hanson, Bo was a tremendous influence and mentor to me when I came to Milwaukee to attend Marquette. MU was Bo's alma mater, although I am certain his academic achievements were remarkably questionable.

When I asked what he majored in, he said, "Gin Rummy and watching the pretty girls. I was the only 8th Semester Sophomore on Campus."

Bo was a bon vivant, especially in singing circles. Never a tall man, and with a full voice tenor, he would tell stories of borrowing a car to bomb down to Chicago #1 chapter and sing with Buzz Haeger, Ray Henders, and all of the greats of yore in the (g)old days. Often, Bo said that they would stay up singing, tagging and woodshedding until the sun came up, and he would then gambol back to Milwaukee just in time to miss his first morning class.

He cared about his friends and family, and showed many of us young

'uns the way to be a great; you would have thought he had won again himself.

Starting in 1955, Bo began his championship ways. Three other MU guys and he formed the *Marqsmen*, and won the LO'L championship. The University heard of their win, and gave them snappy (and fairly expensive) suitcases for their singing travels with the MU logo on it.

Next district win was the *Fanfares* (great name) in 1965. For 3 years running, they earned their way into the top 10 at International. This made him the only member of the MVE until Bryan Ziegler to have that distinction.

He then won (again) in 1978 with *Sound Gallery*. For a very long time, he was the only man to win 3 LO'L District Championships in a quartet.

He delighted when the MVE started on our ascent in the late 80's and simply beamed when we had a hit set.

Bo had the old vaudeville feel to him, and loved to resurrect the jokes that sustained for over a hundred years. He was with Ron Schilling, Dick Grahn and Frank Marzacco in *Shear Delight* for many years (likely the busiest quartet in the country doing local gigs)... And carried that on to *Easy Days*, whose members (with Frank) included Dick Riege, Bill Kilbourne, Dennis Monroe, Jim Ansay and now Matt Nagel... Heck, I even did a couple of gigs with them. Once I was called fifteen minutes before they started because of an illness. I told them I did not know their rep...

Bo said, "Don't worry, this is for the 93rd birthday of this lady. Sing what you know and look cute and she'll be amazed."

His groups were on national TV. They opened for Russell Crowe's band (and he sang with them). To me, Bo embodied what I have held dear in the MVE.

Just wish I could sing one more with Bo.

Guessing that Bo is happy to put on his robe and wings, and once again sing the most honking full voice tenor in the heavens."

-Mike Lietke

Comments written and overheard about Bo:

Dave: He was a true entertainer and could have the audience in the palm of his hands no matter the occasion.

Randy: His incredibly positive, non-judgmental approach resonated with me, and was truly inspirational.

Bryan: One of my first riser-mates. Taught me so much about being a good chorus singer and was so welcoming to a young kid. Truly one of the greats, he will be very missed!

Several lauded their experiences with the Quartet Club, started and led by Bo and a few others to give singers with little quartet experience a chance to learn independence by performing in a VLQ. The lessons learned and confidence gained lifted many into forming their first quartet.

Many, myself included, learned valuable and cherished lessons about performing and entertaining from watching and singing with Bo. Miss you, my friend.

-Jim Franklin



From “Crazy Idea” to District Champions!

Sometimes the best adventures start with what seems like a “crazy” idea. When the possibility of competing first came up, the timing didn’t look promising. But then, as if by magic, the planets aligned, and our schedules cleared. We had just enough time (barely) to get registered. Little did we know this was leading us to one of the most incredible experiences of our barbershop lives. Even now, it almost doesn’t feel real.

The entire convention weekend was nothing short of amazing! A massive thank you to Jay Althof and James Estes for the roles you played in this wildly successful convention, AND for your guidance in helping us navigate this new-to-us competition experience. Thank you to the whole convention team for keeping things organized and running smoothly. And a special shoutout to Tony Blackwood for encouraging us to do this in the first place, and for letting us use his hotel room as our “homebase” for the weekend, since by the time we were registered, the hotel was fully booked.

We know that the Land O’ Lakes District is filled with incredible people, but we were truly blown away and deeply touched by the overwhelming welcome we received from the entire district. From the moment we arrived, we were embraced as family by this amazing BHS community. As Sweet Adelines members venturing into new territory, we’ve been deeply moved by the unwavering support from both our barbershop worlds. Our Sweet Adelines friends have been our cheerleaders from day one, believing in us every step of the way. Meanwhile, our new BHS family has welcomed us with open arms, creating an atmosphere of warmth and acceptance that made this experience even more special.



Of course, none of this would be possible without our amazing support system. To all our friends – both long-time and new – your cheers, encouragement, hugs, and support filled our hearts and lifted our spirits throughout the weekend. And to our patient families, who’ve always supported our “just one night a week” hobby (wink, wink), your understanding and encouragement mean everything to us.

Huge Congratulations to all quartet and chorus competitors - especially Forward Harmony for winning the Chorus Contest! You are all awesome!! We enjoyed every performance we were lucky enough to see and were blown away by the talent. The energy and passion on stage were truly inspiring!

As your 2024 Land O’ Lakes District Quartet Champions, we are truly honored and incredibly excited about this new chapter in our barbershop journey. This whole experience has been like a dream come true, and we’re still pinching ourselves to make sure it’s real!

Thank you, Land O’ Lakes District, for turning this “crazy idea” into one of our most treasured achievements. We couldn’t be more grateful to be part of this amazing barbershop family!

- Spice, 2024 Land O’ Lakes District Quartet Champions
Angela, Heidi, Liz, Jan

Live life with a little Spice!
Email: QuartetSpice@gmail.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/QuartetSpice>
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@spicequartet>



HARMONY COLLEGE MIDWEST 2025

Featuring: 2018 International Champions
AFTER HOURS



Head Clinician:
Patrick McAlexander

Guest Quartet Lead:
Eric Dalbey



Educational Classes, HCM Chorus, Quartet Coaching, and more!

Date: March 21-22nd, 2025

Location: Doubletree by Hilton, 10 Brickyard Dr, Bloomington, IL 61701

Follow us on Facebook for additional event updates!





Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Alert!

Submitted by (HOF) David Speidel, NPHB President

Our team is working hard to get all of the pieces in place so you can register in early December for the 2025 Rally being held at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Plymouth, MN. The dates are May 2nd through May 4th. We will have 10 great musical selections to wet your whistle and all of the usual fun stuff that makes the weekend a quartetting experience bonanza. If you choose to come early, you can participate in one of the highlights of the weekend which is our journey on a chartered bus to 3 or 4 high school music programs to promote our musical art form and to enjoy performances by these great choral programs. The past 2 years Donny Rose has accompanied us and we expect that he'll be there again in 2025.

If you aren't busy with a quartet at this time, it is a great opportunity to build lasting friendships with singers from the LO'L District and beyond. We typically get 60-70 singers with many coming from all over the US. Even if you have a quartet, why not bring the whole gang up and get immersed in non-stop quartetting. You'll come away with a bunch of new music for your quartet's repertoire. It's like nothing you'll have experienced before. There won't be anyone shutting you down for singing until 3 or 4 in the morning.

In summary, the weekend includes a Friday School Music Education Program, great food, great musical charts, two random draw quartet contests, a full Saturday night show and more. If you're reluctant because of financial concerns, we have scholarships available to ease the burden. It's easy. Get 'On-Line' in early December at nphb.org and sign up for the time of your life!

CONTEST CORNER

with James Estes, DVP for Contest and Judging

Happy Holidays Land O' Lakes!! I sincerely hope everyone has gotten some time to wind down after a busy fall. We had the contest recap in last issue so let's take a bit of time to just gear up for next year!



Our very own Checkmate quartet will be singing at Midwinter convention in San Antonio at the end of January. I've heard it's a great town to visit if you want to go watch them in person, or there's always a webcast as well! Check out the BHS website for more details.

Also, if contest is your thing, now is the time to start developing habits that translate to higher scores on stage. Remember that the district has a partnership with the ADC to send **FREE COACHES** to your chapter! AND the ADC has **scholarships available** for quartet schools like HCM or Harmony University, and individuals are considered as well. See www.loldistrict.com and www.loladc.com

-James




Lakefront Quartet
Max, Dylan, Derek & Brian

Call/Text: 414-708-3573

Follow us!
@lakefront_qt



Jeff Paul
Ken Ryan

**RANSOM
NOTES
QUARTET**

(701) 799-8665
ransomnotes@myyahoo.com Facebook: Ransom Notes Quartet



JAY TONY BEN TOM

VOCALITY
classic a cappella sound

www.vocalityquartet.com 651-206-2686

CHORD SMASH!

Sam Sather, Erik Eliason, James Estes, Scott Perau

info@chordsmash.com
715-461-0318




CHECKMATE

A Winning Combination of Music in the Barbershop Style!

Contact: Harry Hanson 2020 Grange Ave. Racine WI
Phone: 262-498-0314 Email: checkmatequartet96@gmail.com
Facebook.com/CheckmateQuartet96



Allen
Colin
Matt
Nate



Facebook: Coulee Classic Quartet

LO'L home page: <http://loldistrict.org>

Follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/LOLDistrictBHS



Calendar

Please send show registrations to:
District Secretary Bob Brey, Land O' Lakes District
1411 S. 31st St.
Manitowoc, WI 54220
rwbrey1950@gmail.com

2025



January

- 10-11 Leadership Training Academy - UW River Falls
- 25 Amery, WI - Youth Festival
- 28-Feb2 BHS Midwinter Convention - San Antonio, TX



March

- 21-22 Harmony College Midwest - Bloomington, ILL



April

- 5 Bismarck-Mandan, ND
- 11-12 Manitowoc, WI - Three and a Half Men
- 12 Dunn County (Colfax, WI) - Kordal Kombat, Northwoods

April (cont.)

- 12 Brookfield, WI - Greendale Chapter show Midwest Vocal Express and Forward Harmony
- 26 Appleton, WI - Gimme Four
- 26 Mankato, MN
- 26 St. Croix Valley, MN
- 26 St. Cloud, MN - Kordal Kombat

May

- 17 Wisconsin Youth Quartet Festival - Stevens Point, WI
- 17 Oshkosh, WI

June/July

- 28-July6 International Convention - Denver, CO

October

- 4 Amery, WI (Polk County) - Coulee Classic, Just One More!!

