

# The Pitch Piper

77 YEARS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY

OVER 714,089 SQUARE MILES

Volume 78, Number 3

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District

May-June 2025



**Land O' Lakes**  
S.F.E.B.S.Q.S.A.

**2025 Fall  
Convention**

**UP, UP and AWAY**

**October 10 - 11, 2025 | Bloomington, Minnesota**



## 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](mailto: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](mailto:mikelietke@hotmail.com)



### Treasurer

**Matt Nagel**

4999 Sterling Dr.  
Greendale, WI 53129  
(414) 507-5187  
[nagelbshop2009@gmail.com](mailto:nagelbshop2009@gmail.com)



### Director of Events

**Jay Althof**

4671 Lake Ave.  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
(651) 206-2686  
[jayalthof@gmail.com](mailto:jayalthof@gmail.com)



### Executive Vice President

**Nate Peplinski**

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



### Director of Chapter Support & Development

**Jim Rasmus**

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



### Director of Contest & Judging

**James Estes**

(650) 686-1080  
[dir-cj@loldistrict.org](mailto:dir-cj@loldistrict.org)



### Immediate Past President

**Jay Althof**

4671 Lake Ave.  
White Bear Lake, MN 55110  
(651) 206-2686  
[jayalthof@gmail.com](mailto:jayalthof@gmail.com)



### District VP - East Region

**Mike Ziegler**

438 Sunset Dr.  
Plymouth, WI 53073  
(920) 918-7917  
[mikeanddenise@live.com](mailto:mikeanddenise@live.com)



### Secretary

**Tyler Hall**

603 6th St NE  
Mandan, ND 58554  
Cell 701-213-7636  
[secretary@loldistrict.org](mailto:secretary@loldistrict.org)



### District VP - West Region

**Justin McCullough**

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



## Land O' Lakes District – State of The District

July 15, 2025



Fellow Songsters,

Hopefully this finds you in fine fettle. A number of quick mentions here, with a bunch of things occurring in our singing universe.

Recently returned from the Denver International Convention, and it was a barn burner. If you were not able to attend or did not see the performances, please take

the opportunity when you see them to congratulate Forward Harmony chorus and Coulee Classic for extremely impressive showings. These are the very best teams in our little sport that assemble each year, and our fellow singers thrilled the audiences. Proud to call them all friends.

If you have never gone to an International, make it a point to go at least once and experience all that awesome in one week. Hey, St. Louis next year is not that far from many in our district (sorry, Canadian mates), and it finally comes back to Minneapolis in 2027.



The District President's Council meeting was well-attended and interesting. One of the most important things is that the BHS reached full capacity in Denver, which meant a boon to the budget. It was running at a plus \$200,000 to budget through May due to the strong showing.

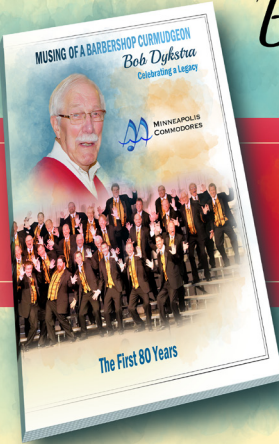
Our Canadian choruses and the Ontario District have met virtually on some issues to quell some uncertainty and make sure their needs are being attended to. Among other things, BHS has put together a Border Crossing document. Though this should not be needed, it may be helpful for those who want extra assurance of smooth passage to such things as the District Convention in October.

Erik Dove (formerly LOL, now BHS staff CFO... Gold Medalist chorus member... Lawyer... Bank Exec... Raconteur) is conducting a significant study of the BHS insurance and how it covers guests and such. Insurance coverage in most cases goes January

to December, so there will be information coming soon. It does not seem that there are storm clouds brewing here on the insurance front, but we want to be sure that long time chapter guests who are not current members and the chapters are covered properly. More to come.

In the meantime, please support your neighbor chapters in their summertime activities, and I cannot wait to sing one with you again in October.

All the very best. Blow the pitch! -Mike



**Bob Dykstra**  
Celebrating a Legacy

A collection of Bob's articles originally published in the CHORDINATOR 2014-2024

75 pages of Barbershop history  
Available in the lobby today  
\$20 (no credit cards)

## LEADERSHIP WITH LARRY

Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.





## ***CHAPTER SUPPORT REPORT***

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



### **“What Can the District Do For You?”**

That’s the question District Liaisons are beginning to ask Chapter leaders this summer.

One way to answer that question is to highlight successful initiatives across the District:

- As the **Green Bay Chapter** re-energizes their dying chorus, they decided to stop doing scripted, ticketed shows. They have developed a repertoire of about 20 patriotic, polecats, romantic, religious, fun songs that can be adapted to most every invitation they receive or event they attend in an effort to put themselves back out in front of their community.
- All Chapters can benefit from the leadership of the **St. Croix Valley Chapter** to help us think through and plan for ways to reach out and involve SENIOR singers. Here is the link that recently went live on the BHS website: [www.barbershop.org/senior-singers](http://www.barbershop.org/senior-singers). Go to the LOL website: <https://loldistrict.org/chapter-development> for details on these and other resources to support your Chapter.

Then there are the LOL programs available to every Chapter in the District:

- **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 promote your Chapter or pay for resources to help your Chorus in your musical development.
- **Visioning Retreats** provides a method to survey your Chapter and brings consultants to guide your conversations toward more focused efforts toward growth and improvement.
- **Take Coaching to the Chapter** helps identify and pay the mileage for bringing a coach to choruses who want to improve their performance package or basic repertoire. Go to the LOL website: <https://loldistrict.org/lol-grants-and-programs> for the details.

It’s not too early to begin planning to attend the **Harmony Academy January 9-10** at UW-River Falls! Yes, it’s new name for the Leadership Training Academy and not just for leaders anymore!!

Reach out to me if you have ideas 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](mailto:pitchpiper@loldistrict.org)**



## ***Kathryn's Kornyr***



KATHRYN ZIEGLER, OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

### **Areas of Executive Functioning...And BARBERSHOP**

Hello again! My chorus, Forward Harmony, just returned from a wonderful trip to Denver, CO for the Barbershop Harmony Society's International Convention. We sang our hearts onto the stage, and were so honored to be performing for the 3rd time in the 3 years we've been together (two times competing, 1 time as the mic tester).

While others observing the convention may have just seen a bunch of singers doing their thing (as well as a bunch of amazing cosplayers at the Fan Expo), as an occupational therapist I can't help but look at International through a different lens. Not only did I see a bunch of singers just doing their thing, but I saw people engaged in what is so clearly a meaningful occupation for them.

The time, energy, life, and love put into the performances that went across the

stage were incredible to behold, and the joy this hobby brings people is evident in each interaction witnessed throughout the week.

Another key occupation that we, as humans, engage in, is *social participation*. Clearly International is a social event, with lifelong friends re-connecting every year, new friends made while singing tags in random corners of the convention center, or cheering for your favorite quartet that you've watched compete for years (so much so they feel like friends).

The social aspect of the convention creates bonds that increase meaning, connection, and just general joy in life, something that is at the heart of occupational therapy.

Now, as we return back to our typical lives and engage in our other meaningful occupations (work, childcare, pet care, other hobbies, etc.), I think it's time to set aside time for another area of occupation...sleep...

- Kathryn

## **Save The Date - 2025 Land O' Lakes Fall Convention – Up, Up and Away!**

We are well into the planning process for our Fall Convention. The convention will once again be held at the Minneapolis Airport Hilton Hotel on October 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Put the date and location on your calendar.

You won't want to miss this event as we continue to build on the success of our past conventions. More details will come over the next couple of months!

Jay Althof, VP Events, LO'L District





It is time get your reservations and registrations for our Fall Convention! Building off the successes of the past few years, we look forward to another super fun gathering of Barbershoppers from all over the District. To make sure you don't miss any of the fun, go to the LO'L convention webpage which provides everything you need to make it happen: [www.loldistrict.org/conventions](http://www.loldistrict.org/conventions).

1. REGISTER FOR THE CONVENTION — Register online with your credit card or download a mail-in registration order form and send it in with your check. You can also order a Saturday lunch, the Showcase dinner (chicken or pork), or get a ticket for the Saturday evening show. Once you register, your badges and meal and event tickets will be ready for you when you arrive.
2. RESERVE YOUR ROOM — Reserve a room at the Headquarters Hotel - MSP Airport Hilton Hotel, 3800 American Blvd E., Bloomington, MN 55425. [www.group.hilton.com/d883ie](http://www.group.hilton.com/d883ie). Our special rate is \$115/night plus taxes.
3. CONTEST AND FESTIVAL REGISTRATION — There will be a link on the Contest and Festival section of the registration webpage which opens August 1st. You must click on this link to register your chorus or quartet if you plan to sing in the contest or festival. Remember that all members of your chorus or quartet must also purchase an All-Events registration badge (\$70) for the convention. Contest and Festival registrations must be completed no later than midnight September 9th!
4. QUARTET CLINICS - If your quartet is not competing, but would like coaching, the District is offering free Quartet Clinics on Friday morning and a chance to perform in the afternoon. All you need is a quartet, two songs, and an All Contest Events registration badge. Sign up with Dylan Ahmann: [dylanahmann@gmail.com](mailto:dylanahmann@gmail.com)
5. ALL CHAPTER CHORUS – Once again, the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade is helping sponsor the All-Chapter Chorus. For just \$10 Steve Zorn will get you the music and the learning tracks and Donny Rose will be directing the chorus. This is another great opportunity for you to sing with some of the best! Just connect with Steve to let him know you are interested and to make your payment for the music. Steve Zorn: [zorn.stephen@gmail.com](mailto:zorn.stephen@gmail.com)

We look forward to seeing you, and over 800 more barbershoppers, at our Fall Convention. Up, Up and Away!

Jay Althof — 2025 LO'L Convention Chair



## Scott Perau Honored with 2025 Golden Chord Award for Exceptional Leadership in Barbershop and Music Education

Red Wing, MN – May 28, 2025

At Red Wing High School's spring concert on May 28, something truly special happened. Right there in Hovde Hall, in front of his students, colleagues, and family, **Scott Perau** was surprised with the **2025 Golden Chord Award**, our district's highest honor for a music educator.

Scott's reaction was genuine, humble, and deeply moving, as you'd expect from someone who has always deflected praise and redirected the spotlight onto his students. But that night, it was his turn. Unbeknownst to him, Jay Althof, quietly slipped into the audience to witness the moment. It was a full-circle celebration of a man who has shaped so many voices, and so many lives.

The **Golden Chord Award**, presented by the **Land O' Lakes District of the Barbershop Harmony Society**, honors an outstanding educator who not only uplifts their school community, but also goes above and beyond to keep the art of barbershop harmony alive and thriving. Scott was nominated by his friend and quartet-mate **Jay Fahl**, and the committee's decision to honor him was unanimous. The award was presented to him by **Jay Althof**, close friend and past president of the Land O' Lakes district.

To further recognize Scott's impact, we're also proud to make a **\$500 contribution to Ovation**, Red Wing's extracurricular vocal ensemble under his leadership. This group has given so many young singers a platform to grow, perform, and connect, and we can't think of a better way to support the work Scott continues to do outside the school day.



If you know Scott, you know this award isn't just about one night or one concert. It's about a career spent **mentoring young singers**, fostering curiosity, building community, and reminding us that barbershop is about so much more than chords, it's about connection.

It's especially meaningful when you consider that **around one year ago**, Scott brought a high school quartet named **Core Four** to the Land O' Lakes District Convention for coaching. One of the singers? His own son, **Silas**. Watching Scott guide him into the barbershop world with the same care and enthusiasm he gives to every student, that's the legacy we're honoring.

Whether he's directing a concert, coaching a quartet, running warmups at district events, or building relationships with other educators, Scott brings heart, excellence, and joy into everything he touches. His influence ripples across classrooms, choruses, and communities—not just in Red Wing, but throughout the Land O' Lakes District and beyond.

From all of us on the **Next Gen team**, and from everyone whose life has been touched by Scott's music and mentorship: **thank you**. You've helped shape the future of barbershop in ways you may never fully realize.

**Congratulations, Scott.**

—  
*Justin La*

Chair, Land O' Lakes Next Gen Committee





---

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (Preliminary)**  
**LAND O'LAKES DISTRICT FALL CONVENTION**  
**Oct 10-11, 2025 – Minneapolis Airport Hilton Hotel, Bloomington, MN**

**Friday - Oct 10**

8:30 - 7:00	Registration/Ticket desk	2nd Floor - Foyer
8:00 - 12:00	Coaching (non-contest quartets)	Mtg Rms I-VIII, XI
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch Break	On Your Own
1:00 – 2:00	Performances (coached quartets)	Ballroom Stage
1:00 - 4:30	ADC Board Meeting	VII Pelican Bay
1:45 – 2:15	ADC Membership Meeting	VII Pelican Bay
2:00 - 3:00	House of Delegates Meeting	Riverside Rm
2:15 – 3:30	ADC Chorus Rehearsal	VII Pelican Bay
3:00 – 5:00	Stage Open for Inspection	Ballroom Stage
3:00 - 4:30	All Chapter Chorus Rehearsal	VIII Wood Duck
5:00 - 9:30	Quartet Prelim Contest	Ballroom Stage
9:30 – 9:40	Barbershopper of the Year Award	Ballroom Stage
9:40 -12:00	Hospitality - Cash Bar	2nd Floor - Foyer
9:45 – 12:00	ASHOW	1st Floor Board room
9:45 -12:00	Quartet Feedback Sessions	Mtg Rms I-VIII

**Saturday - Oct 11**

8:00 – 1:30	Registration/Ticket desk	2nd Floor Foyer
7:30 – 8:45	Stage Open for Inspection	Ballroom Stage
9:00 -12:25	Chorus Contest	Ballroom Stage
12:25 - 1:10	Lunch break	Box Lunch/On Your Own
1:10 – 2:50	Quartet Finals contest	Ballroom Stage
2:50 - 3:00	Hall Of Fame Award	Ballroom Stage
3:00 – 3:10	Spice Swan Song	Ballroom Stage
3:10 – 3:25	Chorus/Quartet Contest Results	Ballroom Stage
3:30 – 6:30	Chorus/Quartet Feedback Sessions	Mtg Rms I-VIII
3:30 – 5:30	Fun Squad Activities	2nd Floor – Foyer
5:30 – 6:30	ADC Chorus Rehearsal	Riverside RM
6:30 - 7:15	Banquet Dinner	Ballroom
7:15 - 9:15	Showcase Show & Joe Liles Lifetime Achievement Award	Ballroom
9:15 - 1:00	Afterglow/Hospitality	Mtg Rms I-VIII, XI





**Convention Registration – Or On-line at: [www.loldistrict.org/conventions](http://www.loldistrict.org/conventions)**

**Land O'Lakes Fall Convention**

**October 10-11, 2025**

Name (First/Last):

Phone:

Email:

2nd Attendee Name (if applicable):

3rd Attendee Name (if applicable):

4th Attendee Name (if applicable):

Group Name on Badge - Chapter/Chorus/Quartet:

Event	Cost/Person	Quantity	Amount
All Contest Events Registration	\$70		
Saturday Showcase Dinner and Show	\$45		
Saturday Box Lunch	\$20		
Complete Convention Registration Package **	\$135		
Jr. Contest Events Registration (12 and under)	\$30		
Jr. Complete Convention Registration Package (12 and under) **	\$95		
<b>Total enclosed</b>			

\*\* Complete Convention Registration Package includes access to all contests, Saturday Lunch and Saturday Showcase Dinner and Show

**Menu Options for Showcase Dinner**

Entrée Choice	Quantity
Pork	
Chicken	

If there are special dietary needs, please provide specifics:

-----

Individual Contest tickets go on sale 30 days prior to Convention and may be purchased at the Registration Desk for Friday Quartet, Saturday Chorus, or Saturday Quartet Finals. Cost: \$25/event



# First Ever Spring Sing was a Blast!

On May 31st, barbershoppers from four of the western-most chapters in our district gathered at Valley City State (ND) University for a day of singing, learning and barbershop-style fellowship.



our mass sing song, and learn about what it's like to be in a great quartet from our friends in Kordal Kombat. We concluded the day with an informal concert singing for one another.

The facilities at Valley City were perfect for this event with a brand-new theater, available rehearsal halls along with practice rooms and dining services right across the street. With the support of the district and ADC we were able to offer the event at a very

Coordinated and planned by Justin McCullough and Brent Gerber, the event was kicked off with a warm-up led by Jay Althof, featured a teaching quartet working with the group to learn a new song together—*It Had to Be You* (SATB), and saw individual choruses breaking into coaching sessions conducted by the members of Kordal Kombat (Mark Halverstadt, Scott Veenhuis, Adam Helgeson, and Ben Israelson), along with Gordon Moe, Jay Althof and Megan Argall.



affordable participant cost.

Feedback from this event was very positive and the District is looking at ways to refine and improve the event for next year while also exploring the possibility of holding a similar event in the eastern part of the District.

Thanks to all who helped to coordinate, support and participate in this great event!



## Northern Pines Harmony Brigade 2025

Submitted by Dave Speidel

The 14th annual Harmony Brigade Rally came off without a hitch the first weekend in May. Over 50 well prepared singers from all over the US joined forces at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Plymouth, MN to celebrate the art of Barbershop quartetting. It all started on Thursday night when the early arrivers met up in the hotel lobby to start singing. It will be the first time that most have had a chance to sing the 10 songs with 'real' live people.

Very early Friday, 30 men hopped on a coach bus to journey to 3 different school districts. Our program for the young musicians includes a little history of our art form and fun quartet demonstrations, including teaching the students a tag or two. This year we were happy to have guest music educator and former director of the Appleton Chapter, Bill Albrecht along to provide the brief Barbershop historical overview and point out the unique characteristics of the Barbershop style for the students. One of the highlights is when the students perform for us and show us their 'stuff'.

The tour concludes in time for us to retreat back to the hotel around 3:00 when the official registration begins. Other singers arrive and everyone starts to seek out the other voice parts to fill out their 'Dance Cards' in an attempt to win the coveted Tramp award before the end of the day on Saturday. After dinner the fun begins when all of the Random Draw quartets are selected and given the song they have to sing after a rehearsal of about 45 minutes. The quartets come up with some very interesting names for themselves and many are good for a 'chuckle'. The quartet performance order is also randomly selected and is announced 1 by 1 as the contest proceeds. After

the 17 quartets perform in the first round, the top 8 are announced for the Saturday afternoon finals, and 1 Wild Card quartet is drafted from singers who didn't qualify. Then on to more singing into the night.

Saturday gets under way early with auditions for the two 'Step Out' quartet spots on the show followed by a brief, but traditional general session meeting and then a short chorus rehearsal in preparation for the Saturday evening show. The afternoon comes with 'guess what'? More singing! That leads up to the mid-afternoon finals contest. Our headliner quartet & judging panel for the weekend - and back for the 2nd time - was LO'L District champs Kordal Kombat. A tradition of the Brigade contest is to keep all scores confidential. The only information revealed are the top 3 winners. This shields the judges from any potential harassment - even though it may be deserved.

During dinner, a very cool tradition of the Brigade experience is when the singers vote for 'The Guy I Came to Sing With'. This award is presented to the person who came to the Rally totally prepared to sing every song, and who symbolizes the 'Spirit' of the Brigade. This year's winner - Alan Parker - came all the way from Des Moines, IA. We are very happy to have Alan as a frequent attendee.

We were delighted to have Jay Althof as the show MC, doing his usual stellar job at the podium. The show featured the Brigade Chorus, the two auditioned 'Step Out' quartets, a 'Random Draw' quartet selected by the audience, Just One More and Kordal Kombat. The evening concludes with a social Pizza afterglow and lots more singing into the wee hours of the night. Lots of reminiscing takes place on Sunday morning at the great Crowne Plaza Breakfast Buffet before everyone says their good-byes, and looking forward to seeing each other again next year.

## **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](mailto:lensingstenor@gmail.com)**





# **SAVE THE DATE**

**LOL District Harmony Academy**  
**(formerly Leadership Training Academy)**

**January 9 – 10, 2026**

**University of Wisconsin – River Falls**

**There will be a variety of elective classes for all barbershoppers who want new ideas on how to make this GREAT hobby even better. We'll have core classes for chapter officers, as well as opportunities to sing and socialize with old friends and meet some new ones.**

## **Our faculty will include:**

**Donny Rose – Harmony Foundation International**

**Bob Cox – BHS Certified Training Facilitator**

**Skipp Kropp – Past BHS Board Member & President**

**Scott Kvigne – Visual Performance Coach/Clinician**

**More details in the next Pitch Piper.**



## unlabeled editor's notes

- This year's Fibonacci convention is going to be really special. Apparently it's as big as the last two put together.
- If you think someone would be deserving of a feature in this publication, contact [pitchpiper@loldistrict.org](mailto:pitchpiper@loldistrict.org)
- In 2017 I didn't do a marathon. I didn't do one in 2018, 2019, or 2020, either. This is a running joke.
- Best wishes and good luck to the new Pitch Piper editors, Tony and Angela Blackwood!
- My landlord told me we need to talk about the heating bill. "Sure," I said. "My door is always open."
- If you need learning tracks, check out [www.choraltracks.com](http://www.choraltracks.com). The annual subscription is an enormous value! [nate@choraltracks.com](mailto:nate@choraltracks.com)
- What's brown and sticky? A stick.
- Get involved. Even if it's only thirty minutes every six months, that's still helping. Ben, I'm talking to you.
- My doctor told me I was going deaf. The news was hard for me to hear.
- During my calculus test, I had to sit between identical twins. It was hard to differentiate between them.
- My friend claims he glued himself to his autobiography. I don't believe him, but that's his story and he's sticking to it.



- Email for submissions is [pitchpiper@loldistrict.org](mailto: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](http://www.loldistrict.org)
- Special note of sponsorship to Matt Curtis and [www.choraltracks.com](http://www.choraltracks.com)



# Choral Tracks

Practice Made Simple



# North Star Chorus Takes on Google Ads

Written by Maeve Walls, North Star Chorus Advertising Intern

Google Ads is an advertising program that gives nonprofit organizations the opportunity to apply for the Google Ad Grant that gives them \$10,000 a month to spend through text ads on Google. The North Star Chorus is the official Greater St. Paul Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and it's also a nonprofit organization. I joined the North Star Chorus as their advertising intern in September of 2024 and my mission was to learn all about Google Ads and see if I could increase website traffic just by posting text ads.

In order to get started I had to reach out to the interns supervisor, Loring Harrop, and get the proper information. I needed a lot of the legal information such as our non profit ID number, the official name of the organization, the official location, and other things like our logo, mission statement and the name of whom the organization is under. After I acquired that information and applied it to the form with some other questions they asked, we had to wait for Google to verify us, which only took a day or two.

Unfortunately we hit a few roadblocks, like our logo said didn't match public information so we had to go back and update our website with the logo and they also gave us HTML code that we needed to add into our website code. Once we fixed all the things they pointed out I was officially able to post our first ad. It started with Google giving me a step by step on how to use the program which was very helpful. I also used other resources and websites that explained how it worked too, I wanted as much information as possible. I found that there are four main parts to AdWords; campaigns, ad groups, ads, and keywords.

The biggest umbrella category is campaigns. You can create multiple campaigns at a time which is helpful. Within the campaigns there are ad groups. This lets you divide your campaigns more

specifically. Then within the ad groups, that's where the ads get posted. You want your ad groups to be specific because there can only be three running ads at a time per ad group. You can create multiple ads but only three can be active simultaneously. The ads are then built out of the keywords. These can be words or phrases but essentially they are used to scan peoples searches for any that match which should then bring up your ad. Keywords are very important.

Google Ads has you start by making a campaign so I made one directed toward getting other singers to join the North Star Chorus. Then I had to upload some keywords. Here I was able to type up some relevant terms that people would have to search in order for our website to pop up. Some terms I chose for us were "Barbershop Quartets," "A Cappella," "Live Performances," and so on. Then it had me create our first ad. It is very direct and simple to follow and it does give you a rating that tells you if your ad is average, good, or excellent and what qualities it's missing, if any.

The keywords you submit will be reviewed by the software and use a lot of its data to determine which keywords will perform the best and get you more results, otherwise it will tell you if it doesn't suit the ad. The better the keyword, the more it'll suggest you use that in your ads. It allows you to put up to 15 headlines which use keywords and phrases, and up to four descriptions per ad. I kept tweaking things until it told me the success rate was "good" or "excellent" which it tells you at the top. I was able to add photos like our logo, or other photos of the group and other sites like a donation site. Those all improve the success rate which mainly just give us a higher chance of the ad showing up in people's searches.

After adding all the headlines, descriptions, photos, links and anything else they asked for, I then posted it and

waited for them to review and upload it. That also took about a day. I let that ad sit for a bit while I worked on other things for the internship and I checked back in after a few weeks. I posted the first ad on November 12th and by December 9th we got 130 clicks, and 1,751 impressions. Our Click Through Rate, or CTR, was only 7.42% which isn't bad for the first month, but it can definitely be higher. CTR measures how often the ad appears in an individual's search and how often they actually click the link versus scrolling past it.

$$CTR = (\text{number of clicks} / \text{number of impressions}) \times 100$$
Our average cost per click during that month was \$7.84 and our total cost for that month was \$1,018.58. That is still only a little more than a tenth that we had to spend in one month. My goal is to spend the entire \$10,000 one month.

We hit another road block for a few months this time. There was a "verification issue," however we are still unsure what happened and how it was resolved. I emailed back and forth with Google Ads Customer Support for months and randomly one day it was working again.

I am creating more campaigns and ads hoping to get as much attention as the first ad did. Our goal is to get a higher CTR which means more people actually clicking on our ad. Google is recommending adding what they call "assets" which are photos and videos. This will boost the chance of our ad showing up on more people's pages. I'm taking everything I learned in the past few months and applying it to our new campaigns so we can take advantage of our Google Ad Grant money.

With this resource back we can focus on our main goal which is getting more people to join the North Star Chorus. It is a hard audience to reach so luckily with Google Ads we can spread the word quite far.





# What are you GETTING out of QUARTETTING?

Nate Peplinski, Executive Vice President



When you form a quartet, one of the most important discussions to have is in goals. What is important to each of you as performers, and what are you willing to compromise/accommodate from others to have a successful endeavor? Here's a quick analysis of certain aspects of fulfillment that can be achieved through the process of quartetting (and I'm sure there are others, as well!)

1. **Social** - Do you love hanging around each other as friends? Is it important to go to dinner, to laugh and joke, to have a few drinks? Any time you share that much time with individuals, you have to be able to manage the social component. And sometimes, for some folks, it's the top priority, and that's ok!

2. **Service** - Do you enjoy singing in the community? Is it more important that you be out performing than necessarily getting paid? What outreach events are of particular interest? Remember that wedding anniversary you sang for where the bride was crying? Remember that night in the nursing home where a dozen folks in wheelchairs who couldn't speak were mouthing the words to the old songs they remembered from their childhood?

3. **Pursuit of Excellence** - Are you there to improve your craft individually and holistically? Do you enjoy doing the blocking and tackling of ensemble singing? Honing vocal technique, mastering blend and unity? Do you strive to be perpetually more free and engaging and natural? Is the very process energizing for you, even if you spend twenty minutes on one 8-bar phrase?

4. **Creativity** - Is the quartet an appropriate outlet for a degree of Creative Artistry that you otherwise wouldn't have? Do you enjoy being in control of bringing certain visions to life that layfolk would never have the outlet to do? Specific music? Specific themes? Do you enjoy comedy?

5. **Contest** - Are you thrilled with the adrenaline and pressure of competing in a contest? This is a very real experience and part of the reason the contest program has gained so much traction. Obviously this pairs considerably with other components as well.

6. **Shows** - This one is probably as much a combination of others as anything else, sharing components of literally each prior item on the list. Are you available for the commitments that go with this? Are you pursuing excellence enough to be rewarded with contracts? Are you branding for entertaining real-live audiences? Are you able to tailor sets to specific crowds?

So any and all of these is good and ok, and every person will place different levels of value on each. Bottom line, make sure you communicate with each other! I hope having this list helps people articulate what's important so you can align visions and achieve success! - Nate

**Forward Harmony** was honored to represent the Land O'Lakes District in Denver at International this July! Our "Rainbow Set" was well received, our score increased slightly, and we enjoyed seeing our friends from around LOL-land. We had several members with us on the international stage for the first time and we all loved the opportunity to share our message of acceptance, kindness, and love with the audience. We only rehearse every other week, so opportunities to spend time together and bond were very appreciated and a lot of fun.

We want to congratulate our friends Coulee Classic for a fantastic performance in Denver as well. They are wonderful ambassadors for LOL!

Both MVE and Forward have taken a few weeks off for a summer break and will be getting down to business (a.k.a. preparing for District competition) in late July and early August. We'll see you all soon in Minneapolis!





**CRAZY**  
little  
**THING**  
— called —  
**LOVE**



**Minneapolis  
Commodores**

Chorus, MCX, Quartets  
*With Special Guests*  
Kordal Kombat

Saturday September 13, 2025  
3:00 PM

Adults \$20, Student/Child \$5

**Minnehaha Academy**  
3100 West River Parkway  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406







## Reviews for Bob Dykstra Book

I had a chance to spend a few very enjoyable hours reading *Musing of a Barbershop Curmudgeon – Bob Dykstra, Celebrating a Legacy*. As I read, there was a song that kept coming to mind - "Simply the Best". Everything Bob Dykstra did in his lifetime was quite simply the best. A good portion of that remarkable life is captured in this compilation of his columns that he wrote for the CHORD-INATOR. Over his lifetime he was around for so many memorable things that were happening as the Barbershop Harmony Society evolved and, lucky for us, he was a most willing and able storyteller. Come along for the ride and be thoroughly entertained.

*MARK O'RTENBERGER – Commodore*

"This book is a polished gem that shines brightly. I know genius when I see it and this fellow called Dykstra clearly has a gift for telling a story. Although I am loath to admit it, I was never very good with setting words to my scores but this man, with pen firmly in hand, knows his way around a word. Some people say my music had too many notes but even if I were to admit that was so, I would gladly provide every one of them to this guy. He would know what to do with them since he understands the concept that every note or lyric has a meaningful place where they should reside." Bravo!

- W. Mozart

"I can't even hear but I can read and I know that what I read comes across with a strong foundation and tempo that leads me to believe this comes from an immense talent." Wunderbar!

- L. Beethoven

After reading the journals of this Signore Roberta Dykstra I'm a bit sad that I never heard about this kind of harmony singing before. Maybe I had been missing the point all along about the Barber of Seville and it was really about the glories of close harmony singing. You should know that I love to sing by myself but I would gladly trade most of that for a chance to sing some of what he calls Barbershop with three other gents. Signore Dykstra's eloquent prose fully captured me and swept me away on the wings of soul stirring harmony.

- E. Caruso

### **Bob Dykstra collection of articles available for sale!**

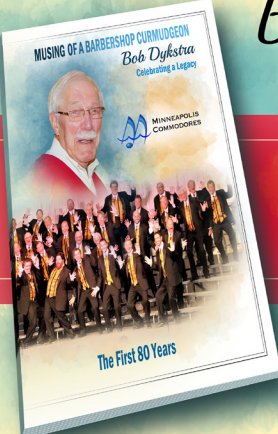
*Proceeds go to the Bob Dykstra Legacy Fund.*

Contact Harvey Weiss

763-439-4447

harveyw137@gmail.com

*Harvey Weiss and the Dykstra family have collaborated to give us this opportunity to relish some of the late legend Bob Dykstra's wit and wisdom, the yarniest musings of a barbershop curmudgeon, as he so eloquently describes.*



**Bob Dykstra**  
Celebrating a Legacy

A collection of Bob's articles  
originally published in the  
CHORDINATOR 2014-2024

75 pages of Barbershop history  
Available in the lobby today  
\$20 (no credit cards)





## APOLOGIES FOR THE TARDINESS OF THE PAPER COPIES

There have been promptness issues with the mailed copies of the Pitch Piper this year.

-Some of that has been related to the editor's slowness on finishing formatting. (me)

-Some of that has been slow postage due to the handicapped state of the current Postal Service.

The last issue, we received a professional apology from the printing company that the issue just inexplicably got lost, no excuses just sincere apology.

Moving forward, we'll be following up more closely. Please accept our staff apologies, and we thank you for your patience as such.

## CONTEST CORNER

with James Estes, DVP for Contest and Judging



Warmest summer greetings to all of you in the Land O' Lakes District!

Summer is just flying by, and I recently completed my most fulfilling judging assignment to date, as a member of the International Panel at the BHS International Convention in Denver, Colorado. 268 songs were judged at the Bellco Theatre, and every performance was a sheer joy to watch. Special congratulations to our Land O' Lakes district representatives in Denver! Forward Harmony from the Greendale, WI chapter gave a truly heartfelt and inspiring performance in the chorus contest, while Coulee Classic had an awesome hit in a \*very tight and competitive quartet contest. Thank you to all our district competitors' time and effort to prepare, compete, and perform at the highest levels of the Barbershop Harmony Society!


Very shortly, on or about August 1, we will begin accepting entries for the Fall District Quartet/Chorus Contests and Festivals in Bloomington!! Head over to <https://loldistrict.org/conventions> for the entry link. Make sure to purchase your registration to the Fall Convention, as that is a BHS and District requirement to compete. In addition, make sure your BHS and District dues are current/paid as of October 10, 2025 so that your group (chorus or quartet) is not disqualified. In addition to registering for the convention, make sure to complete your contest entry through the BHS Member Center, or we won't know of your intention to compete. If you have any questions about the contests/festival, or have any trouble getting your group(s) registered, please reach out to me via email at [dir-cj@loldistrict.org](mailto:dir-cj@loldistrict.org). I'm looking forward to seeing all of you - whether you're competing or not - in just a few short months! Enjoy the remaining summer weather and vibes!





Jeff Paul  
 Ken Ryan

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



JAY TONY BEN TOM

www.vocalityquartet.com 651-206-2686

**CHORD SMASH!**  
 Sam Sather, Erik Eliason, James Estes, Scott Perau  
 info@chordsmash.com  
 715-461-0318



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



**Lakefront Quartet**  
 Max, Dylan, Derek & Brian  
 Call/Text: 414-708-3373  
 Follow us!  
 @lakefront\_qt

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


Follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/LOLDistrictBHS](https://facebook.com/LOLDistrictBHS)





## Calendar

Please send show registrations to:  
 District Secretary Tyler T. Hall  
 603 6th St NE  
 Mandan, ND 58554  
 Cell 701-213-7636  
 secretary@loldistrict.org

**2025**

 **August**  
 12 Como Park  
 12 Harmony Under the Stars - Lacrosse, WI

 **September**  
 13 Minneapolis, MN - Kordal Kombat  
 20 Stevens Point, WI  
 20 Barron, WI - Polk County Chapter show

 **October**  
 4 Amery, WI (Polk County) - Coulee Classic, Just One More!!  
 4 St. Paul, MN - Northstar Chorus

10-11 District Convention = Bloomington, MN

**December**  
 3 Appleton, WI  
 6 Oshkosh, WI  
 9 Appleton, WI

**2026**

**January**  
 9-10 HARMONY ACADEMY - UW-River Falls  
 13-18 BHS Midwinter Convention - Pasadena, CA

**March**  
 28 Colfax, WI - Dunn County

