

The Pitch Piper

75 YEARS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY

OVER 714,089 SQUARE MILES

Volume 75, Number 1

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District

January-February 2023



YTBN, from Burlington HS, WI
BHS 2023 NextGen Jr. Quartet GOLD medalists!



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 Quartets 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 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 North, Nashville, TN 37203-3704. All correspondence or copy should be sent to the editor.

DISTRICT OFFICERS



President:

JAY ALTHOF

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



Executive Vice President:

MIKE LIETKE

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



Immediate Past President:

GORDON BILLOWS

73 Haverstock Cres
Winnipeg, MB R3P 2M7
(C): (204) 881-6125
billows@shaw.ca



Secretary:

BOB BREY

1411 S 31st Street
Manitowoc, WI 54220
(C): (920) 973-4472
rwbrey1950@gmail.com



Treasurer:

JACK EDGERTON

1804 Conant Street
Stevens Point, WI 54481-5819
(H): (715) 344-5746 • (C): (715) 340-3221
ragtime75bbs@gmail.com



District VP - East Region:

JIM RASMUS

500 E Dean Ave
Madison, WI 53716
(C): (920) 973-0010
pjras20@gmail.com



District VP - Central Region:

KEN METTLER

125 Blanding Woods Rd
St Croix Falls, WI 54204
(C): (715) 483-9202
kbmett@hotmail.com



District VP - West Region:

JUSTIN McCULLOUGH

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



Director Chapter Support & Development

JUDD ORFF

6375 St Croix Trail N #145
Stillwater, MN 55082
(C): (651) 262-9843
juddorff3108@msn.com



Director Events

ARV ZENK

1706 Mary Lane
N Mankato, MN 56003
(H): (507) 388-7509 • (C): (507) 995-1655
arvjane@hickorytech.net



Director Contest Judging

JAMES ESTES

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

President's Message

Submitted by Jay Althof - LO'L District President



Hello LO'L Members, and welcome to Barbershop 2023! We have lots of positive momentum building across our district and 2023 is shaping up to be a very good year. We are building on the many activities and accomplishments we had in 2022. **2022 Accomplishments**

- Our Virtual Leadership Academy was held in January of 2022
- Roar Back Initiatives: several chapters requested financial assistance from the district in 2022 and we were able to support those requests
- Continued enhancements on our Website and Facebook page: Todd Smith and Justin McCullough have continued to improve our digital communication platforms
- Continued the PitchPiper and District Directory: Bob and Bill Fricke did a great job again in 2022 editing and publishing our PitchPiper and District directory both in paper and digital formats.

- Harmony University scholarships: In conjunction with the Association of District Champs we provided scholarships to 10 of our chapter members to attend Harmony University
- We had a fantastic Fall Convention in October at the Minneapolis Airport Hilton. Arv Zenk and his team did a great job. We had over 650 attendees and things are shaping up for another exciting and enjoyable event this coming October
- Chapter coaching: Several chapters took advantage of our Bring a Coach to the Chapter program
- Dissolution support: While not something we look forward to doing, but important nonetheless, Del Ryberg helped guide eight of our chapters through the dissolution process in 2022
- Continued involvement and leadership with teams working to improve the focus and effectiveness of Harmony Hall ñ more to come in 2023
- International Convention Participation: The Midwest Vocal Express, St. Croix Crossing and Coulee Classic all did a great job representing our District at the International Convention this past July

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Burlington Nets Midwinter Hat Trick!

Under the direction of Penny Yanke, the NextGen barbershoppers from Burlington High School (Burlington, WI) competed and captured three titles at the Midwinter Contests in Daytona Beach! On Thursday, February 9th, three quartets competed in the NextGen Junior Quartet Contest in front of a standing-room-only crowd of enthusiastic barbershoppers.

The treble quartet **YTBN** took **FIRST PLACE** and were awarded **GOLD** medallions.



YTBN, left to right: Zoe Lipor (T), Madeline Thompson (L), Director Penny Yanke, Megan Fitch (Bs), Genevieve Hauser (Br), and LOL President Jay Althof.



Just Two Brain Cells, left to right: Penny Yanke (Director), Thomas Fitch (T), Julian Ivkovich (L), Ben Stork (Bs), Sam Wallace (Br), and LOL President Jay Althof.



Dynamixed, left to right: Penny Yanke (Director), Gio Grippe (Bs), Julayne Morby (L), Kylee Zigler (T), Evan Deans (Br), and LOL President Jay Althof.

On Friday, February 10th, two NextGen Junior barbershop choruses from Burlington High School were among the seven who competed in the Midwinter Chorus Festival, along with five Seniors choruses. **Here Comes Treble** were the overall winners of the contest and were presented with gold medallions for their outstanding effort. **Reigning Men** were awarded the Plateau A trophy given to a chorus with under 20 members. Some clever folks are now referring to the program as “Burlington Quartet Factory.”





More from Midwinter 2023!

What fantastic representatives for the district! Thanks so much for making us proud.



Checkmate

Dave Baxter, Jim Franklin, Brad Charles, Harry Hanson

Whistle Junction

Sue Nuels (T), Mary Ann Suprenant (Br), (mystery friend), Cathie Zimmerman (Bs) & Jo Ann Coehoorn (L)

Wisconsin Youth Harmony Festival

Bob Brey, WYHF Board member

Looking for your best day of life listening to Next Gen voices? Why not come to Pacelli High School in Stevens Point, Wisconsin on May 20, 2023. We need barbershoppers to come and do our wonderful barbershop clap as a quartet is announced and cheer them on as they enter the stage for their song.

Beginning at 10 AM quartets from across the state will gather to sing barbershop style music. Youth will warm-up, learn some barbershop standards, have lunch and starting at noon sing their festival song before a panel of judges. Scores will be tabulated and an overall winner in barbershop, treble or mixed voices will be crowned. Come join the fun and support our future barbershop singers.

The WYHF group continues to look for monetary support to provide for a fun filled day for the youth attendees. Check out our website youthharmonyfest.org where you can find a link to support our festival. You can also mail a check to our treasurer, Bill Jenkins, in care of the Stevens Point chapter.



President's Message (cont.)

Submitted by Jay Althof - LO'L District President

- The District is in excellent financial shape, in part due to savings by moving to more digital communications and video conferencing for team meetings. Starting in 2023, we have reduced the District Dues by \$10/year.



- We held a series of Best Practice Sharing meetings with the chapters to find ways to increase our Membership
- We continued to hold virtual House of Delegates Meetings
- We presented our first Joe Liles Lifetime Achievement Award to Del Ryberg and Jim Richards

- The District Board and Leadership team met every month to help guide our District forward. And there is more, but I think you recognize that your leadership team is active and strive to be results oriented in our approach.

Now in 2023 we are off to a strong start. Our virtual leadership academy, held on January 7th, went very well and the vocal training session led by Sarah Wigley, called The Barbershop Belt, was a huge hit. All of the information, including videos of most of the sessions are available on our District Website. So, if you missed any of the sessions, or would like a reminder from Sarah's class, just go to the site and click the links. And, we already have great suggestions on how to make next year's academy even better.

We held our House of Delegates meeting via Zoom on January 21st. The best practice sharing session was one of the best and most uplifting set of discussions we've had in a long time. While some of our chapters are struggling, so many had lots of positive comments, have turned the corner after the pandemic and are growing.

Also, on January 21st we had a kick-off meeting with our District Liaisons. The purpose of that meeting was to ensure the 13 District Liaisons had a common understanding of our Liaison program and expectations for connecting with all of our chapters. We are optimistic that by having a closer connection between our chapters and District leadership that we can more effectively focus our District support in a manner that helps our chapters be even more successful.

The District has put in place two types of financial support opportunities for chapters. One is a grant that will subsidize the cost of hiring District quartets

to headline chapter shows. Our hope is that our entertaining District quartets will provide the opportunity for chapters to put on successful shows that not only give a boost to the chapters, but show the public at large what contemporary barbershop truly is. The second grant is an opportunity for chapters to request funds to help them with membership drives, train their directors, promote barbershop in their communities and more. Both grant forms are on our District website under the Document Center. And our Liaisons will be able to provide advice and assistance to those chapters who are interested.

We have made updates to our District Directory, and will continue to do so throughout the year. The updated directory will always be posted on our District website under the Document Center tab. Please let me know if you see items that we need to modify.

Many of our chapters are well underway with preparations for their spring shows. It is great to see the comradery and enthusiasm shared by all our members as they work toward their common goals. Also, a reminder that the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Rally is scheduled for Friday, May 5th through Sunday, May 7th at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Plymouth, MN. Coulee Classic will be the guest quartet and judging panel.

Yes, we are off to a strong start in 2023 and there is so much more to come. Planning for our Fall Convention, and more future events, is already underway. All of this positive activity makes me feel great about the direction we are heading and gives all of us even more opportunities to share the barbershop experience with more people!

Jay Althof, LO'L District President





Northern Pines Harmony Brigade Celebrates 10 Year Anniversary By Dave Speidel

May 5, 2023 will mark the official 10 year anniversary of the NPHB Rally at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center in Plymouth, MN. As of the writing of this article, we have over 60 guys registered and are shooting to reach 70 or more but we are seeking more leads and tenors to balance out the voicing. So don't hesitate to jump in the pool! The water is warm and friendly. *A new feature of this year's Rally is the introduction of activities for spouses.

While you are enjoying the camaraderie of your fellow Barbershoppers, spouses will have the opportunity of doing some 'shopping' of their own. More importantly the Minneapolis area has many great venues for all kinds of arts, music, history and more. Our illustrious judging panel and Saturday Show headliner quartet will be LO'L District Champs and 2023 International Qualifiers - Coulee Classic! A fun group of guys who will participate in singing tags with everyone into the wee hours of the morning! Our own 'Just One More' quartet will be there as well and we are still working on a TDB additional quartet for the Saturday evening show. For those of you who've never participated, you can't beat the value of the weekend.

For \$280 you get 2 nights lodging (double occupancy), 5 meals, "crazy-fun" random draw quartet contests, pizza afterglow party, 10 great charts with stellar learning tracks, School Singout Program for early arrivals, a chance to sing in a large chorus with 'well prepared' singers and more. You even have a chance to win a prestigious Quartet Tramp Award. Don't hesitate – go to www.nphb.org to learn more and register for the time of your life!





Great Plains Harmony Announces New Director

Submitted By: Justin McCullough

After an extensive Director search, which included reaching out to 15+ potential candidates, interviews and auditions, Great Plains Harmony is excited to announce **Mark Reeves** as its next Musical Director.

Mark's love for Barbershop music began when he was sixteen, and the beginning of his college career was made possible in part through a scholarship from the Chorus of the Keys, the Barbershop Harmony chapter in Sarasota, Florida. He holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Samford University and a Masters of Music degree in Choral Conducting from the University of South Florida.

Mark is an experienced music educator and church musician with a career record of building vocal music programs in schools and churches across the United States.

He currently owns and operates Two Rivers Performing Arts School in Jamestown, North Dakota, and teaches K-12 music in the Pingree-Buchanan and Kensal school systems. He is also the co-planter and worship pastor of Buffalo City Church in Jamestown. "I'm eager to build upon the successes of Great Plains Harmony," stated Reeves. "This is a motivated group of excellent voices and through thoughtful collaboration I'm confident we can create fabulous music."

"We are thrilled to have Mark Reeves lead us into our next chapter of music-making" mentioned Stan Andrist, member of the Directors Search Committee. "His music skills, leadership experience, and dynamism were factors in our decision to hire Mark. The membership looks forward to singing for him." "We're extremely excited to have Mark Reeves as our new director." Said Justin McCullough, Vice President of Music and Performance. "His wealth of knowledge, experience, and drive will keep us in an upward trajectory." he added.

Mark has been married to Julia, his high school sweetheart, for 38 years and together they have six grown children and 19 grandchildren (soon to be 20)! Mark's many years of musical experience bring the knowledge and enthusiasm required to lead Great Plains Harmony.

We hope you all join us in welcoming Mark to the Great Plains Harmony and the LO`L District!

--Justin McCullough

The Power of Saying Thank You

submitted by: Ken Mettler

I'd love to share with you the benefits and power of two simple words. THANK YOU.

They are two words that have the power to transform our health, happiness, barbershop performance and success. Research shows that grateful people are happier and more likely to maintain good friendships and successful organizations. A state of gratitude, according to research by the Institute of HeartMath, also improves the heart's rhythm, which helps us to reduce stress, think more clearly under pressure and heal physically. It's actually physiologically impossible to be stressed and thankful at the same time. When you are grateful you flood your body and brain with emotions and endorphins that uplift and energize you rather than the stress hormones that drain you. Gratitude and appreciation are also essential for a healthy chorus environment. In fact, the number one reason why people leave their jobs and hobbies is because they don't feel appreciated. A simple thank you and a show of appreciation can make all the difference. Gratitude is like muscle. The more we do with it the stronger it gets. In this spirit here are 3 ways to practice thankfulness every day.

1. **Take a Weekly Thank You Walk Around the Room at Your Barbershop Practices** - Many years ago I started writing articles for the Pitch Piper with the theme "Marketing the Magic of Barbershop Harmony." They lasted about ten years. One article reminded folks to just say "thank you" every chance you got. People told me that the other articles I wrote about strategy and methods were not as effective as this one article. Saying Thank you will set you up for a positive time at practice each week.
2. **Gratitude Visit** - Martin Seligman, Ph.D., the father of positive psychology, suggests that we write a letter expressing our gratitude to someone. Then we visit this person and read them the letter. His research shows that people who do this are measurably happier and have stronger ties to each other.
3. **Say Thank You at Every Level of Barbershop** - When Doug Conant was the CEO of Campbell Soup he wrote approximately 30,000 thank you notes to his employees and energized the company in the process. Energize and engage your fellow barbershoppers by letting them know you are grateful for them and their efforts. Organizations spend billions of dollars collectively on recognition programs but the best and cheapest recognition program of all consists of a sincere THANK YOU. So, don't forget to say thank you to all your fellow barbershoppers and barbershop customers too. Thank you for taking time to read this and put it into practice. I'm thankful for YOU.

-Ken Mettler



The World Lost One of the Good Guys

by Dave Roesler & Dan Schroeder

Steve Case lost his battle with cancer on Sat, 1/21/23. To know Steve is to love Steve. He was well known to many throughout the LOL District and the Society, for that matter, as the Tagmeister. Steve was the one that would grab a newbie or a guest to teach them a tag and hook them into Barbershop for life. If he noticed someone listening that he knew didn't get the opportunity to sing in a quartet, he'd bring them in for the next tag. Upon his passing, many took to Facebook & CaringBridge to describe their first tag experience with Steve. He created memories for many to last a lifetime.



Steve took his tag singing to the extreme. Anytime he heard a mechanical/electrical hum, he'd identify the key of the hum, grab 2 others and sing a tag with the hum as the post. Steve was arguably one of the most accurate basses in the District. We, along with Roger Williams, had the pleasure of singing with Steve in the quartet, Trademark. We won the LOL District Championship back in 1999 and placed 23rd at the International convention in KC the following year. Steve had sung in many quartets but he knew that Trademark was something special. We were all members of the Great Northern Union Chorus and rehearsed just before chorus. At one of our first rehearsals, we grabbed a room and I closed the door. Steve walked over and opened the door. I looked at him and asked, "Why did you open the door? We're getting ready to rehearse." To which Steve replied, "There's a new sheriff in town!". The three of us just looked at him and shook our heads.

Outside of barbershop, Steve owned his own construction company, Thumbs Up. Steve was a perfectionist and his work demonstrated it. Even though he was in the business, he would freely help a friend with an emergency home issue or give advice over the phone. Steve was a true giver.

Steve was also a strong man of faith, providing prayer to those who needed it and lifting them up when they were down. He led many of us back to the Lord. He was also an avid fisherman, spending hours in the boat with anyone who wanted to fish. He taught tags out on the water even if there were only 2 in the boat. He was generous with his gear and his time.

Steve will be sorely missed by so many. For me (Dave), I lost my best friend, a loss that is going to hurt for a very long time. I loved Steve like a brother. I will miss his friendship, his humor, his prayers, his singing... literally everything about Steve. He was a one of a kind. We know Steve is already teaching tags to the angels and the Barbershop family that preceded him. I asked him to hold a spot for me next to him on the risers. We will sing with him again someday.



Steve didn't want a funeral. Instead there will be a Celebration of Life on Saturday, March 18th, from 2-4pm at the Minneapolis Golf Club, 2001 Flag Ave. S., St. Louis Park, MN 55426. Undoubtedly, there will be tag singing...just the way Steve wanted it!



Hello from FORWARD HARMONY!

Submitted by: Bryan Ziegler

If you weren't at last fall's District convention, you may not have recognized the name of Forward Harmony, the 2022 LO'L Chorus Champions! Well, we'd love to introduce ourselves officially to you!

In December 2021, the Greendale, WI chapter began exploring the possibility of adding a second, all-voice chorus. A committee of Derek Balke, Bryan Ziegler, Jim Ansay, Mike Lietke, Tom Rogina, and Bob Fichtner spent many hours over several months gauging interest, surveying current and prospective members, and gathering information from other multi-chorus chapters to establish guidelines for the creation of a second chorus under the chapter umbrella.

In July 2022, the Greendale chapter membership voted overwhelmingly to expand our membership to include all genders, and the board voted to add an all-voice chorus to our existing men's chorus.

The "Greendale All-Voice Chorus" (as it was known then) held its inaugural meeting soon afterward, with over 40 singers present! Simply by word of mouth, we were able to bring in singers from the Midwest Vocal Express, Capitol Chordsmen, Yahara River Chorus, Choral-Aires, Melodeers, New Tradition, Crosstown Harmony, Riverport Chorus, and Festival City Chorus. After a couple of rehearsals, we brainstormed several potential names, and the winning name chosen was Forward Harmony, representing not only the state motto of Wisconsin ("Forward"), but also our commitment to advancing barbershop forward through BHS's Everyone In Harmony initiative.

We were so thrilled to be able to compete at and take home the 2022 District Chorus Championship after only five rehearsals together! The singers worked amazingly hard to put together our two songs in time. The day of the contest was actually the first time we had sung on risers! We're so proud to be representing LO'L at the 2023 International Chorus Contest in Louisville, KY alongside our chapter-mates in the Midwest Vocal Express!

Since we have members from Madison to Milwaukee to the Chicago area, we rehearse every other Sunday - one of our driving motivators was that we didn't want any of our members to "drop" their regular weekly choruses in favor of singing with Forward Harmony.

Forward Harmony is truly an ALL-voice chorus, open to any person who has a desire to sing four-part harmony. If you're able, we would love to see you and sing with you, every other Sunday from 6-9pm at Emmanuel United Church of Christ on Sunset Dr. in Oconomowoc, WI. If you're not able to make it in person with us, give us a follow on Facebook!

We can't wait to share more harmony with you and Keep The Whole World Singing!
-Forward Harmony



St. Cloud Success!

Submitted by: Bob Starz

Happy to share with you. A year ago after our very successful Christmas show we had a period of very low attendance which might have been because of Covid resurfacing or a period of crappy weather and guys not wanting to make the trip to rehearsal. We were down to 6-8 guys at rehearsal. We chose to take a break from rehearsals for a couple months but still have board meeting/planning sessions for a restart in the spring. We figured it was an all or nothing deal. Spend some money and try to get going again or make the decision to fold.

With money help from the district we put together a plan to restart. A members wife revamped our Facebook/media efforts. We considered joining the local Chamber of Commerce but felt the cost was more than expected benefit. So we decided to try radio.

There are many radio stations in the St Cloud area so we picked one where we could get a 2 for 1 advertising package as a non profit organization. They also gave us a free half hour air time to talk about our upcoming guest night, explain more about who we are and of course sing a tag on air. We bought 45 thirty second ads for \$11 each and got 90 ads over a 2 week period before our restart guest night.

We had a great turnout of current members and got 5 guests from the radio ads. Also a couple of our younger members put on a big push at their private high school. Summer is our biggest performance/singout season and told everyone what our anticipated schedule was going to be and that we also expected to just have fun with being together again and singing for audiences that hadn't heard us for a couple years because of covid.

We started getting attendance in the mid to upper teens and enthusiasm started to spread among our members as well as the young group. We sang at Como Park and had 21 guys on stage. The momentum has continued as we got ready for our Christmas show this year. 32 guys on stage with 5 more former members joining us for the final 3 numbers for 37 on stage. A sellout crowd and a good moneymaker for the chorus. Oldest man on stage was 84 and several young guys at 15 yrs old.

There have been plenty of men from this chorus and other choruses that said radio won't work but maybe it worked well for us because of timing and circumstances revolving around the Covid deal and men just wanting a chance to sing again and audiences wanting to get out and hear music again. It was great to get monetary help from the district and has gotten us a wonderful restart. Other choruses can contact me by this email or 320-894-0433.

-Bob Starz



Dunn County Barbershoppers Proudly Present...

52nd Annual Harmony Show 🎵

"Strike Up The Band!"

Saturday, April 22, 2023

7:00 P.M.



Entertainment by the...

LOL District Champion Quartets

The Gentlemen and First Ave

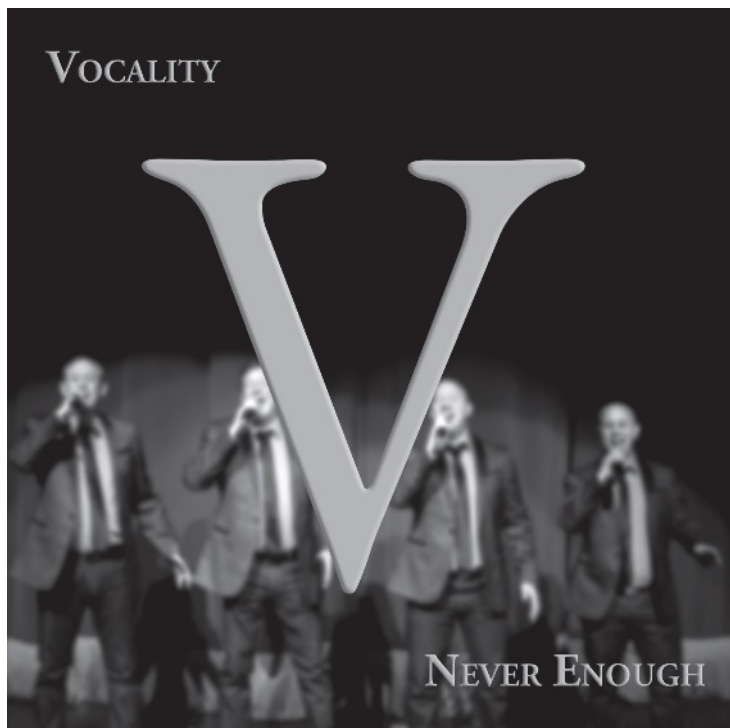
and the

Northern Lights Chorus

Afterglow at
the Whitetail
Golf Course
Colfax

Martin Anderson Gymnasium, 601 University Ave., Colfax, WI

More information: (715) 962-3038 kilnshedpottery@yahoo.com
Visit: www.dccbarbershop.org or Facebook: Dunn County Barbershoppers



Vocality – New Album, “Never Enough”, Available!

As Vocality starts our 16th year together, more than ever, we feel there is “Never Enough” Vocality time! We know that many of you have enjoyed the friendship and brotherhood that comes from being in a quartet and we are so grateful to continue to have this experience in our lives. And, we love to share our music with our audiences, near and far. Now, after a delay due to the pandemic, we are very pleased to announce our 5th album, “Never Enough”, is complete!

The songs on this album range from Broadway Shows to TV Themes to Country and even one by Weird Al Yankovic. We have our albums available for purchase at our performances and on-line at:

<https://store1859042.company.site/Albums-c33919350?sort=priceDesc>

We look forward to seeing many of you at shows in 2023!

Vocality: David, Jay, Tom, & Tony
2007 LO’L District Champs, 2016 Hall Of Fame Inductees

Other notes from the editor:

-The **Manitowoc County (WI) Chapter selected Bill Fricke as their 2022 Barbershopper Of The Year** award winner at the annual installation banquet January 22, 2023.

-The new email for submissions to the Pitch Piper is pitchpiper@loldistrict.org

-Many thanks to Bob Fricke, Bill Fricke, Jay Althof, Bob Brey, and Justin McCullough as we make the transition and continue to evolve district communications.

-Reminder to choruses to send in your show posters

-Reminder to quartets that ad space is available and affordable!

-Reminder to check out all the work that’s gone into the website! www.loldistrict.org

-Also a special note of sponsorship to Matt Curtis and www.choraltracks.com



Choral Tracks
Practice Made Simple



Land O' Lakes District Association of
Chapters of SPEBSQSA Inc.
110 7th Avenue North
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DATED MATERIAL ENCLOSED

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Sam Sather, Erik Eliason, James Estes, Scott Perau
info@chordsmash.com
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VOCALITY
classic a cappella sound
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Colin
Matt
Nate
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715-498-1198
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couleeclassicquartet@gmail.com
Facebook: Coulee Classic quartet



LO'L Home Page on the
Internet: <http://loldistrict.org>



LO'L has a Facebook Page at
www.facebook.com/LOLDistrictBHS/



Calendar

NOTE: Dates shown on this page are for those activities that have proper clearance through the District Secretary. Please DO NOT send show registrations to the editor, DO notify:

BOB BREY, Secretary
Land O' Lakes District
1411 S 31st Street
Manitowoc, WI 54220
rwbrey1950@gmail.com
2023



March

25 Willmar, MN

April

15 St. Croix Valley, MN
15 Madison, WI
15 Appleton, WI
22 Manitowoc County, WI
22 Dunn County, WI
23 Lacrosse, WI
29 Mankato, Mn



May

5-6 Northern Pines Harmony Brigade
13 Green Bay, WI
20 Wisconsin Youth Harmony Festival - Stevens Point

July

2-9 International Convention - Louisville, KY

September

23 Minneapolis, MN
30 Stevens Point, WI

October

13-14 Minneapolis, MN
Annual Convention

December

2 St. Croix Valley

