

# The Pitch Piper

72 YEARS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY

OVER 714,089 SQUARE MILES

Volume 72, Number 1

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District

January – February 2020

## ***District Contest Changes – The Future Will Be Fun!***



Gordon Billows  
President



Jay Althof  
Executive Vice President

It is often said, the only constant is change. And we are making some changes in how we will administer our contests for 2020. First a little background that will help explain why we are making these changes.

For the past few years we have seen an overall decline in our membership and as such the attendance at our competitions and conventions has also declined. And last year we announced that any group that scored 65 or better at the prior District Contest automatically qualified to compete in the current year. When our Board of Directors worked through planning for our Spring contests, we determined that there would be relatively few choruses and quartets that would need to qualify for District.

So, given the cost of holding contests with very few participants, the Board decided to cancel the Spring District qualification contests and invite all registered quartets and choruses who want to compete at the District level to come to Rochester in the Fall. We hope that this will result in having a larger and really fun District convention.

We also need to provide the opportunity for our District quartets to qualify for the International competition. In 2020 we will hold a Preliminary qualification contest the first weekend in May in the Twin Cities area. We will identify a venue soon and share those details when they become available. Then in the Fall we will have a second Preliminary contest along with our District contest to qualify groups for 2021. This sets us up for having a single District level contest in 2021 and beyond.

Going forward, we have every expectation that working together with all our chapters we will find ways to increase our membership and as such hope to have more quartets and choruses who will want to participate in the contests at our Fall convention. As that occurs, we will reinstate District qualification options, which may include the use of video in a process that is both time and cost effective.

We are excited about the future of our District and appreciate everyone's flexibility as we transition to our new approach through 2020.

See Steve Johnson's article for clarification/specifics on page 4.



# 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.

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**LO'L has a Facebook Page at [www.facebook.com/LOLDistrictBHS/](http://www.facebook.com/LOLDistrictBHS/)**

## I Have a Song to Sing!

**Submitted by Gordon Billows - LO'L District President**



Land O' Lakes was well represented at the Midwinter Convention in Jacksonville. Our senior's quartet, Stalemate, took 14th place (out of 25) with a score of 70.8! LOL had two youth choruses on stage - Prairie Chords with 27 students from Regina and Saskatoon and St Louis Park Middle School with 83 students.

Both scored EXCELLENT - an improvement from GOOD at their last Midwinter performance! Best Sellers, a female youth quartet from Onalaska, MI, took SECOND place with an OUTSTANDING score. Be assured that your Parade of Checks donations to LOL Youth in Harmony is providing good support for all these young persons! It was definitely a pleasure to see their excitement and interaction with many of the seniors and top quartet champions throughout their week at Midwinter. Yes, they are our future and they are loving 4-part harmony, Barbershop style, as we all do!

Del Ryberg's Leadership Training Academy committee produced another very successful event with many excellent sessions and presenters. Many of us may have been a tad stressed returning home after the weekend storm, but the knowledge and experience gained by the attendees will go a long way in moving our Chapters forward in 2020. About 70% of our Chapters were represented at LTA.

Kudos to our LOL Administration Team for introducing, debating and resolving several very important and complex issues at the LOL Board meetings held at the Leadership Training Academy. Countless hours over the next few days produced details regarding LOL contests, membership and communications. I thank EVP Jay Althof and the District Officers for hammering out the details in preparation for the policy changes and preparing the information for our membership and District Officers. We believe that the changes and initiatives we are adopting are in the best interest of our members, Chapters and District.

The LOL Administration Team welcomes the 15 new Chapter Presidents and trusts that their tenure will be as successful and rewarding as those who have served in the past or who continue to serve in that role now. Your dedication and leadership is appreciated. Your Chapter Advocate is looking forward to working with their assigned Chapters to make 2020 a better year with improved and continuing opportunities for education, outreach, communications and interaction. We are there to serve your Chapter and members - involve and communicate with us. Chapter Advocate contact information can be found on Page 10 of the 2020 LOL District Directory.

Special recognition goes out to **Ed Selissen** of the Green Bay Chapter - a **70 Year** member of the Barbershop Harmony Society (SPEBSQSA)!



## Editor “Senior Moment”

(Here is the correct ending to the Article in the November/December issue “Say Farewell to a Legend. Sorry for publishing the wrong file)

Submitted by Bob Dykstra

John and the Hut Four retired in 1972 (over John's objection as I recall) and he took a 12-year break from quartet singing. During this hiatus, however, John organized and sang in a trio called “Them” in which the vocals were accompanied by John on a standup bass and Dan Howard (and later Wes Hatlestad) on guitar. This experience actually was instrumental in leading to the formation of the Salty Dogs quartet in 1984 in which Ron Thomley sang tenor, I sang lead, Wes Hatlestad sang bari and played guitar, and John sang bass while gleefully plunking on a standup bass. John whole-heartedly supported the Dawgs' agreement that we never compete and that we seek out musical numbers that were outside the typical barbershop quartet fare. The concept worked wonderfully well for about 17 years, in good measure because of John's ability to come across the footlights.

I should also point out that John directed the City of Lakes Sweet Adelines chorus for a time in the late fifties and early sixties. He married Caryl Cordes, one of the members of his chorus, in 1959 and they lived in harmony (not the town) for sixty years. It's a huge understatement to say that John Hansen will be missed by members of this wonderful hobby of ours. I certainly was blessed to spend 37 years of travel, lodging, and sharing the stage with this unique talent. RIP old friend!



## HOF INDUCTEES “The Rest of the Story”

### Data provided by the HOF committee

Continued from the Nov/Dec 2019 Pitch Piper...

### ROAD RUNNERS QUARTET

1972 LOL District Champion/Ron Thomley-tenor, Ron Strong-lead, Dwight (Wile E.) Mennenga-bari, Norm Wolfe-bass. The quartet represented the LOL for 8-years on the International Stage. Wolfe and Mennenga sang for the entire 30-year career of the quartet.

Over the years change in personnel included Ken Agre, Norm Erickson, Bruce O'Dell, and Rich Slind.

In the beginning the original four were all members of the Minneapolis chapter and during their career sang on chapter shows throughout the United States and Canada.

### BOB GALL

A 52-year member of the Racine Dairy Statesmen. Ran three very successful “Real Men Do Sing Festivals” at Carthage College and the Youth Outreach Program. He is the recipient of 30 men of note awards, led the Racine chorus to a District championship in 1976 and has been active in various competing quartets.

## NORMAN STARKS

Norman made many significant contributions to the entire BHS and put the LOL on the map. Mac Huff and Norm worked together and created several songs that have been sung by International Champion quartets over the years.

*Little Girl* was written for his 3-year old daughter Trish on his way to a business meeting which was sung by both The Renegades and Boston Common. Another song, *Sleeping Child*, was sung by The Suntones and also by Happiness Emporium when they won International in 1975. At the request of Norm's second daughter Deena, he wrote *Fly Away Little Girl* which was sung for the first time at her wedding. Last but not least for family he wrote *Just a Gentle Thought or Two* for his wife Phyllis.

Norm wrote *Sweet and Lovely*, a song sung by barbershoppers, probably weekly, all over the society which was published in the Polecat Song Book in 1971. This recap is just the tip of the iceberg of Norm's contribution to the Barbershop style songs we sing today.



## Living Skies Chorus Annual Christmas Benefit Show

Submitted by Jim Dave Pearce

December 9th was the date for the Regina Chapter's Living Skies Chorus annual Christmas benefit show for Sing Canada Harmony. This is the 4th consecutive year of the event which has totaled over \$7,000.00 in scholarship money for the only Canadian charity solely devoted to promoting singing at all levels in Canadian schools and communities. The concert took place at Westminster United Church in Regina which has hosted the event several times in the past four years, and was dedicated to Dick Carr, long time musician, member and barbershopper who passed away on November 26th, 2019.

In addition to the Living Skies Chorus, guest performers were, “A Squeeze of Scotch”, local Country Singer, Marney Duncan-Carey and of course Regina's mixed youth barbershop chorus, “Harmony 2 Go”.



Dave Pearce receiving benefit cheque from Brandon Carr

An audience of just over 240 supporters attended the evening of Christmas and eclectic music.

Dick performed on CBC's Red River Jamboree in the 60's as a member of the “Altones”, and until recent weeks Dick and his Guitar was a regular performer at retirement homes, hospitals and community

events. He will be memorialized at Harmony Hall in Nashville.

On Dec. 16th, at their annual Christmas reception, Brandon Carr, son of Dick presented a cheque for \$2025 on behalf of the Living Skies chorus to Sing Canada Board member Dave Pearce, which will be distributed as scholarships to deserving Canadians. (Photo) Dick was also the chapter chair for Sing Canada for the past two years and was instrumental in helping raise funds, “So Someone Will Sing Tomorrow”.



## Your LO'L District Dues Submitted by Jack Edgerton

A number of questions and inquiries concerning LO'L District Dues were made at our 2020 LTA. I will attempt to answer them as best I can.

The annual LO'L District Dues is \$34.00. It is broken down into two (2) accounts. By District Policy, \$7.00 of this dues is placed into an account and fund to support quartets and choruses that represent LO'L at the International Convention contests (both mid-Winter and summer). The remaining \$27.00 is used as part of the funding of the overall LO'L budget expenses.

The bulk of our annual expenses is for education and training purposes. These include LO'L officer and Chapter Advocate visits and support of individual chapters; expenses (travel and lodging) incurred in the process of the execution of their duties; and, the costs of District publications (Pitch Piper, District Directory, manuals and associated distribution).

Opportunities provided by the District (LTA, Coach to Chapter, Harmony Brigade, Quartet schools, Standing Ovation, our website, etc.) are partially funded. Transportation and lodging for the LO'L President, Exec VP and C&J Director to Society required functions are funded ... as are costs of the Society Board member and Harmony Foundation Rep to our District Conventions.

YIH is a significant obligation that is NOT part of your District dues. The parade of checks and specifically noted donations are used to support the events and groups associated with YIH. A specific fund is used to keep these monies separate from general funds.

If you have further questions, please drop me a line at [ragtime75@charter.net](mailto:ragtime75@charter.net)



## Heart to Heart Mixed A Capella Quartet

Contact: Nancy Charles  
414-614-1894  
[H2HQuartet@yahoo.com](mailto:H2HQuartet@yahoo.com)

Brad & Nancy Charles  
Kirk & Barb Hyder

## Spring Contests

Submitted by Steve Johnson - Director Contest & Judging Committee

As you have read, all Division Contests have been eliminated. All quartets and choruses, male, mixed and female are invited to compete in this Fall in Rochester, MN. This contest will determine District Champion Choruses and Quartets. It will also serve as the Prelims for ALL quartets and choruses for the Cleveland International in 2021. More on that in a future Pitchpiper.

Spring Prelims May 1 & 2, 2020 have been moved from Fargo to the Twin Cities area. An official contest site has not been set. Communication will be sent out as soon as it has been set.

The Spring Prelims for 2020 will be only for male quartets wishing to qualify for International in LA this summer, 2020. Registration in Barberscore is now open for this. You should be able to log into Barberscore and register your quartet.

This Convention will also have opportunities for quartets not wishing to qualify for LA to sing for Evaluations. More on that in the next Pitchpiper.

If you have any questions about the Spring Prelim Contest, please contact me. [stvjhnsn@att.net](mailto:stvjhnsn@att.net)



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## LO'L Youth in Harmony Update!

Submitted by Jim Rasmus, Chairman, LO'L YIH Committee

We can be very proud of our youth who were at the Midwinter Convention in Jacksonville, FL!



**Best Sellers from Onalaska, WI placed 2nd in the Junior Quartet Contest!!**



**Prairie Chords from Regina-Saskatoon (Sask) received an Excellent rating!**



**The St. Louis Park (MN) Middle School Chorus also received an Excellent rating!**

Looking ahead, the following **Youth in Harmony Workshops** are scheduled (contact):

- Windom (MN) YIH Festival – Jan. 18 > Jay Imker: jimker@centurytel.net
- Willmar (MN) YIH Event – Feb. 1 > Jon Schmidt: jon.schmidt@datasuccessinc.com

**Wisconsin SuperSing Events** > <http://super-sing.org/>

- Oshkosh on Jan. 25 > Craig LaPoint: cmlapoint120@gmail.com
- Stevens Point on Jan. 25 > Tim Kunze: timothy.kunze@gmail.com

There are three other YIH events still in planning stages (contact):

- Amery YIH Workshop > Jon Buss: allegrobuss@gmail.com
- Southeastern Wisconsin Super Sing > Jack Ryback: jryback49@gmail.com
- Greater St. Paul (MN) YIH Event > Scott Zoellner: shzdad@yahoo.com

**The Barbershop Club** is a new initiative that allows SCHOOLS to establish a limited membership presence with BHS. Please pass this information to the music educators you are in touch with! It provides access to free music, recruitment resources, a Club Orientation Guide, group discounts on events and club-related items from BHS, and more! For more information, go to: <https://www.barbershop.org/landing-pages/start-a-bhs-club>.

Don't forget the **4-minute NextGen video** which is very useful as you visit schools to generate interest among music educators and students to sing barbershop! It's available on YouTube at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkyJwOBFO\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hkyJwOBFO_0), or contact me and I'll send you a download.

Finally, be sure to remind your music educators to seek a scholarship (open until May 1st) to attend **Harmony University! All Chapters should consider offering support for transportation for ME's to and from HU!** ME's can receive Continuing Education Units and graduate credits. Go to: <https://www.barbershop.org/events/harmony-university/scholarships#music-educators>





## Reflections On Our Leadership Academy/Chord College

Submitted by Jay Althof - Executive Vice President

Those who were able to successfully navigate through the snow storm and attend the Leadership Academy and Chord College in River Falls, Wisconsin, had a great time and were exposed to many great classes. A huge thank you to the team that organized and made it all happen: Del Ryberg, Arv Zink, Lowell Bennes, Judd Orff, Dave Sylte and Bob Fricke. Fortunately, the storm wasn't as bad as predicted and we had very good attendance. It never ceases to amaze me how talented our volunteer instructors are. And the willingness of both the faculty and attendees to take time out of their busy lives to come together and share their experiences and wisdom to help make our chapters and District ever better is fantastic!

One of the classes I had the honor to lead was titled: The Barbershop Paradox. The key premise is that sometimes we take ourselves too seriously. For example, if we get too focused on contest results. And that sometimes we don't take ourselves seriously enough. And that is because what we provide to our members and guests is a wonderful and safe environment that bridges all sorts of social diversity and builds stronger communities.

Some people ask: "Why is it important to grow our membership?". That is a fair question. My answer lies in the point made above that beyond the enjoyment we have due to singing barbershop, we have the opportunity to truly make a difference in peoples' lives. So the more members we have, the more positive impact we can have for our members and in our communities.

As part of the class we all took a few minutes to identify our individual top 5 aspects of our barbershop experience. Then we contemplated what our lives would be like if we lost those aspects. As you can imagine, none of us would like that to happen and would work very hard to avoid that loss. My hope and desire is that we use that passion to motivate all of us to invite more people to join us in this wonderful hobby that truly has a greater good than just singing. The class participants each came up with at least one idea/action that they plan to take back to their chapters to encourage growth.

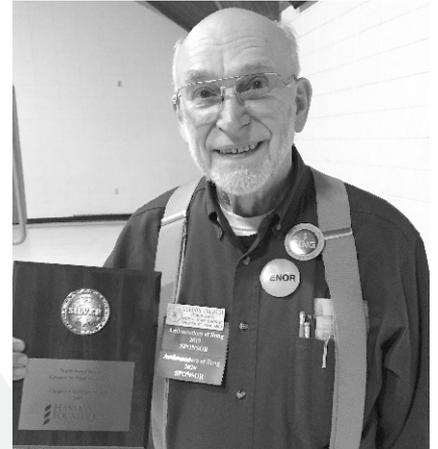
As part of the District Board of Directors, I can assure you that we also want to help the chapters grow and we will be working with the chapters in 2020 and beyond to find creative ways to do just that. As many of us say after singing "Keep The Whole World Singing", "It's Great To Be A Barbershopper!" And it truly is! Let's get many, many more people to join us



## Greater St. Paul Area Chapter Wins 2nd Place Award in Harmony Foundation International Chapter Challenge!

Submitted by North Star Chorus

The Chapter Challenge stressed the importance of everyone supporting Harmony Foundation. Between October 2018 and September 2019, every member was encouraged to donate. The five BHS chapters with the highest percentage of member participation were recognized at the 2020 Jacksonville Midwinter Convention. The St Paul Area Chapter was second place. Thanks to our member, Gordon Everest, for his work getting 78% of the membership to contribute.



### Quartet Coaching Schools Return!

LO'L is excited to announce the return of quartet coaching schools. Schools are scheduled in the Twin Cities (March 7th) and Appleton (March 14th).

Registration forms are available on the LO'L website under events or contact Derek Glenna (summitfuneral@gmail.com) for the Twin Cities school or Ken Bester (shadowbama@hotmail.com) for the Appleton school. Space is limited!



### 2019 Chapter B.O.T.Y. Winners

Manitowoc, WI  
- Randy Detjen  
Winnipeg, MB  
- Chris Magas

Polk County, WI  
- Dan Smith  
Stevens Point, WI  
- Norm Barnard



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## 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:

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2020

### March

7 Milwaukee, WI  
Geneva

### April

4 Dunn County, WI  
4 St. Cloud, MN  
4 St. Croix Valley, MN  
18 Manitowoc County, WI  
Instant Classic  
18 Appleton, WI  
After Hours  
18 Mankato, MN  
18 Windom, MN  
18 Willmar, MN  
25 Minneapolis, MN

### May

1-2 Twin Cities, MN Metro  
LO'L Convention  
and Int'l Prelims  
16 Green Bay, WI

### June/July

28-5 Los Angeles, CA  
International Convention

### October

3 Stevens Point, WI  
23-24 Rochester, MN  
LO'L Fall Convention

### December

12 West Allis, WI

The 2020 District  
Directory is available  
by request via email  
at [districtdirectory@frickeprinting.com](mailto:districtdirectory@frickeprinting.com).

