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Chapters of SPEBSQSA Inc.
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72 YEARS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY

OVER 714,089 SQUARE MILES

Volume 72, Number 5

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District

September - October 2020

VERY IMPORTANT THIS YEAR

Our LOL Leadership Training Academy for 2021 Officers will stream virtual in January so the District needs the officer election results as requested on page 6 of this Pitch Piper issue. READ AND SUBMIT THE INFORMATION EXACTLY AS REQUESTED so a data base can be created to contact 2021 officers for the virtual LTA experience. Please understand the importance of this request and comply with COMPLETE REQUESTED INFORMATION. Thank you!

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
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rbrey1950@gmail.com

SECRETARY NOTE
This information is current as of 9/29/20. Please watch for updates on the LO'L website between Pitch Piper issues. Some chapters may have postponed or cancelled shows and not informed the District Secretary of such.

	2021	
<p>October</p> <p>3 Stevens Point, WI (POSTPONED) Main Street</p> <p>10 Ripon, WI (POSTPONED)</p>	<p>November</p> <p>7 Mankato, MN</p> <p>December</p> <p>12 West Allis, WI (POSTPONED)</p> <p>12-13 Hilltop, MN (possible 3rd show)</p>	<p>10 Polk County, WI (CANCELLED)</p> <p>23-24 Rochester, MN (CANCELLED) LO'L Fall Convention</p> <p>April</p> <p>10 Appleton, WI Tenacious</p> <p>10 Dunn County, WI</p> <p>17 Manitowoc County, WI</p> <p>24 Mankato, MN</p>

St. Croix Crossing Alive & Well!

Submitted by Daniel Heike



Well then, I really don't know where to begin. This past six months has literally been the strangest set of circumstances that I'm sure most of us has ever witnessed. Who could have ever imagined a scenario where almost every live musical and theatrical art form in the entire world is shut down. Politics, weather events, riots and demonstrations. We've experienced these before but we could always come together and enjoy the fellowship of song no matter what the adversity. SCX is trying to deal with the situation as best we can. The first couple weeks after the shutdown were actually a bit relaxing. After years of weekly rehearsals and work it was nice to take a little breather. Then it stretched to a month. Then six weeks. We're ready to go now and everyone is ready to get back in the groove but no such luck. The consequences and risks are still too great. So what are we doing to pass the time? Well Steve has been doing a major interior remodel on his house. After a pipe burst and caused considerable water damage, it was "time for an overhaul" as Jim Carey would say. He stays busy with ZOOM chorus rehearsals and YAHTZEE games with his remote family but they may be playing second fiddle to his ukulele and trumpet mute collection. (must be a baritone thing) His wife also gets to see a lot more of him. (I'm not going there)

Randy is enjoying his newly acquired retirement and spends a lot of time at his cabin in Northern Wisconsin. He has also been doing some remodeling, woodworking, fishing, swimming, etc.

Jared has been enjoying a relaxing summer. He has been spending more time gardening, doing fixer uppers and enjoying walks with his wife.

As for me, I'm think I'm Amish. I've discovered that all I've been doing is working and going to church. I have to check my phone to see what day it is except Amish folk don't have phones. During the lockdown, my wife and I decided that it would be a great opportunity to lose some weight so we went ketotic and were successful in our endeavor. I was also successful in needing to replace every pair of pants that I own. Between staying busy on the farm and several building projects, a martini at the end of the day looked really good. (gin is low in carbs)

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Pitch Piper

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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.

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

I Have a Song to Sing!

Submitted by Gordon Billows
LO'L District President



For many of our general members and District Officers, Barbershopping and the business of Barbershopping has continued, in spite of the Covid-19 Pandemic. Yes, we had to change things up quite a bit (Zoom, Zoom!), but it is so impressive to see just how creative and progressive our Chapters, Districts and Society have become. We are adapting to the ever changing situation and preparing for better times ahead.

Membership in our Society has definitely been declining for a number of reasons like members' age, some disgruntlement, and the Pandemic. The Barbershop Harmony Society presently has 15,981 active members. Land O' Lakes currently has

1133 members, down 185 from this time last year. Although this is disturbing in itself, our District is doing somewhat better than many of the other 17 Districts. LOL has the **5th smallest annual decline** and has the **LOWEST percentage of non-renewed members!** Our challenge is getting NEW MEMBERS, especially now with the Pandemic. In the past year Regina, Saskatchewan recruited 7 new members (congratulations)! A few Chapters have been successful in recruiting new members by inviting guests to their virtual rehearsals. I am hoping that many of the non-renewed members will be returning when the Pandemic is under control and Chapters return to live rehearsals. We all miss the singing and comradery and look forward to better times Barbershopping together. BTW/stay tuned – a membership recruitment program is being developed by Paul Ellinger of Supercharging Your Chapter fame.

Some Chapters have graduated from

simple Zoom chorus rehearsals and are also producing song videos. Winnipeg's River City Sound mixed chorus has their "Dream Lover" video on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=InWoXGPj55c>) and is working on "Bridge Over Troubled Waters". If your Chapter produces a video, send the link to me. We will look into the possibility of having the videos posted on Land O' Lakes website for more Barbershop enthusiasts to enjoy. There are 6 Chapters listed on the LOL website inviting you to their virtual rehearsals. If your Chapter is having these rehearsals and is not listed, consider submitting the information to LOL Webmaster Tyler Smith. We would appreciate the opportunity to join you some evening!

Thanks to Executive VP, Jay Althof, the LOL Board has been hosting virtual monthly meetings to keep us on track and planning for the remainder of this year and also for 2021. Our meetings have also

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Charitable Giving

Submitted by Scott Zoellner & Steve Hardy

As we head towards the end of what has been a very strange year, there are some tax changes some of us may want to consider involving IRA distributions. Until this year, the age when people were required to start taking money out of their IRAs was 70-1/2. This has been changed to age 72, unless you've already started taking money out, and it's possible that regardless of your age, no payments are required for this year anyway. But – if you are inclined to make charitable contributions, not just to BHS or Harmony Foundation, there are new ways to do it that allow you to make them directly from some IRAs. This means that money you would normally be required to pay tax on can be given to qualifying charities in pretax dollars without having to itemize deductions. And the charity won't pay taxes on the money either.

Think about it. Contributions made this way lower your taxable income, possibly lowering your overall tax burden. This may also lower your Medicare premiums, while more of your hard-earned money is available for supporting organizations you'd like to support. Why would you want to pay taxes on money you're giving away anyway? And it all happens without having to go through the pain of itemizing deductions, if you can even do that anymore! If you and your spouse file taxes jointly both of you can do this, lowering your taxable income even further.

Who can do this? If you are currently required to take money from your IRAs, (a Required Minimum Distribution or RMD), you can do this! It's called the **IRA Charitable Rollover**, sometimes called a **Qualified Charitable Distribution**, or **QCD**. The money can go to your church, BHS, Harmony Foundation, your local chapter or district, or other favorite charities. Even all of these at once. The restrictions are that you can give any amount up to the total of your annual required distribution as long as the total doesn't exceed \$100,000 per taxpayer. Also, and this is important, the money can't come from you. It must be made directly from the IRA. If the money is paid to you, and you send it to the charity, it doesn't qualify for the program.

The government has made some decisions in the past couple years that made charitable giving more difficult. For those who qualify, this is a great way for you to get more bang for your charitable dollar, and there's no charge for doing it. If you haven't figured out how you feel about the BHS/Harmony Foundation split yet, you can even make a contribution to your local chapter instead until you figure it out. 100% of the money goes to the chapter without the overhead of fundraisers or infrastructure.

Financial planning requires you have knowledge of the rules in advance, so hopefully you're reading this in time for you to take advantage of it before the end of the year. Talk to your financial or tax person before your IRA automatically sends you your check to see how you can make this program work to your advantage

LO'L Youth in Harmony Update!

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

Our committee met last night (09/20/2020) to discuss the special challenges the COVID Pandemic presents us. There were several suggestions made that choruses around the LOL might consider exploring as you strive to navigate the new landscape of working with music educators. Don't be bashful about reaching out to the music educators in your area! In fact, this may be a particularly important time to establish or continue your relationships with ME's!!

You will need to carefully consider the threat of COVID in your area, but here are some practical suggestions that came from two music educators on our committee:

- Call your music educators and offer to help them in whatever ways you can identify. Please understand that virtual learning is presenting incredibly special challenges to music educators who – like us – are likely not able to gather their classes and choruses together to sing!
- While choruses may not gather – depending upon your local situation – it may be possible to have quartets get together. Consider offering your help to work with quartets.
- **Focus on singing tags!** Young people love them as much as many of us do. It's easier to engage in a tag than to get them to buy into a whole song. Offer to help teach tags to the kids.
- Go to: <https://www.barbershoptags.com/> for ideas. (Guess who you see/hear right up front on their homepage!) There are even competitions being offered with up to \$7000 in prizes!!
- Download the "TagMaster" and/or "GoodTags" apps on your phone and share them with the ME's and young people you meet.
- Consider reaching out to our favorite quartet(s) and ask them to record some tags that you can offer to your music educators. Or, invite them to "Zoom" into a music class someday.
- Watch our webpage at – <http://www.loldistrict.org/directory/yih.html> – for more suggestions and connections.

The Wisconsin Youth Harmony Festival (WYHF) has set their date for Saturday, May 15, 2021. Their application for 501(c)(3) status has been granted which will make their fund-raising easier. Plans are moving forward for a Saskatchewan Quartet Competition in 2021.

Once again, we'd remind you the Barbershop Harmony Society has upgraded our Youth Policies which affects all our Chapters and the District. For more information on what steps you need to be taking, go to <https://www.barbershop.org/youth-protection-update-spring-2020>.

This report may be my last as chair of the LOL District Youth in Harmony Committee. I am confident YIH is in good hands in the LOL There are great days ahead for our hobby and our passion for singing barbershop! Stay well and be safe! .



Lakes Area Country Gentlemen Masked Singers!

Submitted by Gary Alexander

Sometime in May after the Covid-19 shutdowns were initiated, the Lakes Area Country Gentlemen, (which now includes ladies) began having Zoom rehearsals. Lacking the technology to sync everyone, after trying to sing to each other, we realized after one session that it was useless to sing over Zoom with all of us unmuted because there were delays in the sound from others coming across the internet. So we began to rehearse by having the director play the recorded song and with all of us muted, we sang along with the recording and watched the director direct. Of course, he could not give any feedback as to how we sounded, and he was limited to directing the way it was sung on the recording.

This of course was not very satisfying as probably many chapters have found by doing rehearsals this way. Not being able to hear others, and having to strictly follow the interpretation of the recording were quite frustrating. We longed for something better and for the actual physical contact, even if 6 ft. away, of our fellow choristers. Of course many were concerned about the safety of a personal meeting, and probably rightly so because of the information we have read about the dangers of spreading the virus by many people singing in a closed space. And who wants to try to sing wearing a mask?

A breakthrough came in late August. The daughter of one of the ladies in our group makes masks, and she developed a "singer's mask" which had boning installed that kept the mask about 2" away from the mouth which made singing with a mask on more agreeable. We also read some guidelines that the Society had presented for singing as a group and decided to try a rehearsal with the masks and following these guidelines.



On Monday night Aug. 31 we had our first in person rehearsal. The hall we rehearse in, Horticultural Hall in Lake Geneva, fortunately has several options for places to rehearse. Everyone was of course required to wear a mask. The mask could be of your own choosing, but everyone that attended chose to purchase one of the singer's masks, which made us all look a bit like ducks. We first rehearsed in the outdoor courtyard, which worked out well in spite of having to swat a few mosquitoes. We

had enough daylight with our 7:00 PM start and after about 20 minutes we moved inside. We had learned that we should only sing indoors for about 30 minutes before the air would potentially become saturated, so we timed ourselves, and spaced out at least 6 feet and had our director farther away from everyone. We only had about 12 of our 26 members, so it wasn't difficult in the room we use, and we could easily accommodate the whole group with social distancing. After our 30 minutes of what we thought was a worthwhile rehearsal, we moved to a large hallway and spent another 15-20 minutes wrapping up with some quarteting and "Keep The Whole World Singing".

The next Monday was Labor Day and we always suspend rehearsals on holiday weekends, so we will not get together again till Sept. 14, which we are all looking forward to. Here are a couple of photos of the outside rehearsal. If anyone is interested in the singers mask we were using, here is a link to the web site of the lady that makes them. https://www.etsy.com/shop/HawthorneSewing?ref=shop_sugg



Tribute to a Legacy Contest Competitor

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It's been a pleasure putting these facts and remembrances together. I've known Doug Miller for more than 55 years and have enjoyed his friendship and sharing the stage with a number of his quartets. As I watched the Legacy Contest in August and Doug's performance with the Sundowners, I realized that a vast majority of Twin City Area Barbershoppers likely have limited knowledge of his marvelous achievements before he arrived in the Land O'Lakes District, the 10,000 Lakes Division, and the Minneapolis Chapter nearly 40 years ago. I trust that this tribute adequately carries my admiration and respect for his amazing Barbershop career.



Updates from your District Leadership Team

Submitted by Jay Althof, Executive Vice President

Entering the Fall season brings changes all around us. The leaves are changing color, harvest has begun for many of our farmers and schools have re-started, albeit in a different mode than usual. Other changes include our Chapters that would typically be having Fall shows have canceled those plans and we aren't hosting our District Fall convention this year. However, we have been busy planning several future events and I know we are all looking forward to the day when we can get back together, to renew friendships, have fun and ring some chords! Here are several updates.

Board Meeting and HOD Meeting – October 2020

Each month our Board of Directors and other key team leaders meeting via Zoom to work on various projects and programs within our District. In October we have two official meetings. First, on October 18th at 7:00 PM we will have our Fall Board Meeting. Second on October 25th at 7:30 PM we will have our House of Delegates meeting. Both will be held via Zoom and our District Secretary, Bob Brey, has sent notifications to the Chapter leaders, along with the Zoom login information. We will have several key topics to discuss at the Board meeting, and we will elect our 2021 District officers in conjunction with the House of Delegates meeting. This will also be a good opportunity for the Chapter leaders to share with the Board, feedback, input and suggestions for ways to continue to improve the health of our Chapters and District.

Harmony Foundation, International – October 2020

In the last PitchPiper I submitted an article to help explain the split between the Harmony Foundation (HFI) and the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS). I appreciate the positive comments I received from that article. One additional question I received was: "Couldn't someone, or some group, try to get those two organizations to sit down and find a way to work together?"

As some of you know, there is a group called the District Presidents Council (DPC) that is comprised of each District President and Executive Vice President. This council is primarily focused on sharing best practices across all the Districts. However, when the council became aware of the split, we did take action. Following is a communique from the DPC.

In the early stages of the BHS/HFI redefined relationship, it was the hope of DPC that the two organizations could work things out by focusing on common ground. The DPC recommended and mediated a series of dialogues with both groups that, while not generating the cohesion originally sought, did showcase a significant degree of continued alignment. Although the two groups are moving forward differently, both are committed to encouraging people to sing and engage together in harmony.

Both entities have visions, priorities and outreach. How these align with each chapter and member should be a local/personal decision. The DPC will continue to shepherd ongoing dialogue with both groups, careful to protect an environment of encouragement and enjoyment across the barbershop spectrum.

What was the DPC's involvement in things?

Very early on, the DPC was in conversation with HFI and BHS and suggested and moderated meetings with the two groups. We used this dialogue to listen and then took time to gather and review forthcoming information from both organizations. Our goal has been to make both a circumspective and unbiased assessment of the new environment.

What should we do if some of our members want to support just one of the organizations, while others want to support both?

If individuals or chapters choose to support one or both groups, that is, and should be, their choice. How to arrive at a decision is up to the individuals and chapters. BHS and HFI are happy to provide information on how your support would be utilized.

Should we give member information to HFI?

Not at this point. However, you should feel free to invite HFI and/or BHS to your district conventions, district events, chapter events and virtual meetings to learn more about each group, its priorities and how it will operate.

Virtual Christmas Show – December 2020

A team led by Judd Orff, Steve Zorn and Jeff Knight are gathering audio and video material from our Chapters and quartets that will be assembled into a virtual Christmas show. Many details are yet to be completed, but if your quartet or chapter is interested in submitting material to join the 18 chapters and 4 quartets that have already provided material, please contact Judd (juddorff3108@msn.com) and send him your DVD/CD/YouTube link by October 15th. We will then start piecing together all the material into a show that we will broadcast and make available in December. It will be great fun to see clips from so many of our friends around the District, enjoy some holiday music and reinforce what a great hobby we have!

Innovation and Technology Team – December 2020

As I indicated in the last PitchPiper, we have a team led by Justin McCullough and myself that is focused on enhancing how we communicate and provide important information to all our District members. We are working closely with Harmony Hall as they complete a project that will replace the "Member Center". We have shared our requirements with them and hope to leverage that project for our use within the District. We are also

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Another Get To Know Joe Barbershopper: My Journey to Joining the GNU

Submitted by Evi Stiles, GNU Tenor

I've been a musician my entire life. From a young age, people could tell there was something special about how I connected with music on a different level than my peers. I couldn't get enough of practicing, improving, performing, and learning all I could about music.

One of my favorite things about music was the positive reinforcement I got from my musical leaders. Raised as an only child by an extremely overworked single father, any attention I got from adults was wonderful. Recognition of my hard work and knowing it had benefitted other people's lives was intoxicating. Once I graduated high school, though, opportunities to continue my musical development became scarce. After an unsuccessful year or two of trying to be a beginner level piano teacher, I decided life had other plans for me and I moved from my hometown of Houston, Texas, to Plymouth, Minn.

After a few years in Minnesota, I learned more about my sexuality and identity, and slowly came around to the idea that it was OK for me to like both boys and girls. I realized I wasn't the only person on the planet feeling like I was a man trapped in a woman's body. The day I learned what transgender meant, the world suddenly felt open and more welcoming to me in a way it never had before.

While at the annual Pride Festival in Minneapolis, as my true self for the first time, I stumbled upon a booth for a Twin Cities-based LGBT+ orchestra. The idea of giving music another try sent me over the moon with glee. Here was a chance to start playing violin again in an orchestra, with people who were similar to and welcoming to me.

My first orchestra rehearsal was exciting. I was assigned to my section and given new music in a folder with my name on it. I made sure to introduce myself to as many members as I could, and everyone was plenty polite. Playing music again was exciting, yet something about the group didn't sit well with me.

I soon began to feel very alone in that orchestra. For one, everyone was too busy to hang out outside of rehearsal. I also realized I had many more years of professional training and experience than most of the others and disliked being stuck at a skill level where I wouldn't get better over time. If you're not constantly improving, what's the point in playing?

When concert season came, my stress levels were high. Everyone still felt like a stranger, and I felt like I was just filling a chair instead of contributing. After the performance, there was an afterglow dinner at a bar/restaurant. Every single person I asked to sit with said the seats at their table were taken. It became clear: this group did not have a space for me to exist. The group already had its cliques and I was not one of them. It was one of the loneliest experiences of my life.

Some months later, I began learning about barbershop. After a few hours of YouTube videos, I decided I had to try it and searched online for a group to join. Enter: The Great Northern Union.

I finally worked up the nerve to attend my first GNU rehearsal and what a rehearsal it was! The moment I walked through GNU's door, Membership Director Corey Hanson stood up from the guest-greeting table and met me with a warm handshake and a broad smile. I was given a guest music folder, and was told about the audition process, should I decide to join. The whirlwind of fun and excitement I experienced that night was absolutely life changing. Every person on the risers was talented, and they were having fun at the same time. I had never been in a room that full of emotion before. I felt more at home than I've ever felt before.

I'm certain every single GNU member introduced themselves to me and asked how I heard about the chorus, how long I had been singing, etc. The GNU's welcoming nature brought me to joy-filled tears on the drive home. I couldn't believe it was actually real.

The GNU's inclusiveness throughout the night made me feel like I had known these folks for years. Following rehearsal, they invited me to their get-together at a local restaurant/bar. Two different people asked if I wanted to sit by them. After we ate, we headed to the atrium to sing tags, which were both fun and easy to learn. Importantly, each GNU member gendered me correctly. I felt respected and welcome like never before.

The next day I woke up to 25 new friend requests on Facebook, and I knew then I'd found my new barbershop family. The kicker was the fact that I knew singing with GNU would offer me room to improve and goals to strive for musically as well.

Later that year, I stopped attending orchestra rehearsals. It wasn't fulfilling musically or socially. Instead, I had stumbled upon a group of open and loving cisgendered dudes who all cared about who I was. They wanted me around AND they wanted to help me improve. Then-Interim GNU Director Scott Kvigne, specifically, took time to teach me the choreography. I passed my auditions with ease, and never once felt like anyone was judging me. I've been a member of the GNU ever since, and my future looks so much brighter now that I have a barbershop family I'm proud to call my own.

Land O' Lakes Pitch Piper

Have you missed copies of the Pitch Piper?
Current and archived copies of your District newsletters are stored conveniently on our website.
Any missed copies can be downloaded directly to your computer or printed.
<http://www.loldistrict.org/aboutus/pitchpiper.html>



Updates from your District Leadership Team

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planning to have at least an early version of an updated Website up and running by the end of this year.

Virtual Leadership Academy – January 2021

On January 16th we will hold our Leadership Academy for the core administrative roles within our Chapters, via Zoom. Dave Sylte has an article in this edition of the PitchPiper with additional information. The first order of business is to let Bob Brey know who each of your Chapter officers will be for 2021 so we can provide details on how to participate in this important training session. Please share the names and e-mails of your officers with Bob as soon as possible. (rwbrey1950@gmail.com)

Spring Convention – April/May 2021

At this point we have not made a final determination regarding holding a Spring Convention. The primary purpose would be to qualify groups for the planned International Competition to be held in July of 2021. Conversations with Harmony Hall indicate that we may have flexibility on how to qualify our groups. This could include use of video for quartets and the option of attending the convention and participating in a chorus festival prior to the official competition and potentially qualifying as part of the festival. We will share more information as it becomes available toward the end of this year.

Fall Convention – October 2021

Planning has continued for our **Fall convention on October 15-16, 2021**. Arv Zenk and Del Ryberg have identified a new, and excellent venue for the convention and competition in Rochester, MN, but it required that we move the date forward one week from our traditional 4th week in October. We will utilize both the DoubleTree and new Hilton hotels. They are very close to each other, accessible via

the skyway and will provide comfortable and enjoyable spaces for all the events associated with our convention. So put this date on your calendar and let's all plan to have a great time at our District "reunion" convention!

Closing Thoughts

As you can see, your District leaders continue to be fully engaged and busy helping keep Barbershop Harmony alive and well within the LO'L District. Many of our chapters are holding meetings and rehearsals virtually. More are staying connected with phone calls and e-mails. Recently, Clay Hine composed a song "It's The Music That Brings Us Together". It is a very nice piece that reminds us that that while we joined our organizations because of the music, we stay because of the friendships. (For those who are interested, search YouTube: Carolinas District It's The Music That Brings Us Together to watch a very fun virtual choir performance of that song.)

Please reach out to those Barbershop friends you haven't heard from in a while and stay connected. I look forward to providing more updates in the next PitchPiper and our monthly audio messages!

I Have a Song to Sing

...Continued from page 2

included presentations by some special guests like John Donehower (incoming Society President) and Dr. Perry White (Harmony Foundation CEO). Jay has been updating members on the Society/Harmony Foundation split in the July and this Pitch Piper issue. With the end of 2020 coming, it is recommended that LOL members research both charity organizations on line before deciding on where their charitable donations might go.

Land O' Lakes will be having a virtual Fall Board meeting on October 18th and the virtual House of Delegates meeting on October 25th. We are hoping that all Chapter Presidents or their representatives will participate in the House of Delegates meeting. The Spring meeting was well "attended" and provided Chapter Presidents an opportunity to present updates on their chapter's progress and future plans. The Fall meeting agenda will again encourage Presidents or representative to participate in District discussions, reporting and voting on the 2021 District Board. The LOL Parade of Checks will be a topic on the House of Delegates' agenda.

Keep safe, keep well so we can sing together again.

2021 Slate of Officers

Thanks to the Nominating committee (Dan True, John Plazek, and Mark McLaurin) who helped put this slate of officer candidates forward for election. Thanks to the board members and candidates for volunteering to serve. I am excited and optimistic for 2021, Steve Zorn, Chairman.

- President** – Jay Althof
- Executive Vice President** – Mike Lietke
- Secretary (Bob Brey)** – Bob Brey
- Treasurer (Jack Edgerton)** – Jack Edgerton
- Vice President West Region** - Justin McCullough
- Vice President Central Region** - Ken Mettler
- Vice President East Region** - Scott Finley
- Immediate Past President** – Gordon Billows
- Director of Events** – Arv Zenk
- Director Chapter Support & Development** – Judd Orff
- Director of Contest & Judging** – Steve Johnson



Get To Know

Joe Barbershopper

The Beginning of an On-Going Section of the Pitch Piper

Submitted by Jay Althof

Nate Peplinski "Interview"

• Nate, tell us a little about your background. Where did you grow up? What did your parents do for employment? Siblings? Etc.

I grew up the youngest of 7 on a 60-cow dairy farm in Amherst, Wisconsin, near Stevens Point. My parents are Mike and Mary, as many of the district quartet guys would know from the Stevens Point Chapter and Centre Point Sweet Adelines shows and afterglows.

• What was your education and extracurricular activities?

I went to a small high school so I was able to be active in as many extracurriculars as I could. Band (tuba), choir, FFA, quiz bowl, math league, forensics, football, wrestling, track. I'm sure I'm forgetting some others. Then I attended UW-Platteville majoring in Animal Science with a minor in Philosophy, and was active in both the men's and mixed choirs all four years.

• What has been your career?

Most of my career was spent in dairy farming, albeit with "mixed results." (2009 wasn't friendly to anyone in the industry, especially a young farmer with so little equity to leverage in an historic hardship.) I got back on my feet working at Waupaca Foundry, then got back into farming for five years with a neighbor who became a tremendous friend and mentor as well. Then in June of 2019 I moved to West Salem, WI (near Lacrosse) to be with my fiancée, and started working for Matt Curtis and choraltracks.com. Talk about a career change! I do mostly computer work, and do some recording for my own projects on the side.

• How did you get involved with Barbershop?

My dad Mike has been a barbershopper with the Stevens Point chapter since before I was born, so I definitely qualify as a barbershop brat! Mom (Mary) has been

with the Sweet Adelines as well for as long as I can remember, and all the quartet people in the district know her from when she hosts and puts on after-and-after-afterglows! One of my brothers was active for a bit as well, and two of my sisters continue to quartet. Shout-out to The Humdingers!

I started when I was 13, just in time for my voice to start changing hahahaha. Sure was a blast growing up in the chapter with 40 crazy uncles, as I used to say. I'll always appreciate the intergenerational relationships I was able to build, from Director Gary Thiel to District BOTY Jack Edgerton to cousin and ADC member David, and so many more.

• You've become a successful "quartet man" how did that come about?

I've just been so fortunate. Dad's quartet Yesterday's News formed in 1985, and in 2003 I got the opportunity to join the group as tenor when Ken Knutsen (sp?) retired and moved to Minnesota. So many memories with Dad and Geno and Jim. So many local gigs, standing ovations at birthday parties, immediate re-bookings after a curling club Christmas party or a Sons of Norway banquet. Dinners out on the quartet kitty. We continued to sing until Geno unfortunately passed a couple years ago, and we reformed with good friend Roger Harris under the name "In Common." And then there's "One for the Road." What a wild ride with those guys. Building connections with everyone; drink a few beers and be social! Sing some tags! All in all, I'm just so grateful to have made so many close friends and shared some fantastic memories with great people. And also Colin.

• You are an excellent arranger, when did you start doing that and how did that progress?

Jay, you're making me blush. I really just try to let the Muse do most of the work, and stay out of the way! It was shortly before Harmony U in 2008 (shout-out to the ADC for the scholarship!) that I started dabbling in arranging, just trying to get some of these ideas from my head onto the paper and trying to expand my theory knowledge to make it come together. I've gotten some great mentoring from friends

and quartet mates Brian Plehn and Kevin Morrissey, both music teachers, to help develop my technical side.

I try to keep it simple. One tidbit that I always try to keep as a fundamental--I'll paraphrase--the first page of the arranging manual had a quote from Don Gray that said something to the effect of, "always remember that the hobby started by woodshedding. Trust your ear. If it sounds right, it usually is, so you don't always need to know the rules of why."

Then I also try to pick songs that I want to hear, or that audiences will recognize or come away humming, and stay out of the way of the song. I'm not talented enough to get too fancy! So I let the song do the work.

Also any time you're doing a composition, or communicating with anyone, remember the structure "point purpose audience persona" -- the same structure I used to teach when tutoring writing in college -- WHAT are you trying to say, WHY is it relevant, and TO WHOM. Those are the three legs of the tepee and the persona is the rope that binds them all together to take the audience on their journey.

• Tell us about your current life situation and career – we know you have a very special event coming up soon!

That's right, Jay! I'll be getting married to Samantha this fall, Nov. 7 in Wisconsin Dells (Covid allowing). We're very excited! I am currently working for Matt Curtis at choraltracks.com; I've been here just over a year and I love it! Matt is so phenomenally talented and driven and has also become a good friend.

• What else would you like to share with the District barbershoppers?

I'd like to close out with a bit of wisdom that my dad shared with me often while I was growing up: Always remember that breakfast is the most important meal of the day...Because if you're not home by then, YOU'RE IN REAL TROUBLE.



A Special Day... Again!

Submitted by John Plazek, Lead of the Four In Accord

I think everyone can agree that family is an important part of our Barbershop life. Our quartet, the **Four In Accord**, had the wonderful opportunity to sing for our Tenor, Frank Kozlowski's, granddaughter's wedding. The service was held at the beautiful Basilica of St Josephat in Milwaukee, WI on July 18, 2020. Now other quartets have sung for their families weddings before but, we were fortunate to not only sing for Frank's granddaughter's wedding but 30 years and 24 days before that, we sang for his daughter's wedding in the same location! The one thing that was different, (besides being 30 years younger) was that last time, we sang from the balcony. This time we sang in front next to the altar. That saved us the 50 step climb to the balcony. We all appreciated that change. As you can imagine, it was a very special and emotional day for all of us. Also, the Four In Accord just celebrated our 51st anniversary! It's been a great ride so far.. I'm guessing that we probably won't make it to his great, great granddaughters wedding, but then again... who knows!



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Leadership Training Academy Update

Submitted by Dave Sylte – District Education Committee

We are continuing with the planning for a virtual version of the Leadership Training Academy – Lakes Chord College (LTA-LCC) on **Saturday January 16th**. This is based on a shortened half day schedule using Zoom communications focusing on Chapter Officer Core classes. Each class would be one hour, but with an extra 30 minutes factored in for any classes that might run over the one-hour time slot. At this point we have received confirmations from the folks who will be leading each class as follows:

- **President - Larry Lewis**
- **Secretary - Tim Schutte**
- **Treasurer - Lowell Bennes**
- **VP - Music & Performance - Larry Monson**
- **VP Chapter Development- Bob Cox**
- **VP Marketing & PR - Brian Lynch**
- **Music Director - Carrie Marcotte**

Elective Classes

We have not selected nor scheduled any elective classes at this time for two reasons. First, we do not need to schedule any elective classes on the same day as the Chapter Office Core classes. These can be scheduled for a later date and they could be scheduled over several days to maximize participation. Secondly, we want to schedule topics that will be most useful to chapters and individuals considering the ongoing situation with COVID-19.

That's the latest on the virtual LTA-LCC. Watch for the Nov/Dec issue of the Pitch Piper for details on how to participate in this first round of classes.





Instructions for Submitting 2021 Directory Information

To all Land O' Lakes chapter presidents & secretaries:

The gathering of the 2021 district directory information will be handled in the same manner as it was in 2020 **except this year we are requesting an email address** for each officer. See the instructions below and submit by November 1st. Per district bylaws, chapter officer elections are to be held on or before October 15. Chapters still have to submit officer information to the Society as this form is for District Directory use only.

1. Start an email.
2. Enter districtdirectory@frickeprinting.com in the "To" address. Enter District Directory info in the subject line.
3. Reference your current 2019 LOL District Directory, and fill in the appropriate information below to update the 2020 directory. You can copy and paste the information below into an email.
4. If there is no change to any item, indicate "NC" **but an email address is requested for each.**
5. Indicate "NA", if not applicable to your chapter
6. If you have any questions completing this form, you may contact Bob Fricke via the e-mail above or at 920.684.6866
7. Once complete, click "Send"

Chapter/Chorus Name
 Meeting time and place
 Chapter Email
 Website

NOTE: For each position listed below: **name, mailing address, city/st/zip, email & phone number**

- President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- VP-Music & Performance
- VP-Chapter Development
- VP-Marketing & PR
- VP-Youth in Harmony
- Music Director

Greetings From The Heart O' Lakes Harmony Cappella Chorus from Fergus Falls, MN

Submitted by Brent Frazier

This past 6 months has been very challenging for our chorus chapter.

We have continued to keep in communication through our Director and President sending our announcements pertaining to interests of our chorus, birthday greetings and a daily joke of the day by our Past President.

On Monday, 14 September 2020 our chorus chapter assembled together in a church parking lot and social distanced by singing next to our vehicles. Director Brent Gerber directed the chorus by standing in the back of a pickup truck and speaking into a microphone which was connected to a sound system. After voice warm-ups, we sang several Pole Cat songs and a few songs that we have previously sang for our past performances.

A very brief business meeting was also conducted that evening. It was a great get together for 27 gentlemen to harmonize and socialize after a 6 month hiatus. Drone photos were taken that evening and installed on the Heart O' Lakes Harmony website for your pleasure and viewing.



St. Croix Crossing Alive & Well!

...Continued from cover

So, what next? We've decided that each guy gets to pick any song that he wants and with the aid of learning tracks, we can do a mini brigade. When we get back together we'll have four new numbers.

We also decided that for 2021, SCX will do any chapter show or function that we are able for NO CHARGE. Expenses only. We're very humbled and proud to be part of the LOL district and if we can be of any assistance in its reopening, we will do our best.

Brothers in song! Keep your head up and your spirits high for this too shall pass. We're missing all of you very much and look forward with the greatest anticipation to seeing you all soon.

Tribute to a Legacy Contest Competitor

Submitted by Bob Dykstra



I thoroughly enjoyed watching the Society's Legacy Quartet Contest featuring the best quartets never to have won the International gold medal. The Legacy Contest brought back many memories of the Hut Four's international quartet contest experiences from 1958-1969 during which we competed ten times and made the semi-finals seven times. Among the 25 quartets selected as competitors, we faced off against eight of them

on the international stage at one time or another: Easternaires; Four Rascals; Play-Tonics; Impostors; Nighthawks; Sundowners; Far Westerners; and Pacificaires. It was great seeing and hearing them again these many years later. I should add that only two of the 25 quartets (Four Chorders and Clef Dwellers) competed before the Hut Four hit the international stage. (I must be old!)

I was especially pleased to see and hear old friend Doug Miller on the contest stage lending his smooth baritone voice to the Sundowners fine rendition of "Am I Wasting My Time on You?" Doug was one of the premier quartet men in the Society during the latter years of my adventures with the Hut Four and I'd like to pay tribute to his excellence and make sure that younger Barbershoppers know that an icon lives and sings among us.

How is the following for a decade of quartet involvement and excellence? Doug earned fifth-place, fourth-place, and fourth-place medals in 1966, 1967, and 1968 singing baritone with the Sundowners. The very next year (1969) he switched voice part and quartet as he earned a fifth-place medal as bass of Avant Garde. After a one-year hiatus he switched back to bari with the Avant Garde and finished a comfortable 7th in 1971 in New Orleans. Doug apparently took another short break, then joined the Soundtracks as baritone and helped them to a 5th-place medal in 1974, top-ten finishes in 1973 and 1975, and a semi-finalist ranking in 1976. I've been told that Doug's medal with the Soundtracks in 1974 anointed him to be the first quartet man to medal in three quartets singing two different voice parts. He then decided to trade competition for comedy in the late 1970s by joining a great show quartet, the Schizo-Phonics, with whom he sang all four voice parts at one time or another.

All of these fine quartets were proud members of the Illinois District. During the period of magnificent quartet participation I've just described, Doug also somehow found time to direct the South Cook Chapter Chorus and later the Arlingtones from Arlington Heights, Illinois, who earned chorus medals under



Doug's direction in 1973, 1974, and 1975. Can anyone match that ten-year record? During the period 1966 to 1976 Doug Miller sang two different voice parts in three medalist quartets, competed nine times in international quartet competition earning five medals, and directed the Arlingtones to three medals. Not a bad decades work!

Doug then joined the Racine Chapter in the LO'L District as its director from 1976-79 before heading north to take over the baton for the Minneapolis Commodores in 1982. He led them to the International Chorus Contest from 1983-86 before stepping down to concentrate on his new-found loves of judging and administration and his continuing love for ringing seventh chords. He qualified as an Interpretation Judge in 1982 and served as category specialist from 1989-1993. He then moved to the Presentation Category from which he retired in 2014 after 32 years of service to the Society's judging program. He served on five International Contest judging panels.

Doug's contributions to the Land O'Lakes District administration included two terms as district president, three terms as Vice President of Contest and Judging, and a seat on the Society's Operations Team. He also taught at Harmony University fourteen times.

As might be expected Doug continued to lend his expertise to his first love, preserving and propagating Barbershop harmony. He currently sings with the Great Northern Union Chorus, many-time LO'L District chorus champion and International Chorus representative. During his stay in the Twin Cities Area he has sung in a number of quartets including the Gopher State Good Time Music Company, Twin City Alliance, Front Porch Harmony, Special Alliance, and Master Blend, and for the past number of years the Gay Nineties, who have been a registered quartet in the Barbershop Harmony Society since 1950. (I want to assure you that Doug has not been with them quite that long!)

In addition, for 21 years he and his wife Connie, tenor of the Four Star Collection, 1998 Sweet Adelines Queens of Harmony, sang in a mixed harmony very large quartet called Friends. Is it any wonder that my quartet, the Salty Dogs, included a reference to Doug Miller in their song stressing the unlikelihood that the Dawgs would ever make their way to the contest stage? The lyric line went like this....."When Doug Miller sings in just one group and his arms no longer wag; when (Jim) Richards doesn't know the scoop and only knows one tag.....then we'll compete again." Fortunately, those conditions were never met during the Dawgs howling years so we never had to go find a pitchpipe.

The Land O'Lakes District honored Doug for his many contributions to our district and the Barbershop Harmony Society by designating him as the LO'L Barbershopper of the year in 1999 and inducting him into the LO'L Hall of Fame in 2006.

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