The Pitch Piper

78 Years of Barbershop Harmony | Over 714,089 Square Miles

Volume 79 Number 6 | A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District | November-December 2026

LOL District Quartet Champions, Gray Duck



LOL District Chorus Champions and International Chorus District Representative, The Journeymen Chorus



What you'll find inside:

- LOL District Convention Recap, Winners, Awards, and Honorees
- District Leadership Updates
- Bob Dowma enDowment
- Social Media Successes Part 3
- Upcoming Performances and Events

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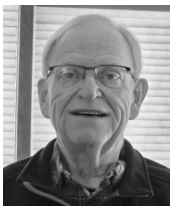
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Pitch Piper

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Land O' Lakes 2026 Fall Convention

District Seniors Quartet Champion, Pending Litigation



District Novice Quartet Champion, 404 Quartet Name Not Found



Next Gen Varsity Quartet Champion, Frostbite



Land O' Lakes 2026 Fall Convention

Barbershopper of the Year



Brent Gerber

Hall of Fame Recipients



Kordal Kombat

Joe Liles Lifetime Achievement Award Recipient



Doug Miller

2026 LOL District Quartets

(alphabetically)



404 Quartet Name Not Found



Alternative Medicine



Amateur Hours



Bandit



Chill Factor



Credit River



Diablo Sauce



Ear Doctors



ESQ



Flirts n Skirts



For The Fun Of It



Forward Fusion

2026 LOL District Quartets

(alphabetically)



Fourward Union



Frostbite



Good Treble



Gray Duck



Joyful Blend



Kordal Kombat



Lakefront



Loose Change



Mannhaven Street



Mixed Meter



Nightcap



Northwoods

2026 LOL District Quartets

(alphabetically)



PD&J



Pending Litigation



Pour Four More



Quandary



RetroFresh



Senior Class



Spice



Stone Arch Sound



Sweet Addiction



They Must Be Mad



Thrift Store Four



What's New

2026 LOL District Choruses

(alphabetically)



All Chapter Chorus



Capitol Chordsmen



Clipper City Chordsmen

2026 LOL District Choruses
(alphabetically)



Commodores



Coulee Chordsmen



Croix Chordsmen

2026 LOL District Choruses
(alphabetically)



Forward Harmony



Fox Valleyaires



Great Northern Union

2026 LOL District Choruses

(alphabetically)



Great Plains Harmony



Lakelanders Chorus



Midwest Vocal Express

2026 LOL District Choruses
(alphabetically)



Northern Gateway Chorus



North Star Chorus



The Riverblenders Chorus

2026 District Convention Showcase and More!

Submitted by Jay Althof

Wow! What another fantastic District Convention! Throughout the entire weekend, it was clear that we truly experienced this year's theme: **People Connecting Through Harmony!**

After the exciting contests, Tagatorium, AHSOW room, and countless informal gatherings, we had the opportunity to enjoy our Showcase performances. It was a very special evening filled with wonderful music, memorable moments, and plenty of reasons to celebrate. Many people deserve our thanks for making it such a success!

First, a big thank-you to **Tom Matchinsky**, who once again did a masterful job as our emcee!

Randy Rodgers promoted and directed the All Chapter Chorus, with assistance from **Dave Speidel**. More than 80 singers representing 25 chapters came together to create an amazing sound—and had a whole lot of fun doing it!

Liz Miller and Tom Matchinsky directed the Association of District Champions (ADC) Chorus. The group honored the legacy of Bob Dowma by performing two of his iconic arrangements, It's a *Good Day* and *Run, Run, Run*. Having champions from more than 50 years ago singing alongside today's champions made this performance especially meaningful.

We also celebrated some very special members of our District. Congratulations to our 2026 **BOTY**, **Brent Gerber**, and our Hall of Fame inductees, **Kordal Kombat!** Del Ryberg also announced our 2026 Joe Liles Lifetime Achievement Award recipient, **Doug Miller**. Doug's many accomplishments and his contributions to Barbershop Harmony throughout our District and beyond are truly remarkable. Congratulations, Doug, on this well-deserved honor!

And then came the quartets!

The quartet portion of the show was nothing short of spectacular. We kicked things off with our **2026 District Champions, Gray Duck**, followed by a special recognition of **Talk Of The Town**, celebrating 50 years as a quartet.

Next came a parade of District Champion quartets, bringing together decades of Land O' Lakes history and harmony:

· **Checkmate** — 1996 District Champions (30-year anniversary)
· **Bravo** — 2001 District Champions (25-year anniversary)
· **Vocality** — 2007 District Champions
· **Kordal Kombat** — 2013 District Champions
· **Chord Smash** — 2015 District Champions
· **Coulee Classic** — 2021 District Champions
· **Chill Factor** — 2023 District Champions
· **Spice** — 2024 District Champions
· **Jukebox** — 2025 District Champions

What a lineup! It was a wonderful reminder of the incredible talent, lasting friendships, and rich musical tradition that make our District so special. It truly was a spectacular show!



Checkmate, 30th Anniversary Quartet Champion

2026 District Convention Showcase and More!

(Continued)

Of course, the evening didn't end when the Showcase was over. Many of us headed to the hospitality rooms, where the camaraderie, singing, laughter, and good times continued into the early morning hours. After all, some of the best memories of a Barbershop convention happen when the formal program is finished!

On a personal note, I am especially grateful to Grant Warning and the entire convention team for pulling together another successful event. The time, effort, and energy required to make a convention like this happen are far greater than most people realize. Thank you for all you do to bring us together!

I am also deeply grateful to everyone who has contributed to the Bob Dowma Endowment. This fund will help the Land O' Lakes District support our quartets, directors, arrangers, youth, and chapters for many years to come. Let's keep those donations coming so we can extend that support even further and ensure Bob's legacy continues to inspire future generations of Barbershoppers!



Bravo, 25th Anniversary Quartet Champion

What a weekend of great music, lasting friendships, and people connecting through harmony.

It truly is GREAT to be a Barbershopper!



The ADC Chorus

Quack! Quack! Quack!

Submitted by Gray Duck

Now that the dust has settled a bit, MANY thanks and acknowledgments are due for helping us become 2026 LOL District Quartet Champions:

This is a time consuming and, let's be honest, odd but super rewarding hobby. We want to thank our partners, families and friends for all the support and love, particularly when the hobby takes us away for a few days; with special gratitude to our partners Hailey Barrett, Annalyse Elizabeth, and April Knipfer for keeping us sane and watching our little ones while we rehearse and perform. We cannot do any of this without you.

A big congratulations to The Journeymen Chorus on your district victory and for being our home chorus for the past several years and the Great Northern Union Chorus for many years prior. To Jukebox Quartet for being tremendously welcoming to us as incoming members of the Land O' Lakes Association of District Champions.

Congratulations to Kordal Kombat on your entrance into the district hall of fame and fantastic singing this weekend. Well done to the Land O' Lakes District, Jay Althof, Nathan Peplinski, James Estes and the team for putting on an excellent convention.

To the many barbershoppers, coaches, and directors in our past who have shown us the way, including (but certainly not limited to) Dean Haagenson and HarmonyWorks, Paul Tabone, Jay Fahl, Isaac Cuellar, Zach Lindquist, Pete Benson, Douglas Carnes, Scott Perau, and Gordon Moe. To Steve Case, whose tag teaching and spirit bit us all pretty young with the barbershop bug.

Lastly, there were 36(!) quartets this year on top of several hundred chorus singers. Thank you and congratulations to everyone that crossed that stage.

Barbershop is alive and well in the Land O' Lakes District. We are tremendously grateful to call this place our home and look forward to making music with as many of you as we can.
- Brent, Eric, Charlie, and Dylan



TJC Expresses Gratitude

Submitted by The Journeymen Chorus

Chorus earns the privilege to represent LOL at International Chorus contest

BLOOMINGTON, MINN.—For the first time as an organization, The Journeymen Chorus performed on a contest stage, in front of the District audience.

It lived up to what so many chorus members already knew: that there's nothing quite like singing in front of old friends and familiar faces in the Land O'Lakes.

Along the way, The Journeymen Chorus earned top honors and captured the 2026 District Chorus Championship. With an overall score of 85.8, the chorus earned the privilege of representing the Land O'Lakes District at the Barbershop Harmony Society's 2027 International Chorus Contest, to be held Saturday, July 10, in Minneapolis.
Led by founding director Scott Perau, the chorus performed Justin Miller's arrangement of Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A Changin'," followed by "Wait Til You See What's Next," an uplifting and energetic song originally composed by Jason Robert Brown and arranged for the chorus by Adam Bock.

"When our chorus performs, we offer up heartfelt messages in the hopes that they impact people's hearts and minds in those few moments, and maybe even change the way they go out into the world after," Journeymen President Jay Fahl said. "While we are incredibly proud and honored to represent the Land O'Lakes District at International next summer, there is no contest metric that can even come close to matching the joy we feel from knowing we achieved those impacts."

While The Journeymen Chorus was formed around the simple ideal of "great men singing great music," the special opportunity to perform at the BHS International in Minnesota—more or less the chorus's own backyard—was something the chorus decided couldn't be passed up.

The opportunity eventually became what the chorus now calls its Journey 2027.

As part of that journey, the chorus was welcomed into the St. Croix Valley Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, has earned a district championship, and will culminate with an appearance on the international stage.

"We owe a huge thank you to the Croix Chordsmen and the St. Croix Valley Chapter for opening their doors and welcoming us into their brotherhood," Fahl said. "Their generosity and ongoing support are a huge part of why we're on the LOL stage at all."

Though the chorus as a whole was new to Land O'Lakes District Conventions, most of our members were not. As such, the chorus recognizes and appreciates the effort it takes to put on a multi-faceted and well-run event. The chorus's gratitude goes out to convention chair Grant Warning and everyone who had a hand in putting it on.

The chorus also tips its cap to our friends in Gray Duck quartet for their amazing turn on the district stage. Their championship is well deserved. And congratulations to all the choruses and quartets who crossed the stage and stood in the district spotlight. You all made it a truly special weekend.

“Hello Land O’Lakes District!”

Submitted by Nate Peplinski, District President

Greetings Fellow-L’ers!

Time for our bi-monthly article from the desk of the President. I’m always terrible at keeping track of things we’ve done and accomplished, and that’s kind of boring to me anyway, so I figured I’d take this shot to talk about some of the exciting things we’re PLANNING, since that’s where my mind is at. After, of course, I give some credit to the convention crew!!

Grant is on a well-deserved vacation so we’ll be looking forward to the Convention debrief, and by so many accounts it was another fantastic reunion for our Barbershop family. Great energy, good singing, so much fun and connection had by all. Sure is nice to talk to people IN PERSON these days, isn’t it?!?!?

The board is very much looking forward to getting some new folks involved, both on the board and in some of the more focused positions. Our Chapter Development team will be unveiling a “Balanced Chapter” program focusing on Four core pillars: Social Connection, Community Service, Musical Excellence, and Intergenerational Collaboration. I think we all can take a look around at our chapters and say, “hey we’re pretty good at this component, and this component too. But maybe if we put a little more energy into this other component, all of our components will grow synergistically together.” Or something like that–Marty Monson will be taking this bull by the horns and you’ll be hearing a lot more later!

Another aspect of service we’re looking to emphasize is the Take Coaching to the Chapter program. Pay more attention to this! What an incredible opportunity to VERY AFFORDABLY work on having more fun creating a better product. And guess what, better products are easier to sell! As is having more fun! It’s really a no-brainer. Tim Milbrandt is excited to breathe new life into this project!

Thirdly, our board is strongly committed to director development, in both musical and leadership terms. We all know how important this position is for the health of our chapters and their ability to give back to their communities. We’re not yet sure how this is going to look. But it’s only November so that’s one of the main things we’ll be getting heads together about.

Lastly, NextGen VP Justin La and EVP Rhonda Gould are getting the wheels turning on getting funding for a Youth event in conjunct with District Convention next year! Very exciting ideas coming in and we’re excited to execute and see what type of growth we can spur.

NOW, how about some CONGRATULATIONS to not just the individual choruses but to the DISTRICT on having FOUR (4!) choruses qualify for the International Contest next summer in Minneapolis!! Has that ever happened before? Tune in to find out more!

I’m sure that I’m missing a bunch of things but like so many of you I’m still catching up on work and health from our fantastic convention weekend! There’s a ton to be excited about in Land O’ Lakes and I’m truly grateful to be able to represent you all. My wife has stopped coming to convention because she gets irritated that I can’t walk ten feet without stopping to chat with someone; how lucky we are in this hobby to get to make friends with such quality people from so many walks of life and geographical areas?? I hope I can be as helpful to all of you as you are fulfilling to me.

Chapter Support Report

Submitted by Jim Rasmus, District VP of Chapter Support
Email: pjras20@gmail.com; Phone/Text: (920) 973-0010

This is my last Chapter Support Report, as I will be stepping down as VP of Chapter Support at the end of the year. I am happy to share with you that Bryan Ziegler will be moving into this position in 2027, and there are some exciting new initiatives being discussed to support our Chapters to move toward more holistic development.

I can provide the following information about LO'L Grants Programs for 2027:

♫ Chapter Show Support Grants will continue to provide up to $750 per Chapter per year to support registered LO'L quartets to appear on Chapter Shows.

♫ Chapter Development Grants will continue to be available to help in your creative Chapter development efforts, but the funds available will be reduced in 2027.

♫ Chapter Visioning Retreats will continue to employ a Chapter Survey as the foundation for a facilitated three-hour retreat with the Chapter/Chorus membership. This free service has fostered new energy and focused growth within six Chapters thus far.

♫ Take Coaching to the Chapter will continue to provide mileage reimbursement for two coaching sessions at your chorus rehearsals per year. This program is woefully under-utilized and is commended to all Chapters for your serious consideration.

♫ District Harmony Academy Grants have been cancelled for 2027. The program's expense didn't prove to be effective. Watch for an announcement on LO'L support for DHA.

I am thankful for the time I have spent serving the Land O'Lakes District! I have met many wonderful people and been challenged to think of new ways to encourage and enhance barbershop harmony. I have come to appreciate the incredibly gifted and generous leaders from all across the LO'L. I am especially thankful for the partnership of Nate Peplinski and the District Board. I have been inspired by the Division VP's with whom I've been privileged to work: Mike Ziegler (East), Arv Zenk (Central), and Brent Gerber (West). I have relied upon the other members of the Chapter Support Team for guidance and direction during my four years as VP: Larry Lewis, Justin McCullough, and Del Ryberg.

While I am sure I will continue to be engaged at the district level, I am looking forward to being more meaningfully involved again in my local Chapter, because I know:

It's GREAT to be a Barbershopper in the Land O'Lakes District!

Contest & Judging Update

Submitted by James Estes, Vice President, Contest & Judging

As another page in Land O' Lakes District history is inked, I'm reminded once again how our convention weekends are a highlight of my year. To see and sing with familiar faces, to watch all our incredible volunteers put together an amazing event, and see the enthusiasm from our audience as each competitor crosses the stage, I know we are among the luckiest people on Earth.

To each and every person who crossed the stage as part of the 36 quartets (!!) and 15 choruses in Bloomington, thank you! Thank you for your preparation. Thank you for the hours spent driving to rehearsals, the hours spent listening to learning tracks, the time in front of your directors and coaches, taking in every nugget of knowledge you can in the moment. To each of our chorus directors, what you do to perpetuate this art form and hobby of ours can't be overstated. Thank you for your willingness to drive these groups to realize their potential…not just for contest weekends, but for rehearsals, shows, sing-outs, and everything else. We wouldn't be here without you.

A HUGE congratulations to our 2026 District Quartet Champion, Gray Duck, as well as our 2026 District Chorus Champion in their first year of competition, The Journeymen Chorus. The consistency and artistry you bring to the stage is so memorable, and we know you will be amazing ambassadors of both barbershop and the Land O' Lakes District. We look forward to many years of excellence from you!

Congratulations also to our 2026 Senior Quartet Champion, Pending Litigation, as well as our representative to the 2027 International Seniors Quartet Contest in Virginia Beach this February, Northwoods! We also had a Varsity Youth Quartet contest won by Frostbite, as well as our 2026 District Novice Quartet Champion, 404 Quartet Name Not Found. Don't worry, we found their name, even if the internet couldn't.

Looking forward to our International Convention and Contests in Minneapolis next summer, we will have, for the first time ever (from what we can find in the history books), FOUR competing choruses from the Land O' Lakes District! In addition to our District Champion, The Journeymen Chorus, we will also be represented by Forward Harmony, The Great Northern Union, and Midwest Vocal Express. I can't think of a more appropriate convention location to have this kind of representation in the International Chorus Competition. CONGRATULATIONS to all these groups!

On the quartet front, we have to wait to declare an official representative to International until all the quartet preliminary contests conclude next May, but we did definitely qualify THREE quartets for *at least* the Sing-In competition in Minneapolis. Big congratulations not only to our District Champion, Gray Duck, but also to 2013 Quartet Champion Kordal Kombat, as well as Amateur Hours, who all put up the Sing-In qualifying score of 78%. 2023 Quartet Champion Chill Factor and 2024 Quartet Champion Spice, also achieved scores making them eligible for district representation. Land O' Lakes quartetting is alive and well!

Once again, it was so great to see you all in Bloomington, and I can't wait to see you all again next year, if not before! Happy Singing!

The Overtone Is Ringing Across Land O'Lakes!

Submitted by ADC enDowment Team

Champions Leading the Way — and a District Paying It Forward

What an incredible Land O'Lakes District Convention! Beyond the wonderful singing, friendships, and championship performances, something special happened that will continue making a difference long after the final chord.

At the Association of District Champions (ADC) board meeting, ADC President **Dan Heike and his wife, Lisa**, surprised us with an extraordinary offer: **They would match up to $10,000 in gifts to the Bob Dowma enDowment during convention weekend!**

And WOW, did our District respond!

Together, you contributed **$10,868**, unlocking the **entire $10,000 Heike match!**

Thanks to Dan and Lisa's remarkable generosity, and everyone who answered their challenge, the Bob Dowma enDowment has now reached **$35,135 toward our initial $50,000 goal**, including a couple of corporate pledges.

But the story goes well beyond dollars.

- **More than 60% of ADC members** have participated.
- **20% of LOL chapters** have joined the effort.
- **114 donations and transactions** have been recorded so far.

These numbers represent something much bigger: a growing community of people choosing to pay forward the joy, friendships, education, and opportunities that barbershop harmony has given us.

THANK YOU, DAN AND LISA HEIKE! Your generosity did more than double the gifts received during convention weekend. It inspired others to participate and demonstrated the power of leading by example.

And to every individual, quartet, chapter, and business that has contributed: **THANK YOU!** Whether your gift was large or small, you've helped build something that can support future generations of barbershoppers.

The Bob Dowma enDowment honors a man who gave so much of his time, talent, and treasure to the music and people he loved. Managed through the Barbershop Harmony Society, this permanent fund will preserve gifts in perpetuity, generating annual support for quartet development, arranging, coaching, artistic leadership, and barbershop education throughout Land O'Lakes.

And we're not finished!

We're already exploring another exciting matching-gift opportunity as we approach the end of the year. Watch for more news soon!

In the meantime, if you haven't yet participated, there's still plenty of room in this chorus. Every gift helps us move closer to our first $50,000 milestone.

Give today: https://www.barbershop.org/?form=dowma

The ADC may be leading the way, but this is a legacy we're building together throughout Land O'Lakes.

May the Overtone Ring On!
Land O'Lakes Association of District Champions

Bob's Overtone Is Still Ringing — Help Us Finish the Year Strong!

Submitted by ADC enDowment Team

A **$10,000 Year-End Matching Challenge from Eric and Tami Strand**

Sometimes the greatest impact of a barbershopper isn't measured by the chords they ring, but by the lives they touch.

Eric Strand, a Land O'Lakes District Quartet Champion with Class Reunion and former member of the St. Paul North Star Chorus, remembers Bob Dowma as one of those special people.

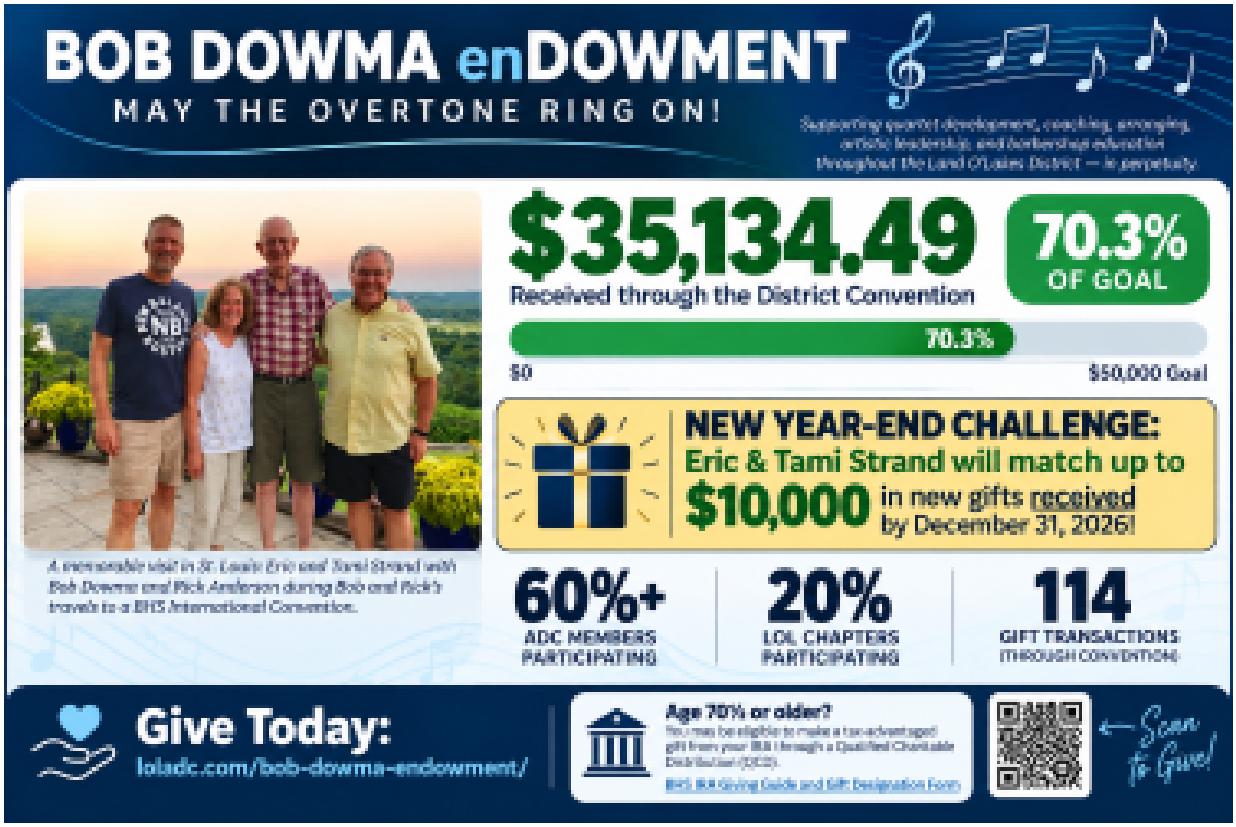
Eric recently shared a photograph from when Bob and Rick Anderson stopped by the Strand home in St. Louis on their way to a BHS Harmony University. For Eric, it brought back memories of a wonderful man and the many barbershoppers who helped shape him during his formative years—lessons and relationships he's carried throughout his 35-year career with **Drury Hotels**.

Now Eric and his wife, Tami, are paying that generosity forward.

Following the incredible $10,000 convention match from Dan and Lisa Heike, **Eric and Tami Strand have offered to match up to $10,000 in additional donations received by December 31, 2026!**

That means your year-end gift can have twice the impact, helping us reach—and potentially exceed—our first $50,000 milestone.

Thanks to the generosity of individuals, quartets, chapters, and businesses throughout Land O'Lakes, we're building a permanent fund that will preserve gifts in perpetuity, generating annual support for quartet development, coaching, arranging, artistic leadership, and barbershop education.



Bob's Overtone Is Still Ringing — Help Us Finish the Year Strong!

(Continued)

Make Your Year-End Gift

Donate Online: https://loladc.com/bob-dowma-endowment/

Age 70½ or older? You may be eligible to make a tax-advantaged gift directly from your IRA through a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). A QCD may also satisfy part or all of your required minimum distribution (RMD).

BHS has prepared an IRA Giving Guide and Gift Designation Form to help you and your IRA custodian.

When completing the form, select **"Other Program / Impact Area"** and write **"Bob Dowma enDowment — Land O'Lakes District"** to ensure your gift is directed to the correct fund. Notify the BHS Philanthropy Team when requesting your distribution.

BHS recommends initiating QCD requests by early December to allow sufficient processing time. **To qualify for the Strand family match, gifts must be received by December 31, 2026.** Please consult your tax advisor regarding your individual circumstances.

To Eric and Tami, our other generous leadership donor, Dan and Lisa Heike, and everyone who has participated: **THANK YOU!**

Champions Leading the Way. A District Paying It Forward.

May the Overtone Ring On!



Social Media Success

Submitted by Loring Harrop

What We Learned on Our Way to 25,000 Followers: Part 3 of 4 – Iterating, Refining, and Embracing the "Work in Progress"

If you're waiting for everything to look polished, professional, and completely figured out before you launch your social media or community outreach, you'll never get started.

Building a presence that eventually captured over 25,000 followers on Facebook and 5,000+ on TikTok wasn't a straight line. We've had to backtrack repeatedly, massage our foundations, and fix things on the fly. Here is a look behind the curtain at how we ironed out our identity, cleaned up our operational tools, and why we're totally fine with being a work in progress.

1. Evolving Our Visual Identity (Without Losing Our Roots)

We didn't land on our full visual identity overnight. Even now, we still make great use of our primary masthead logo and our secondary compass logo. But we realized we needed something that injected real personality into our brand.

Enter our third logo: a happy, singing star named Polaris (our mascot) sporting a cheerful handlebar moustache. It perfectly embodies what a North Star member is all about—male, good-natured, and genuinely loving to sing.

From there, we tightened up our messaging:

- **Shorter Biographies:** We streamlined our bios so people instantly know who we are.
- **Template Consistency:** Most of our posts now automatically include our location and a nod to our brand of "regular guys who sing," making our voice recognizable no matter which platform a viewer stumbles across.

2. Fine-Tuning the Digital Hubs & Ticketing

As our audience grew, we had to make sure our online spaces actually worked for people:

- **The YouTube Cleanup:** We're still actively tuning our YouTube page (https://youtube.com/@northstarchorus-stpaul) - go ahead and subscribe to watch us tinker in real time! We've added dedicated playlists for recurring content, including a welcoming series for international visitors heading to the Twin Cities for next July's convention (**#MarchToMinneapolis2027**).
- **Event Tools & Ticketing:** We've heavily encouraged our members to leverage the invitation feature on Facebook events to pull more local faces out to our live shows. On the backend, we've seamlessly incorporated **Zeffy** ticket sales into our social media and website marketing (reach out if you have questions—we've learned a ton about setting it up!).
- **Bridging Offline to Online:** At our concert entry points, we deployed a banner featuring our formal logo alongside a clear QR code pointing straight to our website's show program. To make sure nobody gets left behind, we added a small icon encouraging anyone unacquainted with QR codes to simply point their phone cameras at it to open the link.

Social Media Success
(Continued)

3. Opening the Doors for Real Partnerships

True community-building means making it effortless for people to find you—whether they want to sing or collaborate:

- **The Local Directory:** For recruiting, we added a dedicated page to our website listing all 10 Twin Cities barbershop groups with direct links to their pages, reinforcing our belief that a rising tide lifts all boats. Take a look at how we laid it out on our Recruiting Page.
- **Media-Facing Hub:** We built a separate media page packed with resources for local television and radio. That transparency paid off directly with a recent feature spot on our local Fox 9 morning show. You can check out that hub on our Media Page.

A Quick Note on "Borrowing" Good Ideas

We didn't invent all of this in a vacuum. A lot of our smartest practices were "borrowed" (legally and lovingly stolen, lol) from our brothers in the Minneapolis Commodores and other peer groups. Our advice? You should borrow, too! There's no reason to reinvent the wheel when we're all trying to figure out how to stand out in a crowded digital space.

Take a Look Under the Hood

We aren't hiding our rough edges. If you look closely at our social media channels and web pages right now, you can find plenty of gaps, loose ends, and experiments that didn't quite pan out.
We welcome the examination. Go ahead and check us out, pick apart what we're doing, and learn from both our successes and our missteps. After all, we're all just figuring out how to stop fighting the screens and start integrating ourselves right into them.

Logo-evolution:



North Star Chorus
"Brothers in a Chord"



Great Plains Harmony Presents: Let Freedom Sing!

Submitted by Kevin Dean

Great Plains Harmony invites you to "Let Freedom Sing" - our salute to 250 years of American independence. Join our chorus, quartets Nightcap, Mannhaven Street, Senior Moments, and Mark IV, along with special appearances by a local children's choir.

Tickets are available at the door - $20 for adults - $10 for students & military veterans.

3 Performances:

- Thursday, November 12th at 7:30 pm at United Lutheran Church in Grand Forks, ND
- Saturday, November 21st at 7:30pm at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN
- Sunday, November 22nd at 2:30pm at the Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN

Hope to see you there!



Minneapolis Commodores Holiday Show

Submitted by Steve Grady



Christmas Celebration in Mankato and Faribault!

Submitted by Arv Zenk

Featuring the Mankato Riverblenders & Faribault Lakelanders

Celebrate the magic of the season with the **Mankato Riverblenders and Faribault Lakelanders** as these two choruses come together for a special Christmas program filled with music, fellowship, and holiday cheer!

Join us on **Sunday, December 13th,** for an afternoon or evening of festive favorites. The program will feature performances by chapter quartets, followed by the combined choruses sharing the joy of the season through beloved Christmas music.

These two choruses have shared the holiday spirit in the past, and we are delighted to bring this tradition back for another superb Christmas show!

Two Communities. One Holiday Tradition. A Whole Lot of Harmony!

Two Performances — One Wonderful Celebration!

- **2:00 PM** — Evangelical Free Church, Faribault
- **7:00 PM** — Christ the King Lutheran Church, Mankato

Admission is free, with a free-will offering gratefully accepted. Proceeds will benefit local charities in both Faribault and Mankato, making this a wonderful opportunity to share the gift of music while giving back to our communities.

Bring your family and friends, enjoy the sounds of the season, and let the harmonies of Christmas fill your heart!

We hope to see you there for an unforgettable celebration of Christmas, community, and song!

Harmony Academy 2027

Submitted by Brian Schultz

LAKES O' LAKES DISTRICT · BARBERSHOP

2027 LOL Harmony Academy

Educational & fun for every Barbershopper



January 8 & 9, 2027

University of Wisconsin – River Falls

Educational & Fun Classes for Every Barbershopper

- New ideas from experts Dan Wessler (Director, Westminster Chorus), Don Fuson (Past BHS President), Bob Cox (BHS Volunteer), & Scott Kvigne (L'OL)
- Friday & Saturday afternoon elective classes on a variety of topics
- Friday evening general session: Learn a new song and some fun tags
- Saturday morning Core Classes for Chapter Officers & Directors, plus "Barbershop Smorgasbord" activities for everyone else

Registration Fee

$85 per person Early Bird,
if registered before December 18, 2026.
After that date the fee is **$100**
Includes 2 meals on Friday & 2 meals on Saturday.

Lodging

Reasonable rates for HA at two local hotels:
Radisson (Headquarters Hotel) and
Commerce (formerly Country Inn).

A Sample of Elective Class Topics

- Learning Better Singing & Performance Techniques
- Authentic Physical Expression
- Strategic Directing
- Telling the Story Using Vocal & Musical Skills
- Sight Singing Made Easy
- Estill Techniques
- Techniques for Dealing with the Aging Voice
- Improving Communication & Supporting Our Members
- The Importance of Good Chapter Leadership
- Marketing for Effect and Community Outreach
- Recruiting/Retention and Orientation of Members
- Engaging with Music Educators & Supporting NextGen Singers
- Helpful Grant Writing Ideas

To Register

- Check with your chapter President or Secretary
- Go to the District website after November 15: **www.loldistrict.org**
- Email Brian Schultz at **SchultzBrian.LTA@gmail.com**



An Evening with GQ

Submitted by Loring Harrop



Northern Pines Harmony Brigade 2027

Submitted by Dave 'Spider' Speidel

NPHB is Ready, Set, Go!

Northern Pines Harmony Brigade registration is now open at www.nphb.org. We have another exciting set of 10 great charts and learning tracks. We can't divulge the names of the songs, but we can tell you that the arrangers of our list of core songs include:

Kyle Snook, Patrick MacAlexander, Mark Hale, Jim Clancy, Dan Wessler, Gene Cockroft, Eric Ruthenber, Larry Wright. That should give you an idea of the quality of songs on our 2027 list.

This year for our judging panel and Saturday evening headliner quartet we've engaged one of the most entertaining quartets in the society from Atlanta – **Boardwalk**! Reminiscent of quartets like the Midnight Oilers. They will be learning many of the songs on our list so they can sing with you! You might recognize these gents. **Brad Kline, Mark Schlinkert, Jared Carlson & Mike Slamka.**

What can you expect. Not mandatory – but if you come early, you can join 30-40 guys on our Friday barbershop music education coach ride to 3 or 4 local high school choral programs. This alone is often one of the highlights of the weekend. Official registration opens at 3:00 on Friday and the quartet singing begins! A great Friday dinner followed by a random draw contest and much singing afterwards. On Saturday there is a brief general meeting followed by a chorus rehearsal. Midafternoon there is a quartet finals contest. Then dinner, followed by the show and the afterglow and singing into the wee hours of the night. There is no lack of opportunity to sing in as many quartet formations as you wish. Complete your quartet dance card and you can earn an official quartet 'Tramp' medal.

What is required? You do not have to be in a quartet but you must have the ability to carry your part in a quartet, singing moderate to difficult charts. If you're newer to barbershop and have the desire – we ask that you provide a reference (i.e. – chorus director) who can vouch for your ability. Another option is to come as a 'Guest' and simply test the waters. You can opt to learn the music and test your skills singing in random quartets without the stress of singing in the contests. Experienced Brigade members will tell you that this is their highlight of the year! So stop sitting on the sideline – put your foot in the pool and join us for an exhilarating weekend of Extreme Barbershop Quartet singing.



Brad Kline Mark Schlinkert Jared Carlson Mike Slamka

April 30 – May 1, 2027
Crowne Plaza Conference Center
Plymouth, MN
Registration now open!

Barbershop in the Badlands

Submitted by Tanya Hushka-Martin



August 27–28, 2027 | Medora, ND

Join N-Compass Chorus and Northern Lights Chorus for an unforgettable weekend of harmony, friendship, and fun!

THE HIGHLIGHT? Sing with our Festival Chorus on the legendary **Burning Hills Amphitheatre** stage before the famous Medora Musical!

Enjoy coaching, education, and tag singing!

Bring the family! Explore the Badlands, Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library, Medora Musical, and Bully Pulpit!

EVERYONE IS INVITED!

More details coming soon!

Come for the harmony. Stay for the experience!

Quartets

















ADC Scholarships Available

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

Scholarships for what, you ask?
Contact Dave Baxter
(dbaxter9@att.net)

Chapter Shows Calendar

November

21 Fargo - Moorhead | Great Plains Harmony
Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead, MN

22 Fargo - Moorhead | Great Plains Harmony
Hjemkomst Center, Moorhead, MN

December

2 Appleton | Fox Valleyaires
DoubleTree, Neenah, WI

5 St. Croix Valley | Croix Chordsmen
Trinity Lutheran Church, Stillwater, MN

5 Winnipeg | River City Sound
Prairie Spirit United Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba

6 Lake Geneva | Lakes Area Country Gentlemen & Ladies
Horticulture Hall, Lake Geneva, WI

8 Appleton | Fox Valleyaires
Neenah High School, Neenah, WI

12 Minneapolis | Commodores and MCX
Minnehaha Academy - Minneapolis, MN

13 Madison | Capitol Chordsmen
Oakwood Village - Madison, WI

December (cont'd)

19 Manitowoc | Clipper City Chordsmen
Franciscan Center for Music Education and Performance, Manitowoc, WI

20 Greendale | MVE and Forward Harmony
Saber Center PAC, Franklin, WI

April 2027

10 St. Croix Valley | Croix Chordsmen
Trinity Lutheran Church, Stillwater, MN

11 Faribault | Lakelanders Chorus
The Grand Event Center, Northfield, MN

17 Appleton | Fox Valleyaires
Xavier Fine Arts Theatre, Appleton, WI

17 Dunn County | Northern Lights Chorus
Colfax, WI

24 Fergus Falls | Heart O' Lakes Harmony
Historic Holmes Theatre, Detroit Lakes, MN

24 Mankato | Riverblenders Chorus
Hosanna Lutheran Church, Mankato, MN

For more information on Chapter Shows, visit:
https://loldistrict.org/chapter-shows

Send show registrations to:
District Secretary, Tyler Hall
603 6th St NE
Mandan, ND 58554
(701) 213-7636
secretary@loldistrict.org

Future District & BHS Conventions

2027	February 3-7	Midwinter, Virginia Beach, VA
2027	July 4-11	International Convention, Minneapolis, MN
2027	October 14-17	LOL District Convention, Location TBD
2028	July 2- 9	International Convention, Chicago, IL
2028	October 12-15	LOL District Convention, Location TBD