

The Pitch Piper

78 Years of Barbershop Harmony

Over 714,089 Square Miles

Volume 79 Number 4

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District

July-August 2026



Gary Lee Rogness
May 3, 1943 — May 20, 2026

[Gary's Obituary.](#)

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Pitch Piper

The Pitch Piper is published bi-monthly by the Land O' Lakes District Association of Chapters of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

Land O' Lakes Chapters are in North Dakota, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Western Michigan Upper Peninsula, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Western Ontario, Canada.

Office of Publication

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“Just a Bunch of Old Farts?”

Submitted by Nate Peplinski, District President

We've all heard the line, almost exclusively from ourselves. Who wants to join a group of old farts? Well, let's talk about reframing.

First off, what's so bad about being a bunch of old farts? How many of you have stories about the war? Or about a '49 Flathead Ford you used to cruise around in? Or how many have years and years of life experiences and leadership experience and success stories far beyond the hobby?

What if instead of apologizing for being “a bunch of old farts,” we embraced it and sold it as an advantage? I grew up in Barbershop, and I didn't view it as JUST a bunch of old farts...more like a club of crazy uncles and grandpas. How many fascinating conversations did we have and how many connections did I make just because of all these...OLD FARTS??

“Please join us or we're going to die as a chapter and eventually as a hobby overall” is not a strong sales pitch. “Come share some intergenerational harmony and community service with a group of well-connected, well-traveled elders who have LEGITIMATE resources to offer!”

And you know what, SHARE those resources! BE the reason they want to come back. Share your wisdom, share your EARS, share your pitcher of beer.

I just got back from the International Convention in St. Louis, and let me tell you after seeing that and Midwinter in Pasadena, it's clear that Intergenerational Collaboration benefits EVERYONE. You don't need to apologize for being different, nor do they. Collaboration means coming together to be synergistically better overall. And as elders, that responsibility is ultimately up to us.

Trust me, if you can switch this mental paradigm, you will not be disappointed. (You'll even be more attractive to members of your own generation!) Do we want to be bees or flies?

You know the idiom. **Stick to the honey.**

Chapter Support Report

Submitted by Jim Rasmus, District VP of Chapter Support

Email: pjras20@gmail.com; Phone/Text: (920) 973-0010

As the fall show and contest season approaches, I think one of the best kept secrets in the Land O'Lakes District **Take Coaching to the Chapter (TCC)**. Its purpose is to share the rich music education resources we have in the LO'L directly with our Chapters. Our **TCC Team of Judd Orff, Mike Leitdke, and Paul Wigley** stand ready to discuss your needs and help you identify a coach who might work well with your director and your chorus. You can even request a specific coach, subject to their availability. The goal is to help your chorus improve their singing by providing an experienced coach to spend an evening at your chorus rehearsal, up to two times a year. The coach will help your members hear a different voice provide insights to help you sing and perform better. You just need to decide if you want to work on your show/contest package or your basic repertoire. The focus areas are vocal production, presentation, or general coaching. Go to <https://loldistrict.org/lol-grants-and-programs> for more details.

There is good reason to be pleased with the progress being shown across the LO'L from the new Mentor Program. Mentors are having a positive impact within several of our Chapters. As a result, conversations are beginning about how we might provide mentorship support for frontline chorus directors, who play such a significant role in the success or failure of their Chapters. If you have ideas for how that might be implemented – or have needs for that support – please share that with me or any member of the LO'L Board. Stay tuned....

On the other hand, it has come to our attention that there are several Chapters around the District that have fallen behind submitting their federal filing, financial review and/or state incorporation reports to the Barbershop Harmony Society. Failure to stay current with those annual reports can result in the suspension of their Chapter Charter! This might be a good time for Chapter Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers to consult the **LOL Business of Barbershop Chapter Business Guide**. Go to <https://loldistrict.org/document-center-1> to download a copy.

A wise insight that struck me while on the live stream of this month's BHS International Convention: **"When you perform, there are two very important people you need to have in mind: one who has never heard you before and one who will never hear you again."**

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

Land O' Lakes STORMS into St. Louis!

Submitted by James Estes, Vice President, Contest & Judging

Hey there, Land O' Lakes Barbershoppers! I write this after returning yesterday from an incredible International Barbershop Quartet/Chorus Convention in St. Louis. The weather was hot, the BBQ was fantastic, and the singing we heard throughout the week from the Society's top groups was unforgettable.

The Ambassadors of Harmony from St. Charles, Missouri, won the International Chorus Competition by a **SINGLE POINT** out of a possible 2400. They statistically tied, but barely edged out an unreal performance by the **Music City Chorus** (Nashville, Tennessee). Keep an eye on the [Society's YouTube page](#) for links to these incredible performances. A heartfelt congratulations also goes to **GQ** (from the Mid-Atlantic District), as the first-ever, all-female quartet to win the International Quartet Contest. The link to their winning song ("[Mothers & Daughters](#)") from the quartet finals is already on YouTube, and if you want to know what a perfect 100 score in Performance looks/sounds like, go check it out. There were barely any dry eyes in the hall after they were finished, and the standing ovation lasted longer than any ovation in recent memory.

The Land O' Lakes District was well-represented in every contest as well. THREE LOL NextGen Varsity quartets (of the 20 that competed) crossed the stage. I believe that is the first time our district has had three quartets qualify in the same year! Big congratulations to **What's New**, **Frostbite**, and **They Must Be Mad!** for their performances. All three quartets improved their scores from when they competed last fall in Land O' Lakes. This is a testament not just to their commitment, but for all of your support of them as well! In the brand new "Sing-In" contest, 2023 LOL Quartet Champion **Chill Factor** sang for a chance to qualify for the International quartet quarterfinals. While they didn't quite make the cut this year, I have a feeling we'll be hearing more from this quartet in the future.

Big congratulations go to the quartets **Triple Threat** and 2025 LOL Quartet Champion **Jukebox** for their performance in the International quarterfinals as well! Both quartets improved from their fall scores, and I'm excited to hear more from these great singing/entertaining quartets!

Think I'm finished? We also had TWO Choruses representing the district in St. Louis! Huge congratulations and thank you to **Forward Harmony**, who mic-tested the first chorus contest session in St. Louis, as well as the **Midwest Vocal Express**, who was the final competitor in the Saturday chorus contest. Special shoutout and recognition to Bryan Ziegler - director of both choruses - for leading both of these high-level groups to the international stage.

If you have never been to an International Convention, PLEASE consider attending either next year or the year after. It's rare that we get two International Conventions (literally) in our backyard, with 2027 happening in Minneapolis, and 2028 happening in Chicago. The experience is unforgettable.

Greendale Chapter in St. Louis!

Submitted by Laurel Peterson, Chapter, Marketing VP

First and foremost, the Greendale Chapter would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all of our LOL family for your support, encouragement, and cheers from the audience on our journey up to and including our appearance in St. Louis over the 4th of July week. It means so much to all of us to have you all behind us and encouraging us to deliver our best performance, and we very much appreciate it!

Speaking of St. Louis, what a wonderful whirlwind week it was! Our "tagline" (pardon the pun!) this year was "it starts and ends with Greendale" since Forward Harmony served as mic testers in the chorus contest, and Midwest Vocal Express was the final competitor in the chorus contest, but our participation in the week wasn't limited to just that:

- All of Chill Factor, who participated in the inaugural "Sing-In Contest" on Tuesday did us proud and then also took the stage with MVE
- Two UW-Madison quartets, What's New and They Must Be Mad, include Forward Harmony members and represented their on-campus ensemble the Badgershop Chorus in the NextGen Chorus. Another Badgershop Chorus quartet, Ultra, also competed representing CSD
- Triple Threat Tenor Tyler (say that five times fast!) competed with Triple Threat as the first contestant in the quartet contest, as well as with Forward Harmony, MVE and 2nd place medalist chorus Music City Chorus
- Several Forward Harmony members took the stage with the Dream Chorus
- Several chapter members competed in Prism Chorus
- ...and last but not least our director Bryan sang in the AIC Chorus on Friday night



Now that the whirlwind of St. Louis is over, we're gearing up to sing at the Schmitt Brothers 75th anniversary celebration in Two Rivers in July, taking a few weeks off, and then we're right back at it as we start looking toward this fall's district contest in Bloomington and also learning music for our annual holiday show. Be sure to catch us on social media for photos and more highlights of our week at international. It's great to be a Greendaler, and great to represent LOL!

Land O' Lakes 2026 Fall Convention

Submitted by Grant Warning Sr., District VP Events

It's registration time for our Fall Convention! Building off the successes of the past few years, we look forward to another super fun gathering of People Connecting Through Harmony from all over the District. To make sure you don't miss any of the fun, go to the LO'L convention webpage which provides everything you need to make it happen: www.loldistrict.org/conventions.

- **REGISTER FOR THE CONVENTION** — Register online with your credit card or download a mail-in registration order form and send it in with your check. You can also order a Saturday lunch, the Showcase dinner (chicken or pork), or get a ticket for the Saturday evening show. Once you register, your badges and meal and event tickets will be ready for you when you arrive.



- **RESERVE YOUR ROOM** — Reserve a room at the Headquarters Hotel - MSP Airport Hilton Hotel, 3800 American Blvd E., Bloomington, MN 55425. This can be done on the LOL District Web Site above. Our special rate is \$115/night plus taxes.
- **CONTEST AND FESTIVAL REGISTRATION** — There will be a link on the Contest and Festival section of the registration webpage which opens August 1st. You must click on this link to register your chorus or quartet if you plan to sing in the contest or festival. Remember that all members of your chorus or quartet must also purchase an All-Events registration badge (\$75) for the convention. Contest and Festival registrations must be completed no later than midnight September 15th!
- **QUARTET CLINICS** (Pending-more to come) - If your quartet is not competing, but would like coaching, the District is offering free Quartet Clinics on Friday morning and a chance to perform in the afternoon. All you need is a quartet, two songs, and an All Contest Events registration badge.
- **ALL CHAPTER CHORUS** (Pending-more to come) – Once again, the Northern Pines Harmony Brigade is helping sponsor the All-Chapter Chorus. For just \$10 you will get the music and the learning tracks. (Chorus Director TBD). This is another great opportunity for you to sing with some of the best!

We look forward to seeing you, and over 800 more barbershoppers, at our Fall Convention. People Connecting Through Harmony.

Grant Warning — 2026 LO'L VP Events

Convention Registration – Or On-line at: <http://www.loldistrict.org/conventions>
Land O'Lakes Fall Convention
October 16-17, 2026

Name (First/Last):

Phone:

Email:

2nd Attendee Name (if applicable):

3rd Attendee Name (if applicable):

4th Attendee Name (if applicable):

Group Name on Badge - Chapter/Chorus/Quartet:

Event	Cost/Person	Quantity	Amount
All Contest Events Registration	\$75		
Saturday Showcase Dinner and Show	\$45		
Saturday Box Lunch	\$20		
Complete Convention Registration Package **	\$140		
Jr. Contest Events Registration (12 and under)	\$30		
Jr. Complete Convention Registration Package (12 and under) **	\$95		
Total enclosed			

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

Menu Options for Showcase Dinner

Entrée Choice	Quantity
Pork	
Chicken	

If there are special dietary needs, please provide specifics:

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

Registrations/Badges will be held at the Barbershop Convention desk at the Hilton Hotel.

Make check payable to: Land O'Lakes District

Mail to: Grant Warning

9350 281st Ave NW

Zimmerman, MN 55398

Any questions: contact Grant at: gawwolf@yahoo.com or 763-226-1447

Registrations are transferable, but not refundable within 30 days of the Convention.

Mail-In Registrations must be postmarked No Later Than October 2.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (Preliminary)
LAND O'LAKES DISTRICT FALL CONVENTION
Oct 16-17, 2026 – Minneapolis Airport Hilton Hotel, Bloomington, MN

Friday - Oct 16

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

Saturday - Oct 17

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

Quartets Competing THIS FALL – IMPORTANT!

Submitted by James Estes, Vice President, Contest & Judging

We have a wonderful, no, INCREDIBLE "problem" in this district right now. Since returning from the pandemic, our district quartet contest has GROWN. Every single year. This is obviously not a problem in the (true) negative sense, as very few districts can say that they have a problem of too many competitors. It does, however, create some challenges at our fall convention if we continue this growth.

If you know you are competing this fall in Bloomington in a quartet, I urge you to get your online contest entry form submitted as soon as possible. We will begin accepting entries on August 1, so please plan accordingly.

Why the urgency? For this year (at least), we will only be able to guarantee feedback sessions (formerly called "evaluations", or "A&Rs" for you *really experienced singers) for the first 28 (twenty-eight) quartets who register. In 2025, for context, we had a total of 38 quartets sign up. Using a mix of extra candidate judges, along with some cancellations from quartets, we were able to accommodate the extra numbers, but in 2026, that will not be the case.

For quartets #29 and beyond, we are exploring creative ways to accommodate the extra time needed, but the easiest way to guarantee you receive valuable feedback from our judging community is to register early! If you have any questions, or need any assistance getting your quartet signed up for contest, please email me at dir-cj@loldistrict.org

Fall Convention Volunteer Opportunities

Submitted by Terry Wheeler, 2026 Convention Backstage Coordinator

Please consider volunteering as an usher, ready room coordinator, runner or riser crew for this year's fall convention. Past Backstage Managers Walt Ogburn, Bob & Sherry Bengsch and others have done a great job organizing the process for a smooth flowing contest show. Now, all we need is you to fill a position for a shift or two. Here is a description of each position and the time commitments.

Usher:

Location of doors:

- Doors 1 & 2 (near registration): Audience entry/exit
- Door 3: Judges only
- Door 4: Performers/backstage personnel exit

Duties:

- Open doors before each contest begins.
- Close doors promptly when the emcee says, "Ushers, please close the doors."
- Remain inside to keep doors closed until applause signals the end of each performance.

Ready Room Coordinator:

Purpose: Manage performer movement from dressing rooms to Ready Room, ensuring groups are on time and informed.

Responsibilities:

- Post contest schedules in dressing rooms (provided by BSM/Contest Manager).
- Greet groups in dressing rooms in advance, explain the process, and keep them informed.
- Escort each group to Ready Room at scheduled time.
- Notify backstage staff via radio which group is in the Ready Room.
- Coordinate with BSM, who signals when a group leaves Ready Room.
- Keep next group prepared once Ready Room is occupied.

Runner:

Purpose: Manage performer belongings and guide them after performances. This is the most physically active role.

Responsibilities:

- Provide carts for performer belongings.
- At stage entrance: performers place personal items on cart.
- Move cart around auditorium to stage exit.
- At exit: return belongings to quartets, or escort choruses to stairs for group photos (placing items on table/cart at stairs if needed).
- Ensure carts are in correct location:
 - Quartets: Stage entrance.
 - Choruses: Outside Ready Room.

Riser Crew:

Move risers from trailer to stage or ready room on Thursday afternoon/Friday morning. On Saturday afternoon, relocate risers to ballroom in time for the ADC Chorus rehearsal.

Shifts available for Ushers, Ready Room Coordinators and Runners:

- Friday, October 16: 3:30-5:30; 5:30-7:45; 7:45-9:45 (Quartets)
- Saturday, October 17: 8:30-10:45; 10:45-12:00 (Choruses) 12:30-3:30 (Quartets)

Riser Crew:

- Thursday afternoon (exact time TBD)
- Friday morning (exact time TBD)
- Saturday, October 17: 1:00

Please e-mail or text Terry Wheeler your availability. Thank you for your consideration.

ttwheeler55413@gmail.com
605-321-1607

Bachelor of Barbershop Harmony

Submitted by Jay Althof

Are You Qualified to Receive the Bachelor of Barbershop Harmony Degree?

Have you spent time learning tags, ringing chords, volunteering for chapter duties, attending rehearsals, serving in leadership, or generally finding new ways to fall deeper into this wonderfully addictive hobby we call barbershop harmony? If so... you might already be working toward a degree — no student loans required!

The **Bachelor of Barbershop Harmony Degree (BBHD)** is an honorary recognition awarded to Land O' Lakes District Barbershoppers who have shown dedication to improving themselves, helping others, and strengthening our Society. It celebrates members who have enthusiastically jumped into the many areas of barbershopping — singing, learning, teaching, organizing, supporting, and occasionally helping carry risers or stack chairs.

Recipients of this prestigious (and completely tuition-free) degree demonstrate a commitment to growing their musical knowledge, expanding their skills, and helping make barbershop harmony more enjoyable for everyone. Even better, their efforts help bring the joy of our craft to audiences and communities throughout our district.

So... How Do You Earn This Coveted (and Frame-Worthy) Degree?

No finals. No term papers. No dorm life. Just barbershop!

Using the application form below as your roadmap, calculate your total points based on your involvement in barbershop activities over the years. If your grand total reaches 300 points or more, congratulations! You are eligible to receive the Bachelor of Barbershop Harmony Degree and an official certificate signed by the current Land O' Lakes District President — suitable for framing, bragging rights, or displaying prominently near your pitch pipe collection.

Here's What To Do Next

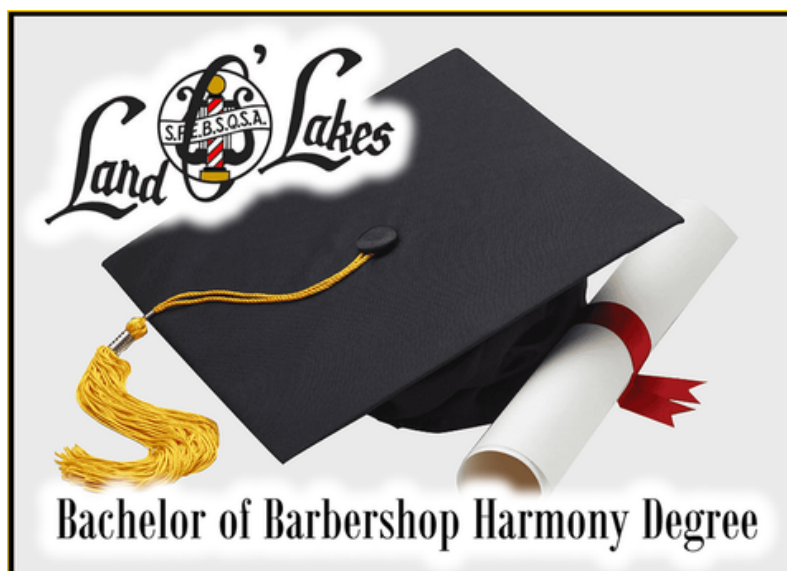
1. Complete the application form (on the next page — or on our District Website)
2. Have it verified by your Chapter President or a District Officer
3. Send it to Todd Smith who will work with the Dean of Admissions, John Plazek and his team to confirm your application:

Todd Smith

✉ Email: tgsemail@gmail.com

✉ Mail: 611 S Holcombe St., Stillwater, MN 55082

☎ Questions? Call Todd at (651) 202-6056





Bachelor of Barbershop Harmony Degree



Congratulations! You've done REALLY WELL. You are applying for the LO'L District Bachelor of Barbershop Harmony Degree. Complete this form once you have reached a score of 300 or higher. The completed form MUST be authenticated and forwarded by the chapter president or a district officer. Submit form to Todd Smith: EMAIL - tgsemail@gmail.com or DIRECT MAIL - 611 So. Holcombe St. Stillwater, MN 55082

ACHIEVEMENT

POINTS

Personal Involvement:

Years of Society Membership – 5 per year (max 50)

Registered Quartet Member – 25 (max 25)

Quartet Contestant – 10 each (max 30)

Pole Cat Songs Learned – 2 each (max 50)

Chorus or Quartet Coach – 20 each (max 20)

Man-of-Note – 2 per each member brought in (max 20)

Attendance at District Harmony Education Schools (COTS, LTA, Harmony Academy, Mini-Hep – 20 each (max 60)

Attendance at International Harmony Education Schools – 25 each (max 75)

Chapter Involvement:

Chapter BOTY – 30 (max 30)

Chapter Officer – 20 per office held (max 60)

Chorus Director – 50 (max 50)

Chorus Assistant Director or Section Leader – 20 (max 20)

Chorus Contestant – 10 each (max 30)

Committee Chair, Show Committee, Bulletin Editor – 10 per year (max 30)

District Involvement:

District BOTY – 40 (max 40)

District Mentor, Liaison, Area Counselor – 20 (max 20)

District Officer or District Committee Member – 30 (max 30)

International Involvement:

International Board or Committee Member – 20 each (max 40)

Candidate judge – 25 (max 25)

Certified Judge – 50 (max 50)

TOTAL POINTS (300 or above required)

AUTHETICATION (by Chapter President or District Officer) | Date Signed _____

Member (print): _____

Chapter: _____

Member Address: _____

Authenticator's Name (print): _____ Signature: _____

SAVE THE DATE



There will be elective classes for all barbershoppers who want to find ways to make this GREAT hobby even more enjoyable. We'll have core classes for chapter officers, as well as many opportunities to sing and socialize with old friends and make new ones.

Our faculty will include:

Don Fuson – Past BHS International President

Bob Cox – BHS Certified Training Facilitator

Scott Kvigne – Visual Performance Coach/Clinician

Other faculty members TBA. Watch for more details on the L'OL website and future issues of the Pitch Piper.

Jack Edgerton Memories

Submitted by Norm Barnard

While we have seen far too many memorials in the recent past, here are some memories that people throughout the District would like to share with those who may not have known Jack Edgerton.

~ I remember Jack's love of quarteting. His dedication. It was a Barbershop show at Pacelli High School when I heard the Sweet Adelines singing. I decided to join the Sweet Adelines in 1976. Jack's quarter sang and I was hooked. – LAUREL HOETH, member, Northern Gateway Chorus

~ A favorite memory? Jack always told the story of his first quartet, The Sentry Men, and their very first contest experience. It was a division contest, and The Sentry Men had very little experience singing together on stage much less singing in a contest environment. Needless to say, those four guys were shaking like a leaf when they walked out on stage for their first song. Jack was the pitchpipe guy and his pipe was in his pants pocket. He reached into his pocket for the pipe and immediately dropped the pitchpipe on the floor. As luck would have it the pitchpipe landed on its edge and began to slowly roll off the stage towards the judges pit. Jack, of course, was scampering after his pipe, trying in vain to grab it before it drops over the edge. Jack did manage to grab it, in the nick of time, right at the edge of the stage, saving him the embarrassment of falling off the stage and landing in a judge's lap.

I first met Jack at a Stevens Point chorus guest night back in the early 70's. He was the first person in the chorus to take me "under his wing" and get me involved in quartet singing. He went out of his way to make sure I was having fun and made sure I was able to participate in many pickup quartets on that night. His love for barbershop singing was obvious to all, and you couldn't help but get caught up in his passion for this great hobby. He definitely got me hooked and I was lucky enough to sing with Jack in our quartet, Ragtime, for a number of years. In all the years I knew Jack, he never changed. He preferred to show others how singing barbershop is done, help them get involved and then let them make up their own mind if the barbershop hobby was right for them. He was someone who truly led by example. – MICHAEL PORREY, member, Northern Gateway Chorus, quartet member, Ragtime and Command Performance

~ Jack was my first manager out of college. (Sentry Insurance) It took him 10-15 years of inviting me to guest nights, but when I finally gave in, I was awful glad I did. He was a constant presence at rehearsals and on the board of directors. An invaluable source of institutional memory. Jack started me into quartet singing. He was a colleague and a friend since 1974. – JOE LARSON, Assistant Director, Northern Gateway Chorus

~ I met Jack around 2012 when my children started curling. A fierce competitor, a leader among leaders, and the epitome of the phrase "iron sharpens iron". He was always kind, generous and supportive of youth curling and in particular, my son and my 3 daughters. For that I will be forever grateful. We all had some great times on the ice, and some bad times too. He taught me that you're never too old to start a new hobby...and life is not to be lived on the sidelines. Get in the game. – SCOTT RUBENZER, member, Northern Gateway Chorus

~ Jack was the person who called me one night in early 2000 to invite me to a Monday night rehearsal. I accepted and as the years fly by, I've now been in the NGC for 26+ years! Jack and I had many interactions over the years, especially when I became chapter treasurer in 2008. He even tried to recruit me to be LOL District Treasurer when he stepped down. No thanks, too much work! Jack was amazing...He did everything and he did it well. I (and all of us) will miss his wit and knowledge of Barbershop. – BILL JENKINS, Treasurer, Northern Gateway Chorus

~ My favorite memory of Jack came at District Contest in 2024 when he had a line in the performance, "What bright side!" and made everyone laugh. Jack was always willing to help others, especially with potential new members. He helped me make sure my membership payments went through. He was a friend you could talk to about anything. Even though He and I sometimes didn't see eye to eye, we always put differences aside because that is what friends do. He always made sure to let me know how thankful he was for me bringing him to rehearsals and getting him home safely. I will miss my friend until I see him again at the Pearly Gates. – BEN BERGERON, member, Northern Gateway Chorus

Whistle Junction Retirement

Submitted by Whistle Junction

Hi! Here is a recap of the Whistle Junction Retirement party. We so appreciate the support that we received from the LOL District during the three years that we competed there!

"A lively group met in Elkhorn Wisconsin on April 19th to say goodbye to Whistle Junction Quartet as they hang up their many costumes for the last time. Whistle Junction started in 2004 with Rag Dolls and progressed into many goofy sets including Cinderella, Hot Dogs, Pirates, Grapes, Lobsters, Flamingos, Aliens, Frankenstein, Superheroes, The Pink Ladies of Grease, Cows, Gnomes, Cockroaches, and their final performance as Minions!

Present were many past members of Whistle Junction including Dona Button, Sue Neuls, and Elly Palmer (who gets the award for travelling the furthest as she lives in Arizona now!)

The present quartet was also there of course: Jo Ann Coehoorn, Mary Ann Suprenant, Cathy Zimmerman, and Nicole Adams.

Many friends from LOL and SAI Region 3 were there, as well as other friends and family. The current quartet sang and then some iterations from the past sang as well. Some history, especially from the early days was discussed and laughed at. The audience sang several tags with us and bid for our costumes. The party was followed by a lovely dinner at Moy's Restaurant in Elkhorn.

Whistle Junction Quartet wishes to thank the LOL District for their support over the past few years. You guys are the BEST!!!!"



CHORD SMASH! Performs at Luther College for Dorian Music Camp

Submitted by Scott Perau

On June 15th, CHORD SMASH! traveled down to Decorah, IA to perform for 300 enthusiastic middle school music students at the Dorian Summer Music Camp held at Luther College. Each evening, the campers end their day with a recital. Camp director and Luther College choir director, Mark Potvin, coordinates the camp and tries to provide a variety of music at these recitals. On one evening they bring in an outside group, and the other evenings they have faculty recitals, student recitals, and a student variety show.

To say the students were excited would be a vast understatement. CHORD SMASH! performed a 40 minute set, including a short tag singing session where they taught all of the students "When I Leave the World Behind." Once the students learned the tag, they invited 4 students onto stage to sing one at a time with CHORD SMASH!. Those students were given a quartet bumper sticker and CD.

CHORD SMASH! did all of their crowd pleasers, and of course, had to break out the instruments and end with "The Devil Went down to Georgia." The students and camp counselors shot out of their seats and gave a rousing standing ovation at the conclusion of the concert. The following day, Mark Potvin reached out and said "Thank you 10,000x over for the musicianship and energy you brought to last night's concert. The campers were buzzing well into today about the experience. I'm grateful for your willingness to jump in, present such a dynamite program, and keep the rapt attention of all 300 middle schoolers."

Performances like this are a key element for inspiring the next generation of barbershop singers. CHORD SMASH! was so grateful for the opportunity to share their music for such a wonderful and important audience.

See you in October!

Sam, Erik, James, and Scott
CHORD SMASH!



Barbershoppers Give to Local Schools!

Submitted by Don Hayden

During the Dunn County Barbershoppers 55th Annual Barbershop Show, the Northern Lights Chorus awarded \$1000 grants to three local music programs.

The Plum City, Boyceville and Elmwood Vocal Music Programs were awarded the grants to help them purchase necessities to keep their programs strong. Representatives from all three schools were on hand for the concert and were awarded the checks at a special presentation during the show. Congratulations to these instructors for keeping music alive in our schools!



Accepting the grants were (left to right) Quinn Martin- Plum City Music Instructor, Don Hayden- Dunn County Barbershopper, Ben Simmerman- Boyceville Music Instructor, and Taylor Wallace- Elmwood Music Instructor

Saint Cloud Singing Saints Volunteer

Submitted by Brent Gerber

Every year the Saint Cloud Singing Saints are asked to serve in the beer tent at the Sauk Rapids Food Fest. We always have plenty of volunteers to do that and typically earn about \$1200 for the chorus. We view that money as a payment for the bus ride to get us to the annual Como Park chorus event, this year on August 11. So it's a win for everyone!



Sharing the Joy: Our "Sing for Life" Video is Live!

Submitted by Walt Ogburn, President, St. Croix Valley Chapter

Every week, we gather in our chapter halls across the Land O' Lakes District to do what we love: ring chords, share laughs, and build community. We all know the profound impact this hobby has on our lives, but explaining that magic to the guys outside our barbershop circle isn't always easy.

To help bridge that gap, our chapter recently produced a short video titled Sing for Life. It perfectly captures the heart of what we do—focusing on the camaraderie, the energy, and the pure fun of building something meaningful with a great bunch of guys.

You can watch it here:

[Watch the Sing for Life Video on YouTube](#)



A Value-Driven Message for All Chapters

Our goal with this project wasn't to build a high-pressure recruitment tool. Instead, we wanted to create a genuine, low-stress invitation to show other men the mental, emotional, and social boosts that come from group singing.

We are sharing this with our fellow LO'L chapters because the message belongs to all of us. We encourage you to:

- Watch it and share it with your own members.
- Pass it along to friends, family, or neighbors who might resonate with the message.
- Use it as inspiration for how your own chapter communicates the deep value of the barbershop community to your local audience.

Let's keep sharing the joy of harmony and lifting up the lives of the guys in our communities. If you have any questions about how we put the program together, feel free to reach out!

Alternative Medicine Quartet Featured Nationally

Submitted by Joel Bourgeois

Via "Aging Untold," a syndicated program carried by Gray Local Media, of which Wausau's Channel 7 is a part, the Alternative Medicine Quartet story is enjoying a renaissance. In the last couple of weeks, the feature, now two years old, is being broadcast nationwide by participating stations.

Here's what viewers of WBKO in Bowling Green, KY, saw if they were watching "Aging Untold" recently:

[Aging Untold: Steps to take after a dementia diagnosis](#)

Social Media Success

Submitted by Loring Harrop

What We Learned on Our Way to 25,000 Facebook Followers...

A quarterly series for community groups, music ensembles, and the people who support them.

PART 1 — The Power of Showing Up for Others (and How to Do It Well)

A) Who We Are

We are the North Star Chorus, the main performing unit of the Greater St. Paul Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. We're about 25 men—mostly seniors—who love harmony, community service, and good humor. We're not tech experts, and we're not a championship chorus. But we've been singing since the 1950s, and we care deeply about the Twin Cities and about our art form.

In early 2025, we had fewer than 1,000 Facebook followers. Today, we have more than **25,000**.

B) Our Philosophy: Support Others First

Our growth began when we stopped thinking about “how to get attention” and started thinking about how to give attention.

Since then, we've followed more than 2,000 pages—choruses, nonprofits, community groups, local leaders—and we like, share, comment, and encourage them regularly. We see social media as a community service, not a marketing channel.

C) Tips for Your Group (and Your Supporters)

1. Follow widely — and intentionally.

Aim to follow hundreds or thousands of pages. It costs nothing and builds visibility for all of us. This is just another type of harmony.

2. Comment generously.

Comments are the strongest engagement signal. Even a simple “Beautiful work!” helps.

3. When publishing content, use vertical video (9:16) for Reels, Instagram, and TikTok.

Vertical is the default for mobile users. It fills the screen, boosts watch time, and increases the chance of being recommended. Focus on faces instead of trying to capture the full chorus.

4. Keep musical clips short.

Your best-performing content will often be 20–30 seconds.

People will watch a short clip; they will scroll past a full song.

5. Encourage your members to participate.

If 20 members each comment once a week, your reach multiplies. If they support other groups, too, the 'rising tide will raise all of our ships'.

6. Share your best practices — and ask others for theirs.

We want to learn from you, too. Let's build a culture of shared wisdom.

Follow and support the groups that support our community:

Facebook / Instagram / TikTok:

@NorthStarChorus Barbershop Harmony Society: @BarbershopHarmonySociety SingUnited (formerly Sweet Adelines International): @SingUnitedHQ Harmony Incorporated: @HarmonyInc Yooper Janet: @YooperJanet (tell us about your favorite influencer)

Let's build a culture where community groups lift each other up, celebrate one another, and help every ensemble—large or small—find its audience.

Barbershop Harmony Open

Submitted by Dave Roesler

18TH ANNUAL BARBERSHOP HARMONY OPEN

CALL FOR SPONSORS!



*HELP US CONTINUE A WONDERFUL TRADITION OF HARMONY,
FELLOWSHIP AND PHILANTHROPY BY BECOMING A SPONSOR TODAY!*

PAR LEVEL

\$50-\$249

Benefits include:

- Hole Sponsor Signage
- Business/name on Barbershop Harmony Open website

BIRDIE LEVEL

\$250-\$999

Includes Par Level benefits plus:

- Social Media shoutout
- Sponsor-provided promotional swag bag gift for all participants

EAGLE LEVEL

\$1,000+

Includes Birdie Level benefits plus:

- Sponsor banner with prime on-site placement
- On-course direct networking opportunity at a dedicated tee box

This year's beneficiaries include:

- Arts for All Wisconsin
- Giving Voice Initiative
- FMC Endowment Fund of ACDA Minnesota



CONTACT US TODAY!

Dave Roesler: 952-426-2143
bigd82413@gmail.com

Dan Schroeder: 612-801-8008
dschrades@msn.com



www.journeymenchorus.org/bhopen

Barbershop Harmony Open

Submitted by Dave Roesler



An Evening with Vocality

Submitted by Tony Blackwood

For the East Enders, Thrasher Opera House will welcome the dynamic a cappella quartet VOCALITY to its historic stage in Green Lake, WI on Saturday, August 8 at 7:30 p.m.

From the local headlines:

“VOCALITY brings the house down everywhere they perform, delivering a wide-ranging repertoire that feels like a jukebox on shuffle. Audiences can expect an energetic journey through classic rock from the 1960s and 1970s, soul-stirring gospel, show-stopping Broadway hits, and a little bit of country. Known for their authentic and engaging stage presence, the group has earned a reputation for delivering performances that are downright fun and resonate deeply with music lovers of all generations.”

Tickets can be purchased online by visiting www.thrasheroperahouse.com or by calling 920-294-4279.

We will be performing many fan favorites including ***Carry On/Come Sail Away, Demons*** and (of course) ***The Biggest Ball of Twine in Minnesota***. We also have a few new tunes to share including a new personal favorite ***Mountain Music***.

We hope to see you there!!

Vocality
2007 LOL District Champs
Jay, Tony, Ben & Tom

Vocality 11th Annual Porch Concert

Submitted by Vocality

VOCALITY: 11th ANNUAL FREE CONCERT FROM THE PORCH



SATURDAY, AUGUST 15TH, 2026 - 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

**With
special
guests:**

**Chord
Smash!**

[facebook.com/
chordsmash](https://facebook.com/chordsmash)



4671 Lake Avenue
White Bear Lake, MN

Bring Your Own Lawn
Chair And Beverage!

Parking on Banning
Street

www.VocalityQuartet.com

A Cappella music presented by the award winning quartets, Vocality, and Chord Smash!. Albums available for sale and donations appreciated.

Minneapolis Commodores Show

Submitted by Steve Grady

The  Minneapolis Commodores Present



Four Seasons of Singing in One Unforgettable Show

Commodores, MCX & Quartets
Featuring Just One More & Frostbite

Saturday September 12, 2026
3:02 PM

Minnehaha Academy
3100 West River Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55406



Scan for Tickets or
<https://bit.ly/4330Lhz>

Great Plains Harmony Celebrates America's 250th Anniversary

Submitted by Chris Haug

Great Plains Harmony celebrates America's 250th anniversary with 3 shows featuring patriotic songs to honor our country & the people who built it.

November 12 at United Lutheran Church in Grand Forks, ND at 7:30 pm

November 21 at Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN at 7:30 pm

November 22 at Hjemkomst Center in Moorhead, MN at 2:30 pm

As America marks its 250th anniversary, Great Plains Harmony invites everyone to celebrate through music. Join us for one of three special performances featuring patriotic songs that honor our nation, its history, and the people who helped shape it.

Whatever your perspective, we hope you'll join us for an evening of music, reflection, and community as we celebrate this historic milestone together.

Come celebrate America's 250th anniversary with Great Plains Harmony - we'd be honored to share this special occasion with you!



North Country Harmony: A New Project Chorus for a Big District Moment

Submitted by Jamye Casperson

When the International Convention comes to Minneapolis in 2027, the Land O' Lakes District will have a rare chance to show the barbershop world who we are. To help mark that moment, a new project chorus — **North Country Harmony** — is forming to serve as the mic-tester ensemble for the International Chorus Contest.

Why This Chorus Was Formed

North Country Harmony isn't a chapter and isn't intended to become a permanent ensemble. It's a **project chorus** designed around a single idea: Let's create something memorable, musical, and distinctly "Land O' Lakes" for our International year.

The repertoire celebrates Minnesota's musical heritage with:

- A dynamic Prince medley
- A heartfelt Bob Dylan medley

It's a chance to honor the artists who shaped our region and to showcase the talent within our District.

About the All-Male Voice Choice

Some have asked why this project chorus is male-only, especially in a District where many ensembles are proudly mixed-voice. Here is the honest, straightforward answer: The decision was simply a choice — not a judgment, not a philosophy, and not a statement about who belongs in barbershop. It reflects the vision of the project's organizers for this particular ensemble, for this particular moment. We understand that not everyone will agree with that choice, and we respect those feelings.

Who We're Inviting

North Country Harmony is open to any male singer in the LOL District who wants to:

- Be part of a one-time International performance
- Sing iconic Minnesota music
- Work in a positive, supportive, high-expectation environment
- Represent the Land O' Lakes District on a global stage

You don't need to be a top-tier competitor. You *do* need enthusiasm, preparation, and a desire to contribute to something special.

What You Can Expect

- Clear rehearsal plans
- Strong learning materials (most of the learning is done on your own and you come to in person rehearsals when possible)
- A culture built on respect and encouragement
- A performance experience you'll remember for years
- A chance to see and hear the best choruses IN THE WORLD!

If This Project Speaks to You — Join Us

North Country Harmony has already gotten started and we're excited to welcome more singers who want to help create a powerful musical moment for our District during our International year. Email NCH administrator Jamye Casperson at jkcasperson@gmail.com or director Paul Wigley paul.wigley54@gmail.com with questions or to sign up.

What did NCH singers say after the first rehearsal:

"Singing these two arrangements, commissioned just for us, is an opportunity to participate in something truly special."

"The first NCH rehearsal was a blast. The opportunity to sing two brand new never-before-heard charts, featuring the songs of a couple of iconic musicians, was exhilarating."

Schmitt Brothers Diamond Jubilee

Submitted by Schmitt Family

Celebrate 75 Years of Harmony at the Schmitt Brothers Diamond Jubilee on Saturday, July 18

Family-friendly event features FREE barbershop concert

The community is invited to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Schmitt Brothers victory as international barbershop quartet champions at a family-friendly event featuring a free barbershop concert in Two Rivers Central Park on Saturday, July 18, from 6 – 8 p.m. The concert will take place on the Schmitt Brothers Stage, the only stage in the country dedicated to a champion barbershop quartet.

It was in this park that Two Rivers welcomed their hometown heroes – the Schmitt Brothers quartet – after they won the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA) title in 1951. The quartet traveled 2 million miles and performed in 3,000 shows during their 35-year career. Everywhere they went, Jim, Joe, Paul and Fran Schmitt worked hard to spread harmony and their hometown spirit.

What HARMONY LIVES ON the Schmitt Brothers Stage 75th Anniversary celebration

When Saturday, July 18, 2026 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Where

Schmitt Brothers Stage in Two Rivers Central Park, Two Rivers, WI
In case of rain, the concert will be held in the Community House gym at 1720 West Park Street

Performing

Free barbershop concert hosted by the Clipper City Chordsmen and featuring the three-time international Bronze Medalist Midwest Vocal Express Chorus, 2024 Land O'Lakes District Champion Forward Harmony Chorus, 2021 Land O'Lakes District Champion Coulee Classic quartet, What's New quartet from the University of Wisconsin - Madison, and 2025 Wisconsin Youth Harmony Festival High School Champion Quad Aces quartet.

Food/Drink

- The Washington House Museum, part of the Two Rivers Historical Society, will serve a Signature Schmitt Brothers Sundae topped with strawberries, nuts, hot fudge, whipped cream, and a cherry on top from noon until 6:00 p.m. at 1622 Jefferson Street.
- The Cool City Brewing Company at 1718 West Park Street will offer Schmitt Brothers Barbershop Brew in commemorative crowlers.
- The Two Rivers Rotary Club will sell snacks and beverages at the concession stand in Two Rivers Central Park during the show.

About

This event is presented by generous donations from the Association of District Barbershop Champions, CT Nails, Explore Two Rivers, Shoreline Credit Union, Skylight Wealth Management, and the William and Nancy Webster family. Community partners include Architectural Forest Products LLC, Cool City Brewing Company, Hawkins Ash CPAs, Paczkowski Family Dental, Lighthouse Inn, Schmitt Brothers Eleven, Schroeder's Department Store, Schwartz Manufacturing Company, and Shelley Vogel at Weichert Realty.

More Information

- Visit schmittbrothersquartet.com
- Read/listen to "The Schmitt Brothers" book available at local booksellers and schmittbrothersbooks.com
- Follow [The Schmitt Brothers Quartet](https://www.facebook.com/TheSchmittBrothersQuartet) on Facebook
- Listen to The Schmitt Brothers Greatest Hits on Apple Music and Spotify
- Visit the Washington House Museum to see the display dedicated to the quartet

Contact: schmittbrothersquartet@gmail.com

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)

Calendar

August

- 8 Madison | Capitol Chordsmen
Covenant Presbyterian Church, Madison, WI

September

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

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

- 19 Stevens Point | Northern Gateway
Pacelli Catholic High School, Stevens Point, WI

- 19 Polk County | Indianhead Chorus
Barron Area Community Center, Barron, WI

- Greater St. Paul | North Star Chorus
26 3 p.m. Show: Northern Heights Church, Arden Hills, MN
6:30 p.m. Cabaret: VFW Roseville, MN

October

- 3 Polk County | Indianhead Chorus
Amery High School, Amery WI

November

- 7 The Journeymen Chorus
North Heights Church, Arden Hills, MN

- 12 Fargo - Moorhead | Great Plains Harmony
United Lutheran Church, Grand Forks, ND

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

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

December

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

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

2026	October 15-18	LOL District Convention, Minneapolis Airport Hilton
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