

Harmonotes

The Quarterly Bulletin of the
Kansas City Heart of America Chorus

CHORUS AND QUARTET SINGING
IN THE BARBERSHOP STYLE



SECOND-OLDEST CHAPTER IN THE
BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

VOLUME 19 • ISSUE 3 • JULY 2019

PRESIDENTIAL POINT OF VIEW?

By Mike Schumacher, HOA President



SCHUMACHER

Do you have a motto? Do you want a motto is? Do you know HOA's motto? Every now and again, I get hung up on the meaning of a word. Sorry about that but that's how my brain works sometimes (or a lot). According to the dictionary (you remember what that is, right?), a motto is a short sentence or phrase chosen to encapsulate the beliefs or ideas guiding an entity. Unbeknownst to me, it also means a phrase that recurs throughout a musical

work and has some symbolic significance. This all started last week when I read HOA's motto again. Everyone I talk to wants to have fun in our rehearsals and I'm all for that. Right now I'm more concerned with the broad picture and I think the answer is in the motto we have. *Drawn by Harmony, Bound by Friendships, Striving for Excellence!* Here's what I hope is true.

Drawn by Harmony – every one of us heard barbershop for the first time and was amazed at the sound. Amazed at the chords ring even though most of us didn't know how or why but it sucked us in. (Continued on page 2 ➡)

In This Issue:

- 4** Chapter Longevity - Call to Action
- 5** Reviewing the 2019 International Chorus Competitions
- 6** Reviewing the 2019 International Quartet Competitions
- 8** *Handful, HOA Land Dandy Bass Through Tried-and-True Method*
- 9** Monte Turns 70 (at Least in BHS Years)
- 10** Six Days in Salt Lake City

Harmonotes

Harmonotes is published by the board of directors of the Kansas City, Mo., Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society®, a non-profit organization. Photographs that are not attributed are the work of our photographers at large. Unless accompanied by a byline, all articles have been written by the editor and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the officers and members of the chapter. Space will be made available for opposing points of view.

Chapter meets at 7 p.m. each Tuesday night, at
Center High School
87th and Holmes - Kansas City, Mo. 64131

2019 CHAPTER OFFICERS AND BOARD

President	Mike Schumacher
Immediate Past President	Barry Sanders
Executive V.P.	OPEN
Music/Performance V.P.	John Braden
Membership V.P.	Don Fuson
Program V.P.	Jerry Meier
Marketing & PR V.P.	Adam Singleton
Operations V.P.	Steve Keisker
Secretary	Tom Hadley
Treasurer	Harvey Shapiro
Board Member at Large	Marty Oldehoeft
	John Erwine
	Vince Perry IV
	Greg Busch
	Dale Neuman
Board Member Emeritus	

MUSICAL LEADERS

Chorus Director	Bob Velazquez
Director Emeritus	Jim Bagby
Associate Director	Carter Combs
Assistant Director	Mike Schumacher

SECTION LEADERS

Tenor	Carter Combs
Lead	John Braden
Baritone	Bruce Wenner, Rich Huyck
Bass	David Stockard

HARMONOTES STAFF

Honorary Editor Emeritus in Perpetuity	Wade Dexter
Editor	Todd Anderson
Photographer at Large	Ron McIntire
Staff Reporters	ALL Our Chapter Members!

All chapter officers and quartets are expected, and chapter members encouraged, to contribute their ideas on a regular basis. The editorial staff reserves the right to deny publication of material deemed inappropriate for Harmonotes and to edit all submissions for reasons of space and clarity (grammar, content and spelling). Permission to reprint articles is granted to barbershop editors as long as the author and Harmonotes are acknowledged. The utmost care was used in preparation of this newsletter. Should you notice erroneous copy, please let the editor know! Comments/submissions may be made to:

Todd Anderson (Editor)
2909 West Trevor Trail • Ozark, Mo. 65721-8438
(417) 766-2367 • todd@andersondesign.biz

HOA Board meetings take place at 6pm on the second Monday or Tuesday of the month, at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 100 East Red Bridge Road, Kansas City, MO 64131. Chapter members are welcome!

HOA Website: www.hoachorus.com
Web Address: webstaff@hoachorus.com
Chorus Manager & Webmaster - Vince Perry



(Continued from front cover)

Especially when we got the first opportunity to sing a tag and we heard our voice lend clarity to the chord. Wow... sign me up... That's cool. That's what we need to remember when we're talking to other guys about barbershop.

Bound by Friendships – Some of my best friends are in our chorus and some in other choruses around this country (and the world). Somebody at International this year was talking about our great hobby. Most would agree that it's more than a hobby. More like a lifestyle or I like to think of it as a brotherhood. If you've had the opportunity to visit other chapter meetings/chorus rehearsals and was treated like you belong, you know what I mean. Standing in the halls of the headquarters hotel at International and singing with guys from *Zero8* (Sweden) or singing a tag with *Musical Island Boys* (New Zealand) or standing on the risers singing with *Mile High Chorus* and watching **Darren Drown** direct is awesome. That's what we need to think about when a guest comes into our rehearsals... treat him as a brother, teach him a tag, and just make him feel special. I wish more of our inactive members would come back and sing with us as I miss their voice and warm smiles. I miss the camaraderie.

Striving for Excellence – It doesn't say striving for perfect. Again if you've had the pleasure of singing with another chorus (as a guest), you know there are guys on their risers just like the guys on our risers. Our musical leadership is raising the bar and I'm as hard as I can to keep up at times but it is making me a better singer. And I am more appreciative of the incredible efforts that all of you are making to make *HOA* better. I've said it before and I will continue to say I want to be the best 30 or 35 or 40 man chorus that we can be. As **Carter Combs** said tonight, if I come off the stage and somebody says to me I touched their life or I touched their heart – That's my "A-HA" moment!

Guys, we are doing so many good things. We just need to get the word out that we are here and we want to share this life changing singing opportunity! That being said I want to encourage all of us to get behind **John Erwine** who has "stepped up" and taken the helm of the Golf Scramble. We need your help gathering prizes, searching for players and sponsors. It's not hard, you just have to take some time and ask. This was our big fundraiser last year and it can be again with our help. Next, **Barry Sanders** (among his other concerns) has again "stepped up" and is working feverishly towards making the Holiday Show a rousing success. That can happen if we all start selling tickets to a show that Includes one of the Best ever International Champion Quartets, *Vocal Spectrum*. And while all this is happening the music team is pushing to make us better for contest and I will start a committee to hunt for a new show venue for next spring. Any ideas should be sent my way.

As always, THANK YOU for all you do to make *HOA* a better, more vibrant, and inviting chorus/chapter! You great are why I enjoy singing so much. "Don't let perfect get in the way of better" (my new motto). ♥

HARMONY FOUNDATION REPORT

by Jim Porter



Note that we will have our raffle each time we meet in our regular location.

All of the proceeds of the raffle not given as prizes or used for expenses of the raffle goes to Harmony Foundation at the end of each year.

In return, we are able to have the Foundation designate up to 30% of the funds given to chapter activities such as Harmony Explosion.

As of July 24th, after 26 drawings (10 since the last report):

- The total collected for Harmony Foundation since the last report is \$217.
- The total collected for the calendar year 2019 to date is \$545.

The carry-over jackpot amount stands at \$280. ❤️

The music to "Take Me Out To The Ball Game," 1908, was written by Albert Von Tilzer, brother of Harry Von Tilzer, who gave us many barbershop songs. When Albert wrote the music, he had never seen a baseball game. (Source: PBS radio broadcast)



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

...to the following HOA MEMBERS!

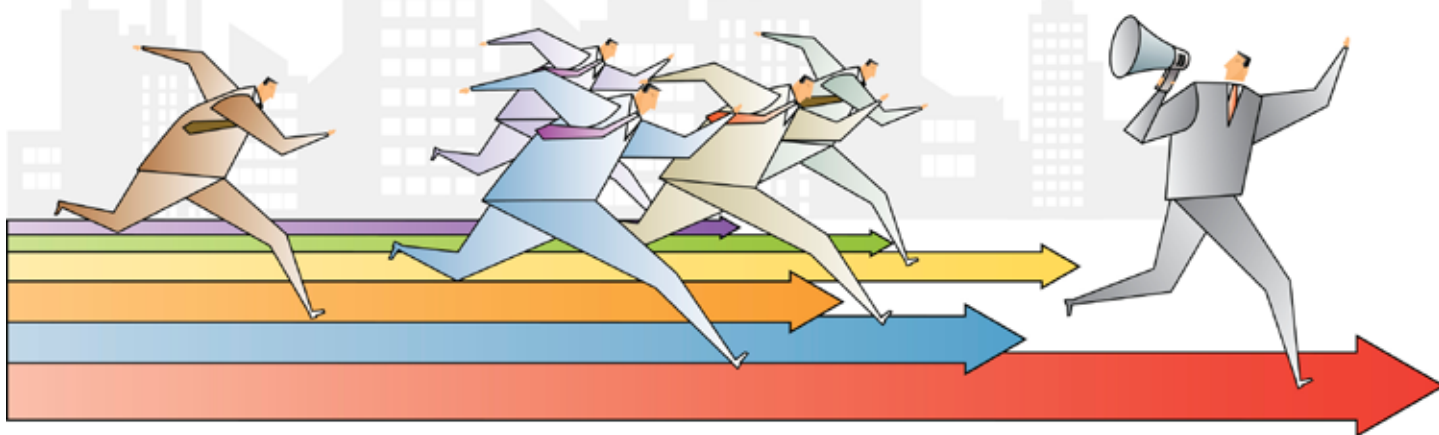
July 11 Mike Templer
July 14 Dave Parker
July 16 J.P. Marshall
July 18 Matt Moore
July 20 David Stockard
July 22 Calvin Yoder
July 26 David Miller
July 30 Bob Velazquez
July 30 Vince Perry IV

August 2 Lyle Wyly
August 4 Wally Thornton
August 7 Monty Duerksen
August 7 Gordy Coleman
August 14 Denny Briley
August 18 Harry Stewart
August 19 Greg Busch
August 19 Mark Fortino
August 20 Jonathan Andrews
August 25 Charley Drake
August 30 Mike Schumacher
August 31 Carl Turlin

September 5 Thom Tisdall
September 6 Jerry Garrard
September 7 Frank Lasta
September 8 John Braden
September 10 Rich Huyck
September 11 Willard Yoder
September 14 Matthew Fortino
September 15 Ron Abel
September 16 Michael Meier
September 23 Phil Veltkamp
September 24 Tom Hadley

CHAPTER LONGEVITY— CALL TO ACTION

by Ron McIntire



Well, my first call to action chapter presentation is behind me. The purpose was to encourage every member of the chapter to put on their thinking cap and begin the thought process for bringing in visitors and new members. During my presentation, I told the story about the dinner I had with my wife, her sister and her husband and my sister and her husband at Granite City Restaurant. It was between the performances of the March show. In that story, I related that no sooner had we been seated than several members of the chorus came in. I asked if they would sing Happy Birthday to my brother-in-law. Within minutes at least two other tables asked for the song. Later it occurred to me that quartets might be the answer to getting our name in the public. Maybe we could station a quartet at a restaurant for two or three hours on weekends to sing *Happy Birthday* to patrons. The idea didn't fly too well but it was an idea and that's what I tried to convey.

As I said in my presentation, *HOA* stands to lose up to six members in the next two years and I may be one of those. By my calculation, *HOA* had about 70 members

or 60% of the chapter membership on stage in 2008. By 2019 we had about 30 dropping the ratio to 33%. I worry that the king of the *Central States District* and the chorus to beat at district contest will be a memory in fewer than ten years. That is unless we do something soon. I offered to chair a committee to explore ways to bring in new members but I'm in a hurry and the response was slower than expected so I set up the committee, appointed myself chairman and found three committee members.

I now have some committee guidelines and I have issued an email to the HOANet for all members to start the process by thinking of ways to get our name in the public. I have also expanded my committee a bit to include suggestions for making our rehearsals more fun and interesting. We'll see how it turns out but we cannot wait.

THIS IS NOT A DIY PROJECT. So, if you have an idea, no matter how small, send it to any member of the Chapter Member Exploratory Project, (CMEP): **Ron McIntire, Don Fuson, Barry Sanders, or John Erwine.** It will require everyone to

commit to thinking long and hard about how it can be done. I challenge every member of the chapter to be bold, be creative and take the initiative. If it takes forming a quartet, then form a quartet. If it takes advertising in some form, then do it. But don't forget, if your idea involves representing the Kansas City Chapter or HOA with music, be sure to involve the Music Team or the board. I will report to the chapter board on our progress from time to time and will keep you up to date in my next *Harmonotes* article.

So, now is the time. Let's get started. ♥

An Invitation to

Men of all ages who like to sing

Heart of America Chorus

Enrollment is now open to men of all ages who like to sing and enjoy four-part harmony.

Join us from 7pm to 9:30pm Every Tuesday evening
Center High School
8715 Holmes Road
Kansas City, MO 64131
See our website at HOAChorus.com

REVIEWING THE INTERNATIONAL CHORUS COMPETITIONS IN 2019

by Jim Porter

It is still true that the *Ambassadors of Harmony* has never beaten the Westminster Chorus in any contest year both chapters competed in the same contest.

Remember 2007? That was the year the two chapters TIED for the gold medal. Westminster won the tiebreaker. **Jim Henry** was left to say "All I wanted was ONE more point from ONE judge on ONE song!"

I submit it is well nigh impossible if *Westminster* keeps setting records when they compete.

Their 2937 score is an all time record, breaking their own record of 2932 set in 2010. That wonderful performance by AOH in 2009 (76 Trombones) is now 3rd best, 2926 points. Fourth is Westminster again, when they won gold in 2015 with 2,924 points.

Also, Westminster is no longer a small chorus. There were 100 of them on stage this year.

Altogether, the number of times a chorus topped 2900 points is 9. The first time was AOH in 2009. Dallas has the dubious distinction of being the only one to do that and have to settle for a silver medal. They posted 2913 (still

2779 would have earned them the gold medal in 2002 and 1995.

Last October, the *Ambassadors of Harmony* put up the best qualifying chorus score of all, 94.4%. *Westminster* posted the 2nd best score, 94.0%. *Central Standard* posted 92.1%, for 3rd place.

At Salt Lake City, the *Ambassadors* posted 96.5%, a nice improvement of 2.1% at that level. *Westminster*, however, blew past them, posting 97.9%, an astounding 3.9% gain over October.

How hard is that? If your favorite baseball team were to go 47 - 3 over 50 games,

that would be 94.0%. To improve that record to 97.9% would require they win their next 93 consecutive games!

The top choruses normally show some improvement from October to July. If they did not, that's a lot of hard work for nothing, just ask anyone now singing for Central Standard. The average improvement by the top 20 choruses this year was 1.80%, from 85.85% in October to 87.65% last week in Salt Lake City. How did *Central Standard* do? They posted

their best score ever) in 2010, when Westminster set the previous record at 2,932.

Point inflation, as some claim? Or is it really true that the top choruses just keep getting better and better? Right here in Kansas City, our friends in *Central Standard* are still looking for another 100 points or so to reach that level, and after 4 years of striving, they are no closer. Yet, this year's 4th place score of



REVIEWING THE INTERNATIONAL CHORUS COMPETITIONS IN 2019

(Continued from page 5)

93.0% in July, after 92.1% in October, improving by 0.9%. It may not look like much, but 92.1% would have resulted in a 7th place finish and no medal.

So, which is the most improved chorus? *Westminster* actually came close, but they were just 2nd. The winner is a relatively new group, who last year in Orlando appeared on stage for the first time. Their score was a modest 80.9%, but it was the first time ANY chapter from the Seneca Land district EVER scored 80% at International. Rather frequently, the chorus representing that district would finish dead last in the competition. Last October, this chorus qualified for International with a 77.8% score. In most any other district, that would not be the top score in the district, and it was nowhere close to qualifying as a wild card. However, it was easily the highest score in their district, so there they were, qualified for Salt Lake City, with the lowest qualifying score of any of this year's competitors.

They took on the challenge and availed themselves well, posting a score of 82.2% to place 20th, an improvement of 4.4%. *The Harmonic Collective* from Seneca Land District is your Most Improved Chorus of 2019. It will be interesting to see what the future holds for them and their district.

Overall, the average score for the top 5 (medalist) choruses was 95.14%, which tops the previous best, 94.58% in 2017. The 7th place chorus (*Music City* from Nashville) posted 92.13%, but the 8th place score was substantially lower, 86.33%. The average score for the top 10 choruses was 91.78%, which was 0.14% BELOW this average last year in Orlando. The average score for the top 20 choruses was 87.65%, just 0.04% higher than this average last year.

So – why are there no choruses in the high-80% or lowest-90% range? Consider the chapters that sat out this year.

The *Great Northern Union* posted 94.00% at International in 2017, and has not competed since then.

Up-and-coming *Parkside Harmony* posted 92.23% in Orlando, then won their district in October with 93.33%, the 3rd best qualifying score, behind only *Westminster* and the *Ambassadors of Harmony*, then chose not to compete.

The *Fog City Singers* posted 91.17% in Orlando, then 86.89% in the fall, which led to their choosing to sit out.

Perennial contender *Alexandria Harmonizers* posted 90.93% in Orlando, then chose not to compete last fall.

New Zealand's *Vocal FX* chorus posted 90.47% in Orlando, then let pass the opportunity for a head-to-head meeting with Sweden's *zero8* chorus for the distinction of being the best chorus outside of the USA.

The *Kentucky Vocal Union* posted 90.73% in 2017, but has not competed since then.

Summing up, there are 7 choruses that scored over 90% this year in Salt Lake City, an 8th (*Heralds of Harmony*) fell short but has scored over 90% in the past (last year, 91.73%), plus 6 chapters choosing not to compete, plus recent gold medal winners *Dallas Vocal Majority* and *Masters of Harmony*, that is 16 choruses capable of performing at the 90% level.

This year, the sheets also identified the arranger(s). Which arranger is the favorite of the top choruses? **David Wright** continues to lead the way, with 8 out of a total of 54 songs to his credit. **Aaron Dale** is 2nd with 6 songs, followed by **Patrick McAlexander** and **Steve Armstrong** (5 each), then **Clay Hine** with 4 songs. **Kevin Keller** and **Theo Hicks** each have 3 songs to their credit, while **Dan Wessler** and **Jay Giallombardo** each have 2, leaving 16 others with 1 song. ❤️

REVIEWING THE INTERNATIONAL QUARTET COMPETITIONS IN 2019

by Jim Porter

It was a good year for the quartets, as 50 North American quartets and 13 others from affiliates across the seas qualified for International with a 76% or better performance. Two of the 17 North American districts sent their best quartet to Salt Lake City with a score less than 76%, so there were 65 quartets eligible to compete. Eight opted out, leaving 57 to compete, which matched the record set in 2016 for the largest group of all time. Had the cut-off been 77%, 6 would have missed the cut, leaving 51.

Just 27 of these quartets also competed last year at International in Orlando. A total of 51 were there. Another 4 competed at International in 2017, but sat out in 2018, not competing in the prelims. One (*Momma's Boys*) returned to International after a 5 year hiatus (they last appeared in 2014). That leaves 25 quartets that were singing on the International stage for the first time. Of these, 7 competed last year in the prelims, but either missed the cut or chose to sit out.

A case in point is *Midtown*, a quartet out of New York with our own Anthony Fortino singing lead. That group first competed in the 2017 prelims, posting a score of 72.04% and missing the cut. They did not compete in 2018, but they came out into the limelight at the Mid-Atlantic prelims in April, lapping a very strong group of competitors and winning the trophy with an 88.38%



score. At International, they did even better, scoring 90.13% and winning a medal in their very first International competition. Daddy Mark has to be a proud papa, if not a bit envious. He has yet to sing with a quartet in the top 10.

Other quartets moving up include:

- Ontario District's *Yonge Guns* improved 5.07% and placed 16th for the Most Improved distinction. Their qualifying score was just 36th best.

- Mid-Atlantic District's *Pratt Street Power* improved 4.34% and placed 8th, after qualifying 16th best.

- Mid-Atlantic District's *Gimme Four* improved 4.03% and placed 14th, after qualifying 20th best.
- Evergreen District's *Momma's Boys* improved 3.15% and placed 19th, after qualifying 25th best.
- Johnny Appleseed District's *The Core* improved 3.10% and placed 10th, after qualifying 14th best.

Pratt Street Power and *The Core* also showed good improvement over last year in Orlando, improving by 2.41% and 2.68% respectfully. The greatest improvement in that comparison is by Rooftop Records, who improved last year's 86.43% (8th place) finish by 4.46% to claim the 4th place medal.

Overall, the average score for the top 10 quartets edged up 0.30% over 2018, to 89.92%. The average score for the top 20 quartets was up 0.77% over 2018, to 87.25%. Both are all time records.

At the district level, Sunshine district has the distinction of having the top 3 quartets after spring prelims was complete. They placed 1st, 2nd and 4th at Salt Lake City (Johnny Appleseed's Quorum placed 3rd). Beyond those 3, the district's 4th quartet posted a 72% score.

Mid-Atlantic District had 7 at SLC, 2 in the top 10 (1 medalist), 5 in the top 20. Johnny Appleseed District had 7 at SLC, 2 in the top 10 (1 medalist).

Far Western District had 5 at SLC, 1 in the top 10, 2 in the top 20.

HANDFUL, HOA LAND DANDY BASS THROUGH TRIED-AND-TRUE METHOD

by Jim Bagby, NHH Director

Some of you know that the *New Harmony Handful* has made the Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church its monthly meeting home for virtually all of our existence, going on 11 years. HOA members will recall the Raytown church with the white steeple as our occasional stop for extra meetings, or staging practices in the basement fellowship hall. BRPC is the home church for **Mike Schumacher**, **Don Young**, me, former member **John Starcke** and the late **Ed Sundermeyer**.

NHH pays the church a small fee for use of the choir room (or sometime the cooler parlor). We also include BRPC in what was our original mission: sing for summer church services when choirs are on vacation. And we usually are invited about once a year to sing for a delightful lunch meeting of the BRPC's Older, Wiser, Livelier, Seniors (OWLS).

It was during a service earlier this year that the Handful first came to the ear of the **Rev. Ron Galvin**. Dr. Galvin is our interim pastor, who also sings with the choir, where he's clearly the best bass (no offense, Don). He also has experience as a choir director in his long career. After the service, he was enthusiastic in his praise of the NHH. So the next time we were getting ready to sing for the OWLS, I took him a copy of "Down Mobile" and asked him to look it over. He said "sure." I asked if he were gonna be at the OWLS lunch. His eyes lit up and he said "You bet!"

So the leader of the OWLS, Mike's wife, **Linda Schumacher**, publicized a surprise folks would not wanna miss along with the next appearance of the NHH. Midway through our program, we sang "Down Mobile" (not part of our rep, but we'd boned up on it) and brought up Ron from the crowd to join us. The basses never sounded better! And Ron announced, "I want to sing with these guys!"

He meant it. Afterward, he was chatting with us, and asked seriously about joining NHH. I told him I'd come to his office and we'd discuss it. Not only is this pretty much a hand-picked group of folks who learn music on their own so we can put it together in our monthly rehearsals, EVERYONE must be a member of the Kansas City Chapter. Not all are active, but they have the HOA connection.

So I met with Ron and laid that out. You'll notice we have no other ministers in our chapters, nor do most — not because they can't sing, but because of the tremendous time demands on their jobs. And for the NHH, almost all of our 25-plus gigs each year are during the day. And an additional complication for a man of the cloth: up to a half-dozen could be on Sunday morning.

Ron said, basically, well I'm gonna be out of the BRPC responsibility soon. The church loves him, one and all, and would retain him as the permanent minister if he'd agree. But he and Sandy are looking forward to returning to their Lee's Summit retirement and grandchildren here and elsewhere. So the next thing you know, he has happily joined the *Heart of America Chorus* bass section as a regular member AND the *New Harmony Handful*!

All because he heard barbershop chords, said "that's for me" and "where do I sign up?" Would I lie about a minister? MY pastor?

You can ask him yourself. ❤️



NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT!



Introducing the newest member of the Chapter!



Ronald (Ron) Galvin is a first-time barbershopper living in Lee's Summit, MO with his wife Sandy. He is a retired pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Lee's Summit but now serves as an Interim Transitional Pastor with the Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church in Raytown. His musical experience includes guitar, high school, college and seminary choir and sings bass in the HOA chorus. ❤️

Photo by Ron McIntire

MONTE TURNS 70! (AT LEAST IN BHS YEARS)

by Don Fuson

A group of well-wishers from *HOA* joined the **Duerksen** family to present **Monte** his 70th renewal card on May 2, 2019. We gathered at the Retirement Residence is south Overland Park where Monte and his wife, **Shirley**, lived.

The gathering was joyful, and celebrated by the Duerksen clan, and with a smattering of HOA members, as well.

The pictures are bittersweet, as Monte's wife, Shirley, passed away a couple of weeks later. The family gathering for the presentation turned out to be a good excuse for Monte and Shirley to see the support that the chapter had for Monte.

It turns out that today is always the right time to celebrate small and large milestones in the lives of those around us. Sing and bring out the smiles! ♥

At right, top to bottom: Monte is all smiles after getting the 70th BHS card from past International President, Don Fuson, and supported by son-in-law Matt Bostick. The balloons on the head were just an unplanned extra!; Monte and the Command Performance quartet (with Rich Huyck, Jon Gathright and Carter Combs) helped reconnect with and tell the story of "Sweet Mae" in song one more time; The extended Duerksen family (Shirley and Monte in the middle front row) were all present to help celebrate the "young Barbershopper"; The HOA "family" joined with Monte to serenade the crowd. Front: Jim Bagby, Monte Duerksen, Rich Huyck, Jon Gathright, Ron Abel, Keith Schweer. Back row: Carter Combs, Matt Bostick, Don Fuson, Mike Schumacher, Bruce Wenner.



SIX DAYS IN SALT LAKE CITY

by Tom Hadley



OK, you may think I'm weird, but my wife and I actually drove to Salt Lake City (which is about 1100 miles from KC). The reason?

We were already on the road for a different vacation and combined the two into one big road trip.

What was International like? Exciting, frustrating, enjoyable, exhausting, fun, overwhelming and unforgettable are some of the best words to describe it. My experience is probably different from most of the attendees as we didn't stay downtown, but rather spent the week at our son's and his wife's house in a close-in suburb.

We arrived in SLC on Saturday night and spent a couple of days visiting and playing board games. On Monday night we got our first taste of Barbershop by attending the pre-convention kick-off show, which was held outdoors on the grounds of the Convention Center. That was a two-hour show featuring 10 or 12 quartets who would later be competing. No fancy costumes, just shorts and flip-flops for the most part. I remember

hearing Midtown sing there and thinking to myself, "Wow, these guys are fun to listen to!"

On Tuesday the convention officially opened and the competitions began, as well as many classes hosted by Harmony University. I had to plan my day in advance because some of the classes overlapped with the competitions, and it's not like I could easily get from one to the other! The classes were all held at the hotel which was the convention headquarters, but the competitions were held in two other places, which were about a mile away! The quartet quarterfinals (which took the field from 57 quartets down to 20) were held in the iconic Tabernacle. A very strange building built 150 years ago, it houses nothing but seating and a stage. No conference rooms, office space or even bathrooms (which were in some detached buildings). Large columns blocked some of the view and the sound system left something to be desired, and yet the music was enchanting.

All other performances were held at the relatively new Convention Center, just a block away from the Tabernacle. This building was amazing! It can seat up to

21,000 people! Sight lines weren't all great, but hey, we didn't nearly fill the building so that wasn't a problem.

The most memorable performances that I got to see were 1) the AIC (Association of International Champions) show on Thursday night (the 4th of July). Scores of champions participated (including **Jim Bagby** of course) to perform both as a chorus and in quartets. The theme of the show was a simulated "Name That Sitcom" game, in which a TV theme song was sung and we got to guess what show it came from. It was hilarious! Jim was one of the whistlers for the theme from "The Andy Griffith Show". Another memorable performance was the Quartet Finals – that is, the final 10. What great singing!

The chorus competition was more exciting than I thought it would be. I enjoy comedy, and so for me, the *Music City Chorus'* performance was my favorite. The set was inside Noah's Ark, with all their singers dressed in full-length animal costumes. Jokes abounded. For example, when the elephants were walking around, they sang, "Sit down, you're rocking the boat".



Several dinosaurs missed getting on the ark, and a hungry bear almost ate a unicorn!

My only regret is that I didn't get to spend more time at the hotel, fraternizing with other barbershoppers. I felt torn between being there and being back with the family, so I did some of both. I would have liked to have done a little more woodshedding and tag singing, both of which were available at the hotel. I particularly enjoyed the one time I got to eat lunch with the other KC Chapter people who were there, and I enjoyed meeting some of **Don Fuson's** acquaintances (he seems to know everybody!).

I hope everyone gets to attend International . . . it was a great experience. ❤️



REVIEWING THE INTERNATIONAL QUARTET COMPETITIONS IN 2019 *(Continued from page 5)*

Southwestern District had 4 at SLC, 1 in the top 10, their 2nd best placed 21st. Central States District had 4 at SLC, but none in the top 20.

Sweden had 3 at SLC, 2 in the top 20. Neither *Lemon Squeezy* nor *Stockholm Syndrome* competed.

Dixie, Evergreen, Northeastern and Ontario districts each had 3 at SLC, 1 (DIX) top 10, 2 others (EVG,ONT) top 20.

This year, the sheets also identified the arranger(s). Which arranger is the favorite of the top quartets? **Aaron Dale**. He was identified as the arranger for 23 of the 174 songs sung by the 57 competing quartets. The next two together do not match that total, they are **Patrick McAlexander** (12 songs) and **Theo Hicks** (10). **Clay Hine** is 4th with 9 songs, then comes **David Wright** and **Kohl Kitzmiller** (8 each). Altogether, there were 53 individuals identified as arrangers.

Wayne Grimmer, lead singer for *'Round Midnight*, arranged 6 songs, all for his own quartet. They placed 9th, marking him as a competent arranger (also lead singer). Perhaps he should market his skills to others?

The youth quartet competition (next generation) did not reveal qualifying scores, so comparisons can only be made to scores from past years. Few of these quartets compete at this level more than once, almost no one more

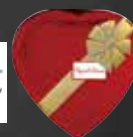
than 3 times. Our own *Stand By* competed last year in Orlando, placing 9th with 75.06%. This year they improved slightly to 75.50% but it was enough to move them up to 7th place. Of the 6 ahead of them, only the champion, *Wildfire*, competed last year (placing 3rd). *Electones* placed 3rd, they also competed in 2016 and 2017, but not last year.

Overall, average scores have trended downward in this competition in the past few years. The average for the top 10 quartets was 76.46% this year, 77.09% last year, 77.42% in 2017, and 79.88% in 2016. The average was 76.65% in 2014. Most other years in the past 10 saw the average around 76%, but it was 79.48% in 2009 and 78.91% in 2010. In earlier years, the average was in the lower 70's. Likely, 2016 was a record high for this average. ❤️



MAKE AN EFFORT TO PATRONIZE OUR SPONSORS!

The Heart of America Chorus membership owes it to our sponsors to be aware of their support. Please use and/or support their products/services whenever possible and make an effort to let them know that we are thankful for this support!



HEART OF AMERICA CHORUS CALENDAR

July 21-28

Harmony University

August 3

Leavenworth Cody Choraliers 50th Anniversary Show

August 4

HOA Performance at Starlight

September 26

HOA Golf Tourney at Falcon Lakes

THE KANSAS CITY CHAPTER OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

...is a singing fraternity whose mission is to learn, teach, and perform the highest-quality, entertaining, a cappella music that embraces the barbershop style through the Heart of America Chorus and its chapter quartets, to bring about a spiritual and emotional response from the performer and the audience.