



Heart of America



MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

- Jan. 8 Installation/Awards Banquet @ Radisson Hotel Lenexa, 95th & I-35
- Jan. 18 Coaching session with Music category guru, **Kevin Keller**
- Jan. 28 12th Street Rag School Tour
- Jan. 29 All-day Music Team planning session
- Feb. 13-14 Singing Valentines
- Feb. 19 Harmony Explosion @ Shawnee Mission West High School
- Mar. 19 HOA Annual Show, Music Hall, w/ *Power Play* - 2003 Int'l Champs
- Mar. 29 Guest Night

January 2005

HARMONOTES

The monthly newsletter of Kansas City's
Heart of America Chorus



The second-oldest chapter in the
Barbershop Harmony Society

Drawn by Harmony,...
Bound by Friendship,...
Striving for Excellence!



Columbia performance photo courtesy of Jeffi Combs

LAST LOOK AT THE ARENA; AND AN HOA PEEK AHEAD

by Jim Bagby, Ye Olde Arm-Waver

The challenging/grueling/rewarding December provided plenty of fodder for reflections and observations. Before the old year starts to dim in the rearview mirror, and before the new one can overwhelm us, let me share some of those with you, as honestly as I can.

If you agree, we'll translate many of these ideas into discussion topics and possible action items for the music team's Jan. 29 all-day planning session. If you disagree—and we need your candor, since this is a hobby—let us know so we can consider alternate viewpoints or approaches.

1. Three weekends of performances in a row during the holidays is probably too much to expect of a chapter, no matter how much money is to be made. The size of our chorus shrank on consecutive weekends, which is to be expected. The good news is the quality of the effort and the singing did not diminish from one performance to the next, even when we were missing some key voices.
2. With the variety of directors involved in the three shows, and the

varied alignments HOA was in over the three weekends, I found myself standing in a lot of different places in the chorus. I discovered again that we have many more strong voices than leaners. I was surprised at the improvement in some voices I'd not heard individually in some time, both veterans and folks who've joined us in the last year or two, or less. This leads me to be optimistic about the work we're doing week in and week out.

3. The enthusiasm from the majority of the chorus following good meetings, successful rehearsals and well-received performances leads me to conclude that our music team—starting with me and the directing staff—need to be even better prepared, demand more, expect more and accept fewer excuses. No, don't read into that we need to reorder our lives so that our hobby comes before God and family and job. But sometimes we can plan better how it does fit, or how we can organize our time so we know our music on time, and juggle schedules on occasion. [After more than six decades, I know this for sure: we mostly do in this life what we want to do most. If it's deer hunting, we plan for that; or seeing the grandchildren. Or attending the national mahjong tournament. Name your poison. . .] *Continued on pg. 3* ♦

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SALVATION ARMY BELL-RINGING

Two perspectives that reflect on this year's success!

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2005 INSTALLATION & AWARDS BANQUET

Make plans now to take part in this memorable evening!

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DUTY CALLS

Dr. Neil Johnson slated to report to Iraq. HOA responds with a warm send-off!

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ANNUAL SPRING SHOW
2005 will feature '03 Int'l champs: PowerPlay! Plus... ticket info and much more!

Society for the Preservation and Encouragement
of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America
Kansas City Chapter, Inc.
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HARMONOTES

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Heart of America Chorus

The Kansas City, MO. Chapter S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc.

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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, phrasing, and spelling).

Permission to reprint articles is granted to barbershop chapters as long as the author and *Harmonotes* are acknowledged.

The utmost care was used in preparation of this newsletter.

However, should you notice erroneous copy, please let the Editor know! Comments/submissions may be made to:

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CHAPTER INFORMATION

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Continued from front cover...

4. It won't have much effect for the music team to kick it up a notch if the HOA members don't do the same. Not just say "yeah, we believe" or "yes, we'll record regularly" or "yes, we'll use our learning media" or "yes, we'll sing every day" but actually do it. We've been through all the pledges, and experienced bursts of do-gooder spells. But I think we can agree there has not been an epiphany of the kind Kevin Keller described, where AOH decided it would put its mouth where its pitchpipe was, and proceed upward instead of laterally.

When I think of the quality of the learning CDs now being provided by the HOA music team, I can't understand why anyone would not be able to learn words, notes and interpretation. If there IS a reason, as I say, we need to know!

5. We are so blessed with the quality of leadership. A chapter of about 150 people, a hobby organization where no one, basically, has to do anything, is an amazing machine to move in any direction. The fact that it moves so well is a tribute to the folks out front we see—and to the quiet guys who work behind the scenes, many of who seldom get recognized.

The only way they will ever get their due is for you to thank them, individually, when you notice that special task someone performs—regularly, or jumping in to help out. While we're at it, let's thank our families for their support!

I thought of that because even with the accolades and applause I get from fronting the chorus, a member called me at home the other day, just to say "thanks for being there." He didn't have to do that, but it was a make-your-day-better moment...and reminded me again how fortunate I am to have the most honored position in a tremendous chapter. ♥

A LOOK BACK AT 2004

by Marty "Oly" Oldehoeft, Chapter President



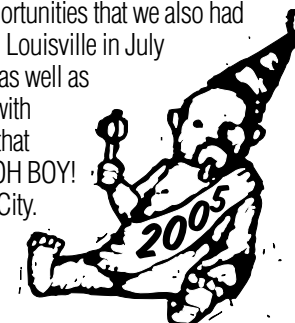
We're in the season of reflection on the previous year. "It truly has been grand my friends." Looking back on 2004, our chapter has many things to be thankful and excited about. Starting the year with a well-attended award/installation banquet. We and our families left with the 2004 chapter board officially in place and ready for the tasks for the new year. We also left knowing who the recipients of the chapter awards were for 2003. The John Cross plaque going to **Jerry Garrard**, the BOTY awarded to **Al Higgins**, and the Oz Newgard

"Ozzie" award presented to **Mark Fortino**.

Now we look at the singing opportunities for 2004. We had several including the big four—Singing Valentines, our March Show, the Holiday Spectacular, and the Columbia Show. Add to those Singing in the Park and the all-day Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army. It was a special December for us to remember, since 3 of these events were back to back to back (is that enough?). Wow, I say, ... what dedication from you guys to the hobby we love and what love and tolerance from our families. Thank you, Thank you!

No, I didn't forget the two competition opportunities that we also had this year. Our trip to the International stage in Louisville in July after a four-year wait met us with excitement as well as GOOD singing. Our 13th-place finish left us with room to grow. In Omaha, we found some of that growth by winning the District AAA Crown. OH BOY! Now we look forward to 2005 and Salt Lake City.

My wish for each of you is a blessed and healthy 2005. ♥



Heart of America Chorus

TWELVE-TIME Central States District Champion!

CHAPTER QUARTET CHAMPIONS

- Rural Route 4 - 1986 International Champion**
 Don Kahl (tenor), Calvin Yoder (lead), Jim Bagby (bari), Willard Yoder (bass)
- Gentlemen of Note - 2001 International Seniors Medallists**
 Rod Rule (tenor), Jon Gathright (lead), Rich Huyck (bari), Monty Duerksen (bass)
- HyPower Serenaders - 1948 Central States District Champion**
 Don McPherson (tenor), Ben Franklin (lead), Bert Phelps (bari), Dale Warrick (bass)
- Gambolliers - 1952 Central States District Champion**
 John Dooley (tenor), Eddie Schliebs (lead), Orval Wilson (bari), Jimmy Byrnes (bass)
- BMA Gambolliers - 1957 Central States District Champion**
 Barney Wasson (tenor), Eddie Schliebs (lead), Orval Wilson (bari), Harold Robinette (bass)
- The Kippers - 1962 Central States District Champion**
 *Ken Gabler (tenor), *Tom Taylor (lead), John Goldsbury (bari), Don Page (bass)
- The Four Kippers - 1966 Central States District Champion**
 *Ken Gabler (tenor), *Byron Meyers (lead), John Goldsbury (bari), Gil Lefholz (bass)
- The Morning Times - 1974 Central States District Champion**
 Dave Snook (tenor), Roger O'Dell (lead), Steve Leone (bari), Stan Grossman (bass)
- Corner Quartet - 1981 Central States District Champion**
 Don Kahl (tenor), Lance Heilmann, (lead) Steve Leone (bari), Stan Grossman (bass)
- Harmony Spectrum - 1982 Central States District Champion**
 Gene Bowers (tenor), David Krause (lead), Jim Bagby (bari), Willard Yoder (bass)
- Special Touch - 1984 Central States District Champion**
 *Rick Kready (tenor), David Krause (lead), *Bud Clark (bari), Matt Moore (bass)
- KC Connection - 1986 Central States District Champion**
 Rod Rule (tenor), Wayne Lankenau (lead), Rich Huyck (bari), Larry Wilson (bass)
- 12th Street Rag - 1994 Central States District Champion**
 *Rick Kready (tenor), Mark Fortino (lead), John Fortino (bari), Keith Schweer (bass)

OTHER CHAPTER QUARTETS

- 12th Street Rag - 2000 International Semi-Finalists**
 *Micah Jeppesen (tenor), Mark Fortino (lead), John Fortino (bari), *Barry Moore (bass)
- Crosstown Four**
 Dale Neuman (tenor), Gordon Coleman (lead), Ron Abel (bari), Val Putzier (bass)
- Grandstand**
 Rob Mathieu (tenor), David Krause (lead), *Jeff Veteto (bari), *Adam Veteto (bass)
- Mother's Guys**
 Rob Mathieu (tenor), and Mike Mathieu (lead) Rick Mathieu (bari), Joe Mathieu (bass)
- New and Used Parts**
 Jerry Garrard (tenor), Mike Neff (lead), Grant Hunget (bari), Keith Schweer (bass)
- Rewind!**
 Marlin Weidler (tenor), Thom Tisdall (lead), Dick Irwin (bari), *J.B. Witham (bass)
- Sound Alibi**
 Tom Elefson (tenor), Jerry Garrard (lead), Shawn Jeffries (bari), Darrell McCune (bass)
- Sounds Like Treble**
 Niel Johnson (tenor), Rob Varney (lead), Al Fehlauer (bari) and *Bill Bay (bass)
- SureFire!**
 Carter Combs (tenor), Mike Neff (lead), Grant Hunget (bari), Don Young (bass)
- The Buzz**
 Mike Troyer (tenor) Jason Eggers (lead), Kalin Tapp (bari) and Mike Louque (bass)
- Tone-Henge**
 Bruce Wenner (tenor), Dan Henry (lead), Jim Bagby (bari), Keith Schweer (bass)

*Member of other chapters

TWO PERSPECTIVES: 60 HOA MEN SING AND RING BELLS FOR THE SALVATION ARMY DEC. 18

by Jim Porter

Our last public event each year is also one of the most fun events, as we perform for the Salvation Army in a mall setting on the last Saturday before Christmas. This year's event at Metro North Mall was no exception, and will be remembered for the camaraderie, the singing, the renewal of old acquaintances, and for a few surprises as well.

At each session, we invited others from the audience to join us for a few familiar carols, and the wriggling around to accommodate them without pushing the end men off into the water was interesting. However, all went well. No one got wet, and some of our "guests" turned out to be old time stalwarts that had contributed to the growth and success of the *Heart of America Chorus* in years past.

After doing the 1-o'clock set, I was delighted to see **Barry Moore** and **Micah Jeppesen** in the audience. As it turned out, the men of *12th Street Rag* had come together that day to have a coaching session with **Bill Biffle**, and all of them, including Bill, were there. Our 2-o'clock set was a special delight for all who heard it, as *12th Street Rag* contributed 3 of their best numbers to the performance. This certainly was the most pleasant surprise of the day, as the men in the chorus were wanting to applaud along with the audience in front of us after they sang their songs.

There were a lot of old-timers in the audience at one time or another. It was a treat to have some of these fellows join us on the risers to sing a few songs together. Our youngest member was **John Winfield's** infant son, who sat on his father's shoulders most of the day as Dad joined the chorus in song. He was a trooper and never once tried to add his own notes to the chords!

I saw a lady in the audience who was clearly enjoying our performance. I talked to her after the 2 pm set—she said she had never heard us before. She was one of the most enthusiastic people in the audience. I found out she lived nearby and was part of a church where there had been some discussion about starting up a male singing group to do four-part harmony, and that she had been looking for some group to use as a model. I told her all I knew about the chorus, gave her a card, and our web-site address, and invited her to hear us on our spring show. Since she was in that local area, I also told her about the *Sons of Liberty*, and invited her also to check them out. There was an additional delight here as well, as she crossed paths with **David Krause**, and found out she was a high school classmate of David, and had not seen him in over 25 years!

Part of the experience was singing request songs from the audience. One request during our last set was for "That Old Quartet of Mine", which seemed to sum up the day nicely, as so many old friends had joined us in song during the day. This song was once in the chorus repertoire, and the men with over 5 years experience did it very well. It is a song I feel should be returned to the repertoire so the newer men can also share the joy of singing this classic song that speaks so well of the experience of being a barbershopper. ♥

by Ron McIntire

For most of the active *Heart of America Chorus*, singing for the Salvation Army at Christmas time is a tradition. This year 60 men turned out for all or part of Saturday, Dec. 18 to sing from 11am to 4pm at Metro North Shopping Center. On the average that's 48.5 singers at each performance, down from a high of 57.3 per performance in 2001. Not all members stayed for the six half-hour performances—some stayed for only one session, others for more. The 35 voices that held out for the full six performances were:

Carter Combs	Roy Manade	Carl Turlin	Dennis Kinghorn
Tom Elefson	Mike Mathieu	Al Higgins	Kent McClean
Rob Mathieu	David Miller	Dick Irwin	Darrell McCune
Chuck Blair	Jim Moynihan	Shawn Jeffries	Ron McIntire
Gordon Coleman	Don Peck	Bruce Wenner	Jack Selby
Ron Fortino	Charles Ramirez	Marlin Weidler	Harvey Shapiro
Jerry Garrard	Tony Strub	Chuck Ames	Colin Smalley
Jon Gathright	Thom Tisdall	Jim Bagby	Jerry Snyder
Bob Howard	Kevin Tritsch	Kevin Beauford	

One of my favorite duties over the past 15 or more years of keeping the sign-in sheets at the Salvation Army Bell Ringing has been to make a list of HOA members, past and present, we haven't seen for awhile who come to hear us sing. This year, by my count, there were 17 who stopped by—a record number from previous years. Members we haven't seen for awhile include:

- Dick Henderson** - Tenor, past member now inactive for health reasons
- Fred Whisman** - Bass, long time member now inactive
- George Park** - Lead, long time member now inactive for health reasons
- Harold Robinette** - Bass, past long time member, moved but now back in town
- Manley Vance** - Lead, past long time member now inactive
- Wade Dexter** - Bass, long time member now inactive for family reasons
- Rick Dunaway** - Bari, past member and past member of Liberty chapter
- Marvin Blakeman** - Bass, past member
- Al Moritz** - Bass, Long time member now inactive
- Win Cady** - Bass, past member now inactive for health reasons
- Steve Lindsay** - Bari, Past member
- Charlie Drake** - Bari, Moving to Tulsa, OK
- Clarence Bond** - Lead, Past member and past member of *Harmony Handful*
- Barry Moore** - St. Charles, MO, Bass of *12th Street Rag*,
- Micah Jeppesen** - Fremont, NE, Tenor of *12th Steet Rag*,
- Bill Biffle** - Albuquerque, NM, "Beloved Brother" and HOA singing coach,
- Dennis Taylor** - Tenor, long time member, visits HOA occasionally
- Tom Millot** - Tenor, dual member with Overland Park
- David Krause** - HOA member and Society Historian - we've missed you
- J.B. Witham** - Bass, Past member

These are just some of the fellows who helped build our chapter; the men who helped us sing as well as we do. They are our heritage and we owe part of our success to them. Here's a suggestion: during the half hour between each set at the next bell ringing, look around for small groups of chorus members who may be talking to someone you don't recognize. Chances are that person is a former HOA member; your brother in song. Go introduce yourself. You won't regret it. ♥



The Northland Corps of the Salvation Army Corp has already updated their totals through Saturday. Your efforts for just that day generated a total of \$2,754.10. That compares to \$3,450.91 which we raised last year for the one-day effort at MetroNorth.

WHO'LL GIVE ME \$10?

by Mike Mathieu, Chairman KC Bellringing Advisory Council, and HOA Bellringing Coordinator.

Perhaps in future years this will be a sound heard more often in our efforts to raise funds for our favorite charity. Tuesday, Dec. 21, due to an increase in donations, an auction concept appeared as a fund-raising idea. With very limited time, an e-mail was sent out via the HOAnet encouraging members to bring gifts valued at less than \$20. We were looking for new gifts, or items that perhaps members would purchase that day, that members would bid on that evening. Whatever dollars were collected would be turned over entirely to the Salvation Army.

Thanks to Auctioneer **Carter Combs**, we were able to raise \$366 in additional contributions. Items included golf balls, picture frames, various CDs, leather wallet, hand made scarves, gift certificates to First Watch, a personally autographed ice scraper, and many other priceless items. Grand prize was a *Rural Route 4* CD that was purchased by **Thom Tisdall** for \$100. Because of his generosity, Thom was also given a free minnow bucket that didn't seem to draw much attention during the regular auction.

As I gaze into my crystal ball, I can visualize an auction similar to this, but with much more planning, more auctionable items, and many more participants, happening sometime in our future. Perhaps next year many of us procrastinating shoppers can finish up, or at least get started on their Christmas shopping at the auction.

With donations from the weekend at MetroNorth, we are currently approaching \$3,600 for our Bellringing efforts this year. Donations may still be contributed for this year by mailing them through **Mike Mathieu**. The Salvation Army thanks all of you for your continuing efforts. ♥



HOA singing during the last performance at the Dec. 18 Salvation Army Bell Ringing (Photo courtesy of Ron McIntire)

2005 INSTALLATION & AWARDS BANQUET

Saturday, Jan. 8, at the Radisson Hotel Lenexa 12601 West 95th St (95th & I-35), Lenexa, KS 66215

Sign up now by completing the online form at http://www.hoachorus.com/installation_banquet05.htm or call Al Higgins at (816) 765-3434. Make Checks to HOA Chapter & give to **Al Higgins** ASAP!

Deadline for Signups is Tuesday Jan. 4. If you are attending but not eating, please let Al Higgins know by noon on Friday, Jan. 7.

- **Plan Now to Attend the Biggest Social Event of the Year!**
- **Support "Oly" & Crew as they take the oath of office!**
- **Honor our new John Cross, Oz Newgard, and Barbershopper of the Year recipients!**
- **SPECIAL FEATURE: Presentation of first Joe Stern Lifetime Achievement Award to past chapter, CSD and two-time Society President Gil Lefholz!**

Your Emcee for this event is **Don Young**
Your Installing Officer is **Ron Abel**, the only HOA member in chapter history to receive each of the following awards!

- *HOA Barbershopper of the Year for 1995*
- *HOA Oz Newgard Award Recipient for 2000*
- *Past HOA President for 1996-1997*
- *Past Central States District President 1982-1983*
- *CSD Barbershopper of the Year for 1979*
- *HOA Barbershopper of the Year for 1975*
- *HOA Oz Newgard Award Recipient for 1992*
- *HOA John Cross Award Recipient for 2000*
- *Past HOA President for 1974*

Buffet Menu

Fried Chicken & Barbecued Brisket
Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Vegetable, Salad, Rolls and Dessert
Coffee and Tea.

Adult Price: \$21 per person
5-12 Price: \$11 per person
Under 5 Price: No charge

Time Schedule-Approximate

5:45 PM - Social Hour (Cash bar provided)
6:30 PM - Buffet Dinner
8:00 PM - Entertainment
8:30 PM - Installation of Officers
8:45 PM - HOA Awards

HOLD THAT TAG (FOR 12 MONTHS), I'LL BE RIGHT BACK

by Dr. Neil Johnson



It is with a fair bit of sadness that I must inform the HOA Chorus that I will be deploying very shortly for Iraq. As most of you know, in my normal life I am an Army physician at Ft. Leavenworth, and as such, must do my duty like everyone else in support of U.S. operations overseas. I will likely depart in the first week or two in January, and I will be gone for 12 months. Where I am going and precisely what I will be doing is not entirely clear at this point, but I believe I will be involved as a medical advisor of sorts to the headquarters element coordinating medical support in that area of operations. Basically doc-stuff, but mostly planning and not a lot of casualty care.

This deployment comes as somewhat a surprise in that I felt like I was in sort of a protected position where I am now. In the big picture of things, this assignment should really be a big opportunity for me career-wise, and to not go would probably set me up to go later on anyway in a much less desirable capacity (e.g. bomb-sniffer, camel driver, etc.). For our family, this is probably as good a time as any. We're comfortably settled in a home on post, the kids are comfortable with their school, friends and sports teams, and the friends in the community are extremely supportive and understanding of what's going on. We've been through stuff like this before, and we've survived. The big bonus is that by accepting this job, I've guaranteed a slot to come back to Kansas City when I return, for at least a few more years.

So, thanks for the memories so far in the best chorus in the Society. I will be watching you on the webcast this July, so don't let me catch anyone not emoting as much as I would be. I look forward to staying in contact with you in various forms, especially e-mail and the *Harmonotes*. Consider this an "I'll Be Seeing You" later, as opposed to a "To the Last Goodbye!" because I'll be back in a few shakes. ♥



"SUR-PRISE, SUR-PRISE!!" by AL Fehlauer

All who attended the Dec. 21 HOA rehearsal witnessed and participated in a surprise send-off for our beloved tenor, soldier, doctor, friend, and riser-mate **Niel Johnson**, who will deploy to Iraq in mid-January. Of course, our HOA farewell for Niel is only temporary, since he will be re-assigned back to Fort Leavenworth upon redeployment 13 months from now.

For those who may not have been there, the idea formed out in Columbia when a few HOA-ers covertly discussed how to best send off Doc Niel in style. Special thanks to **Jerry Garrard, Grant Hunget, Rich Huyck and Jim Bagby** for working behind the scenes and allotting rehearsal time, and for each member who donated a memorable farewell gift.

The idea of a swan song performance by his quartet, *Sounds Like Treble*, came about, followed by some gag gift-giving, and *SLT* was put on the schedule to sing a couple. The first number was just as Niel had expected, one of his favorite Christmas songs, "Joy to the World" (with VM tag). This was not followed by the song Niel expected to sing next, but by a tag parody ("Without a Song" — It's Niel's Last Song) developed by Niel's quartet and sung extemporaneously by Niel who, as usual, had no clue where the song was going. After the closing parody of the much-modified "End of the World" tag, our esteemed PVP produced a box of "special gifts" donated by HOA-ers as a "From the Heart" Iraqi Survival Kit. Among many memorable items presented, the one that made the big guy blush the most was a carton of milk and some Oreo cookies...but I suppose you had to have been at the Buckeye Invitational to understand why.

Following the rehearsal, the HOA afterglow crowd joined Niel at the Piano Bar where many a tag and song was sung, except for this one forgotten about until now... "ODE to Niel" (to tune of "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen").

*Our tenor sings so very high, that's nothing we deny.
But when he starts to sing off key, it always makes us cry.
So do we tell him that he stinks, or do we have to lie.
Are his shorts tight, we always wonder why, me oh my.
Please Lord help us to be thankful while we cry.
When Niel goes off to Baghdad, we all will miss him so.
He brings a certain dignity to ev'-ry afterglow.
And we will keep his spot in ALL OUR HEARTS after he goes.
HE needs tidings of comfort and joy, comfort & joy.
We need tidings of comfort and joy!*

Godspeed, Niel. We'll save your spot on the risers and in the quartet!! ♥

HEARTBEATS HIGHLIGHTS

by Sandy Rule, Secretary

As you read this, the Christmas season will have passed, the New Year will have begun. The *Heartbeats* hopes that each of you had a wonderful holiday season, and that you are blessed in 2005.

The first 2004 *Heartbeats* meeting was held Feb. 24. The focus that night was the spring district contest that was held here in Kansas City in April.

Jeffi Combs volunteered to head-up the Hospitality Room, and with **Carol Ramirez's** help, the Ladies' Breakfast.

Linda Schumacher and **Carol Ramirez** volunteered to head-up another successful March-Show-luncheon at the Music Hall.

Sarah and Mary Fortino volunteered to head-up the Harmony College scholarship, which **Charles Ramirez** received this year.

Our next meeting was held May 11. We reviewed the committee reports of the March Show luncheon and the spring district contest. Then we discussed the "Send-Off" for the district FALL chorus contest in Omaha.

On Sept. 14 we met at the home of **Jon and Dessie Gathright** for our annual fall potluck dinner and meeting. None of the ladies had lost their cooking skills over the summer! We made plans for another "Send-Off"—this time for the fall district contest Oct. 5. Mary Fortino took upon herself to make new ties for the chorus members, which turned-out great! Thank you, Mary! Other topics discussed were the Dec. 4 Christmas Show and the Dec. 18 chorus bell ringing for the Salvation Army at Metro North Mall.

Our last meeting for 2004 was held Nov. 2. We also held our annual Silent Auction that evening. THANK YOU to all who donated items to be auctioned—we greatly appreciate it! We had our election of officers for 2005. Those elected were: **Sharon Oldehoeft**, President; **Joan Korek**, Vice President; **Sandy Rule**, Secretary; **Sarah Fortino**, Treasurer; **Roberta Porter** and **Carol Ramirez**, Board Members; and **Dessie Gathright**, Sunshine Chairman. The 2004 Board and the 2005 Board will meet in January to plan the meetings for 2005.

We want to express our sincere "THANK YOU" to the members and non-member who helped so much by donating food throughout the year for various chorus functions! That included a reception for Bill Rashleigh's visit in February, the March Show Luncheon, the June "Send Off" for International Contest, a chorus Guest Night in late August, the October "Send Off" for the District Contest, and the Silent Auction in November. Also THANKS to those who ushered at the Shows and Spring Contest and to those who worked on various committees and projects.

Lastly, I would like to welcome any of the other wives, sweethearts, etc. who have not-yet joined our group, to come and "check us out." We meet at the church during chorus rehearsals. There are no "requirements" and our dues are only \$5 a year. Watch for details coming of our first 2005 meeting and come! We would love to have you!! ♥

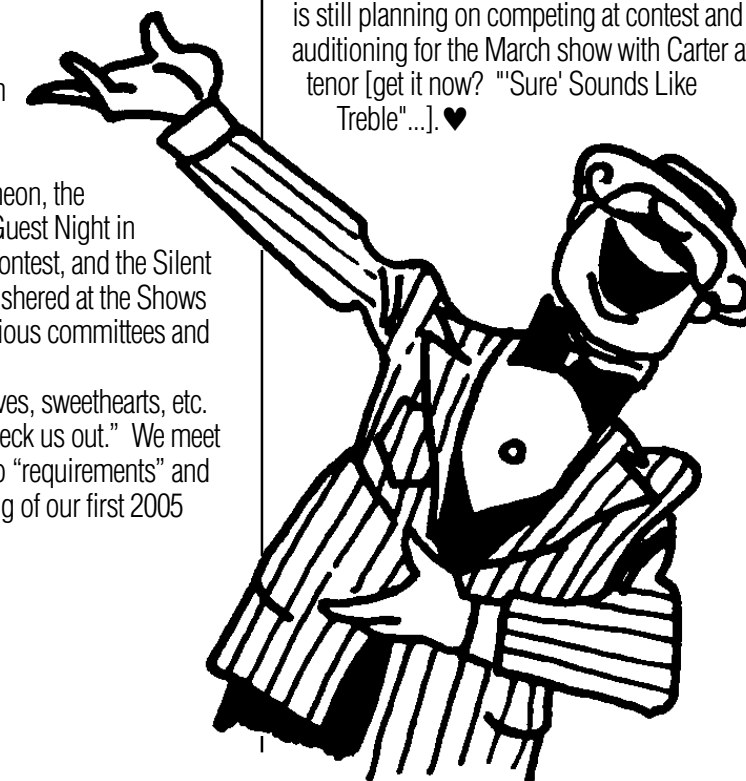
SURE SOUNDS LIKE TREBLE FOR S.L.T.

by Dr. Neil Johnson



The *Sounds Like Treble* quartet has been busy this holiday season performing at a variety of parties and restaurants in the Leavenworth area. Groups have really seemed to enjoy such arrangements as "Joy To the World" and "Let It Snow," complete with way-big ringing tags and Al's usual antics. On one occasion, we had a joke backfire, but it was funny how it happened. During one of Al's jokes after "Jingle Bells" he asked, "where do reindeer come from?" [Answer: Wherever you leave them.] At one restaurant, an audience member simply answered "Cabela's." Can't argue with that answer. Sometimes the audience reaction is funnier than the jokes.

SLT is bracing for the departure of it's tenor, **Niel**, who will be away in Iraq for a year. One of the last projects the quartet is finishing up is a CD of our repertoire so that upon his return, he'll have an easier time getting back up to speed. The other purpose is to help their new temporary tenor, **Carter Combs**, learn the *SLT* songs and enable the quartet to continue enjoying quartetting through the next year. *SLT* is still planning on competing at contest and auditioning for the March show with Carter at tenor [get it now? "Sure' Sounds Like Treble"...]. ♥





JANUARY, 2005:

In the "Look at the Past" column, in the December *Harmonotes*, I made reference in the "Ten Years Ago" segment to "one **Don Peck**" who had just joined the chapter. I added in parentheses "(anyone know where he is these days?)" as a gentle, tongue-in-cheek reference to Don's long and faithful service as an HOA member, assuming that anyone who knew Don should be aware of his attendance and service record with the chapter. It never occurred to me that someone might misunderstand my intent and respond quickly, "Oh, I know where Don is. He's right there on the risers every Tuesday night," or something like that.

Well, a few days after the publication of the December *Harmonotes*, I received the nicest e-mail message from a very gracious lady named **Jane**, who is the wife of **Dennis Taylor**, the original tenor with one of the best comedy quartets

every to be generated, the *Merry Mugs*. Here's what she had to say: "I was just reading Don's *Harmonotes* and noticed the 10-years-ago article looking for Don Peck. I attended a Tuesday night meeting approximately two months ago and Don Peck was there. I noticed him because our daughter-in-law met him last summer back East at a family reunion. Seems he was related by marriage to one of our aunts. When he mentioned barbershopping, her ears perked up and she told him her father-in-law, Dennis Taylor was a long-time member. But my point is—evidently Don Peck is definitely still around."

I immediately e-mailed a reply in which I apologized for misleading her, and I asked if I could have a few words about Dennis, where he is now, what he's doing, how is he, etc. She very helpfully supplied the following: "Time marches on, but he is doing just fine. His vocal chords aren't as flexible as they used to be so he isn't singing much these days, but he loves to go to the HOA Tuesday night meetings occasionally to listen to the chorus and sit with old friend, **Dan Henry**. Dennis quit singing with the *Merry Mugs* in 1966 when he became a pilot for TWA and his schedule would not permit weekends off. We have a new Apple IPOD with about 1,000 songs and 50 different artists on it, but if I play anything other than "BB," he complains. He tells everyone who will listen he is the longest term member of HOA (he thinks he and **Frank Leone** may have joined the same night). He has been a member for 56 years. What wonderful memories we both have of many swell people and music that holds its own, and then some, more than any other genre." Anybody want to comment on that? How about it, Frank? Dan?

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO: JANUARY, 1979

You know, I get a real kick out of going through these back issues of *Harmonotes* each month, searching for items that might be of interest for this column. I like to check the names of fellows who were relatively new back then to barbershopping and the chapter, to note what they were contributing at the time, and to muse over what they have done in the intervening years to help make the *Heart of America Chorus* what it is today.

Take the Jan. 1979 issue, for example. Chapter President **Fred Whisman** reminded us of the three major performing events that we should be looking forward to during what Fred calls the "Year of Challenge": The March Parade of Quartets, the international chorus contest in Minneapolis in July (HOA had just won its first district chorus championship the preceding October right here in Kansas City), and the CSD fall contest in Omaha. We can all remember how Fred, with that beautiful head of white hair, used to stand out on the risers. Last I heard, Fred's poor health was making that long trip to Kearney to each Tuesday night meeting a real chore... Membership VP **Frank Lasta** reports the following guests on hand during the guest night on Jan. 9. They were **Walt Bates, Jerry Chelemer, Wendell Cochren** (deceased), **Rod Flater, Bob Gippert, Jeff Jones, and Manley Vance**. Frank's job with Black & Veatch took him all over the world. Imagine what his contribution might have been if he'd been able to be with us every Tuesday night. **Pete Peterson** (deceased) was busy making hotel reservations at the Curtis Hotel (right across the street from the headquarters hotel for the international convention in Minneapolis). Now there's a guy who made a mark as a judging chairman at all levels of barbershopping competition... **Jim Bagby**, still flushed with success after his first chorus championship as a music director, announced that the *HOA* and *St. Joseph Pony Expressmen* (that's what they called themselves back then) were scheduled to appear together on the late show following the CSD spring prelims. They

were to sing "Night Time in Dixie," and "Gonna Build a Mountain." And how fortunate we are to have had Jim with us all these years... **Linn Bellis** (deceased?) was in the process of producing the new chapter directory. Wonder if he had access to a computer back then... CSD Convention Steering Committee Chairman **Clyde Menson** proudly presented a check in the amount of \$5,009.12 as the HOA share of the 1978 district convention profits. Now there was a potential ball of fire. Wonder what happened to Clyde? Seems I remember he retired and moved to Florida. Am I right, somebody?... **Gil Lefholz**, chairman of the afterglow committee for the 1979 annual show, announced that the event would be held in the Imperial Ballroom of the Muehlbach Hotel. Now there's a guy who has left an impression on our barbershopping hobby. I believe that Gil's term as international president was extended over the better part of three years by the death or incapacitation of the elected official. (I should also point out that Gil was editor of *Harmonotes* in 1979.) Take good care of yourself, Gil. New members reported in this issue were **Carl Kreiser, Michael R. Schumacher** (he's listed as lead/baritone. Thought he sang bass?), and **John Warrior**. A couple of guys there, John and Mike, would be sorely missed if we lost them. We seldom see John except backstage at the Music Hall during our annual show, but what an advantage it is to have somebody back there who knows what he's doing... The late **Bill Wall** was ticket chairman for the 1979 show. In his article, he announced that "the financial pressures of taking a chorus to Minneapolis" had resulted in an increase in price to \$6, \$5, \$4, and \$2." Guess we were all born 25 years too soon. In an article without a byline (probably the editor's), we learn of the organization of the *Harmony Handful*, a "day chorus" to respond to calls for a group for functions that occurred when most of the regular HOA members would not be available. New officers were **Merlin Barcus** (deceased) (president), **Leo Erickson** (executive VP), **James Noeth** (secretary), and **Ed Sundermeyer** (treasurer). **Jim Bagby** would be the director, with **Rod Rule** (deceased) and **David Krause** as his assistants... and last but certainly not least, **Charlie Greene** was calling for donations of aluminum cans to be sold as a source of chapter revenue.

FIFTY YEARS AGO: FEBRUARY, 1955

I don't find a copy of the Jan. 1955 *Harmonotes* among the bunch that **Warren Edmonds** sent me several years ago. But I did find this item in the Feb. issue that I thought some of you real, real old-timers might find interesting. It's a compilation of events that occurred during the year 1956, put together by **Ray Koenig**, who may have been the chapter historian since I'm aware that he provided a series of these articles for the *Harmonotes* when Warren was the editor. Hope you find it interesting.

The new chapter officers for 1956 were **Bob Gall** (president), **Elston Schrader** (vice president), **Bill Wall** (secretary), **Pete Peterson** (treasurer), **Mike Michel** (district delegate), **Don Stephens** (immediate past president), and the following members-at-large: **LaVerne Cable, Nile Abbott, Art Babcock, Howard Houston, Bert Phelps, and Don Thome**.

Here's something HOA might want to try. The Past Presidents of the *Heart of America* chapter held their annual meeting at the Twin Oaks on June. Fourteen of the 16 members attended and elected **Orval Wilson** chairman for the coming year. **Don Thome** was named secretary. The article doesn't describe the purpose and mission of the group, but I would imagine they were intended as a source of a great deal of barbershopping experience for the benefit of the chapter in general. I just counted 34 surviving past chapter presidents—(oops, I just noticed that that includes **Marty Oldehoeft**. Well, it won't be long, will it, Marty. Unless they elected you for a second term?)

Here's how barbershoppers went to the international convention back in those days. The "Texas Rocket," with a special car for barbershoppers, was scheduled to leave Kansas City for Minneapolis at 8:55 p.m. the following Wednesday (the item was dated June 13). The event was the international contest. Thirty-five barbershoppers, plus 20 family members, made the trip. Wonder what the tickets cost?

While we're talking about the convention and the contests, Ray has provided a bit of history regarding the HOA quartet participants. The *BMA Gamboliers* (**Barney Wasson, Ed Schliebs, Orval Wilson, Harold Robinette**) and the *Hi-Neighbor Four* (**Jim Conover, Bill Hamm, John Goldsberry, Tom Saunders**) represented Kansas City in the contest. Only two other cities in the Society had two quartets in the contest—Skokie, Illinois, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. *The Confederates* of Memphis, Tennessee, won the international gold medal.

And a final note: As of July 31, 1956, the Society's "Century Club," consisting of chapters with 100 or more members, contained 20 chapters. The CSD had two, Wichita, with 114 members, and Kansas City, with 112. Wonder what ever happened to the "Century Club." Seems like Kenosha used to publish a list of the chapters in the *Harmonizer*. Wonder why they quit? ♥

DEAR STAR ENTERTAINMENT FOLKS

This information was sent to the *Kansas City Star* by Dick Korek, Marketing & PR Vice-President



Hello to all critics, writers, editors at the "STAR." As some of you may know, the *Heart of America Barbershop Chorus* with the *Kansas City Chorus of Sweet Adelines* presented another annual holiday concert. Saturday, Dec. 4 at Unity Village in Lee's Summit. The combined choruses "entertained" people with a variety of songs, energy and choreography that overwhelmed the audience and involved them. How do I know this??? Well, my family from

out of state attended for the first time and following the show, laughingly stated that "we couldn't stop crying, cause that fella in front of us just kept crying because of the beauty of the song." I personally checked over every "survey card" and noted all comments—the audience "loved" the show and wants more.

Possibly sometime in the future we will have an opportunity to involve some of the "Star" critics, writers or editors. I try to communicate with them and am overlooked, as informed by **Cathy Ibarra** in an e-mail Saturday, Dec. 4, 2004—the day of the show—that the Star is "trimming down."

All chorus members, note this information. Here are some numbers. The Unity Village Auditorium capacity is just over 1,000 seats.

Number that attended the 2 pm show: 1,030
Number that turned in "survey cards": 514

Number that attended the 7:30 pm show: 900
Number that turned in "survey cards": 448

An unbelievable return of 50% of survey cards were turned in. I copied all the comments and in the future will share them with you. NO NEGATIVE COMMENTS!!! WOW! What a performance by all.

Many folks requested to be included in future mailings and many requested tickets for the HOA March 19, Music Hall Show!!!

The survey cards confirmed that there were two marketing efforts that worked above everything else. 1.) The flyers and 2.) the pocket cards with your individual efforts to get the word out to all your friends, neighbors and family.

Keep positive and look to the future. Our community, our friends and our families need us and what we give—a dedication, work ethic and striving to "master our art form." 4-part a cappella barbershop harmony, sung by the *Heart of America Barbershop Chorus!* Remember that in March we have the 59th Annual Show at the Music Hall. Flyers will be going out soon to promote this show and of course you will have some NEW "pocket cards" to help promote this event! Isn't a full house great? Cheers to all. ♥

MUSICAL NOTES

by Keith Schweer, Music Vice President



Here we are at the end of another year. It's been a jam-packed, hard-working, fulfilling 2004 for the Kansas City Chapter and HOA, especially toward the end of the year. What am I talking about? It's been this way pretty much all year. We've learned a lot of new music, had world-class coaching,

improved our singing and performance skills, done shows, raised money, made new friends, returned to the International stage, and re-captured the Central States District chorus championship. Whatta year!!! And, guess what? It's gonna be *more of the same* in 2005! As far as the Music Team is concerned, we're always going to be trying to improve our individual and collective abilities as performers. We want each of us to become better singers, because it's only through individual improvement that we can achieve the overall improvement of the chorus. If you have any suggestions or ideas for the improvement of the music program in our chapter, I'd like to hear from you. Here's to 2005, hopefully the best year ever for the *Heart of America Chorus*. ♥

HOA ANNUAL SPRING SHOW TICKETS!



Our Headliner this year will be **POWER PLAY, 2003 International Quartet Champions**. Performances will take place at the **Music Hall**. Tickets run **\$20 / \$15 / \$10**. Order tickets by phone at **816-478-4165**, or online at: http://www.hoachorus.com/annual_show.htm Stay tuned for Afterglow information!

GUEST NIGHT AT HOA A SUCCESS! by Ron McIntire

CARTER COMBS DIRECTS AS HOA WELCOMES 49 VISITORS!



Photo courtesy of Ron McIntire

Now I call that a Guest Night—the best we've had in my 23-year memory with HOA. While many members did their part in bringing the 49 visitors to the meeting Aug. 31, VP for Chapter Development, **Steve Carruthers** gets top billing for his work that night. It even brought out past member, **C.V. Rice** and **Phil Youngs**, **Don Fuson** and **Gene Bowers**—members we haven't seen for awhile. Coupled with the 74 HOA regulars the room was filled with music from 123 voices. What a night! ♥

My Dear Jim,



I've just returned home from witnessing the beautiful spectacular that is your Christmas barbershop show. To say your performance was awesome would be a gigantic understatement! Words cannot express how very much my sister and I

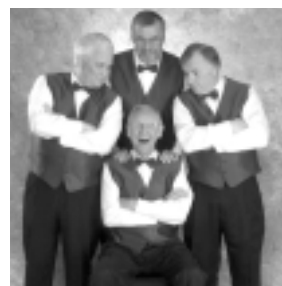
enjoyed your show! We are just a couple of barbershop groupies. We both walked out of that auditorium ten feet off the ground. I want to thank you and all the singers for a beautiful experience and for putting us in the Christmas spirit. (It was just very hard for me to not see that sweet face on the right side of the top row!)

I didn't get the chance to congratulate you and the guys for winning the Central States District championship. I can certainly see the marked improvements you have made in the past couple of years. The hard work shows! I am so very proud of all of you as I know Jim is, watching you and smiling down from above. I'll be thinking of you as you compete in Salt Lake City and wishing you all the best of luck.

I treasure my memories of the ten or so years Jim and I spent with you. He was just so very proud to be a part of such a wonderful group of men. We thank you for all the happy times!

With my deepest love,
Betty White

TONE-HENGE ABSORBED BY DECEMBER by Ol' Dan



For coots our ages (OK, for one coot my age) December has brought a flurry of activity normally embraced by the young-of-body. *Tone-Henge* took on the seasonal tasks as if we were young and in reasonable mental health. It's now become apparent that we are neither, but we're proving that the bliss of ignorance can even mask the aches of old bones.

We're not complaining. Most of HOA's members participated in a December that will go down in annals as the **most busy ever**, what with the annual Holiday shows and accompanying rehearsals, two shows in Columbia and the Salvation Army bell-ringing series of performances. But *Tone-Henge* threw in two additional outings; a performance with the re-hab guys that **Bagby** has molded into a chorus, and the annual "taking our wives to dinner" evening that says "thanks" to the gals who allow us to be so busy.

HOA's seasonal activities are rewarding in many ways, and *Tone-Henge* is delighted to take part. I just hope there's a large bottle under the tree for Ol' Dan.

Not booze. Horse liniment! ♥

TIP OF THE HAT

A TOTH to:

... **Mike Mathieu** for setting up the Salvation Army Fund Raising Kick-Off.

... **Vince Perry** for setting up the Columbia performance and transportation to and fro.

... **Mike Mathieu** for organizing the Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Metro North Mall, **Chuck Ames** for seeing that the risers were transported and in place.

... **Kent McClean** for his work chairing the Holiday Harmony Spectacular, **Dick Korek** for ramrodding the publicity and show program, the music team for putting the music package together and to **Chuck Ames** and his helpers for horsing the risers to and from the show venue.

... **to the unknown organizer(s)** for coordinating the extra rehearsals with the ladies for the Christmas Show at Unity.

A special Tip O' The Hat to to **Mike Schumacher, Chuck Ames, Al Higgins, Ron Abel, Rob Mathieu, Jim Bagby, Carter Combs, Dan Henry Bowser, Jerry Snyder, Jeanne Snyder, Roberta Porter, Colin Smalley** and



all the members who grabbed a bucket in between sessions, donned an apron and helped bring in donations. ♥

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following chapter members!

Jim Moynihan	January 1
John McConnell	January 1
Tom Steele	January 1
Shawn Jeffries	January 1
Don Newman	January 3
Harvey Shapiro	January 7
Robert Rutherford	January 9
Oly Oldehoeft	January 10
Chuck Blair	January 10
Roy Manade	January 13
Kent McClean	January 14
Steve Carruthers	January 15
Gary Mehalic	January 20
Brian Marston	January 21
Bob Burdick	January 25
Rick Foreman	January 30

FEBRUARY HARMONOTES DEADLINE: TUESDAY, JAN. 18!

Chapter officers, quartets, members, ...make plans **NOW** to submit your articles and photographs **NO LATER** than Jan. 18!

