



Heart of
America



January-February Calendar

Jan. 10 Installation/Award Dinner

Jan. 30 Society Mid-Winter Convention, Biloxi, Mississippi

thru Feb. 1

Feb. 7 Harmony Explosion (Olathe North)

Feb. 13 Singing Valentines

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January 2004

Harmonotes

The Monthly Bulletin Of The Kansas City Chapter • SPEBSQSA

Volume 2004, Issue 1

NEW YEAR, NEW TOOL FOR HOA'S DEDICATED

by Jim Bagby, Ye Olde Arm-Waver

As we begin a bright and promising 2004, I commend to you a term I learned from **Darryl Flinn**, from whom I one year inherited the Advanced Coaching class at Harmony College. Darryl went on to a distinguished career at Society executive director. I got the chance to become, once more, HOA chorus director. At worst, that would indicate that neither the chapter nor I learns very fast. At best, the jury is still out on that decision. Without ordering a trumpet fanfare, I'd hope that a non-biased observer would conclude we're on the right track...

The term alluded to above is "creative listening." And my suggestion is that all HOA members apply it to our new CD. I know you're proud as I am of "From the Heart."

I hope you followed the inimitable Vince Perry's lead, and gave away so many for Christmas/Hanukkah presents that we'll have to order more for the March 13 show. And I hope you'll thank the movers and shakers that made the project not only a reality, but got the product here in time to sell more than 100 at the highly successful holiday show. Heading that list are **Mark Fortino** and **Dale Neuman**.

But I (surprise!) digress. Now you have a chance to evaluate, critique and absorb the HOA recorded voice. After the first pass or two—after you've listened just to hear and enjoy, consider a more critical approach. Or to use Darryl's description, be creative in your listening: how could it be better? For songs that we're still singing—and that applies to most—can we perform them better?

There are some mitigating factors. We had just about let "I'll Be Seeing You" escape from our repertoire when we decided to record it. Some of the rough spots are evident. "Auld Lang Syne" was so new at the time of the recording, it bears little resemblance to the version we're now singing. We were borderline tired of singing "Changes" and "Cape Cod." These are not excuses, just facts.

In your aural examination then, what do you hear that you/we can do better? Do you hear distracting agreement on target sounds? A "yer" that creeps in? Pitch slippage? Failure to sing all the sounds of words? Audible breaths, or breaths that inhibit forward motion? Lack of energy at end of phrases? Wow, doesn't "Auld Lang Syne" have great potential for a Louisville vehicle? Specifically, what do you hear in that song that could be better? More energized NG in "Lang"? Shorter breaths in dramatic spots? Other, less obvious improvements? No wrong answers here.

I hope you've already concluded "say, this ties into the assignment I've already begun: regular taping and critique of myself." If you have any questions about that approach, suggested by our venerable sound coach, **Bill Biffle**, see a member of the music team for a hands-on approach.

Speaking of the music team, I think it's worth mentioning again how much work these guys do for the chapter, and how much extra time they spend. (Continued on page 3)→

Chorus Photo by Matt Bostick



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Harmonotes

... is published by the board of directors of the Kansas City, MO., Chapter of SPEBSQSA, Inc., a non-profit organization. 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.

Heart of America Chorus

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

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<i>Staff Reporters</i>	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, 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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Harmonotes@comcast.net

CHAPTER INFORMATION

Chapter meets at 7:00 P.M. each Tuesday night, at:
St. Peter's United Church of Christ
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<i>HOA Website:</i>	www.hoachorus.com
<i>Web Address:</i>	webstaff@hoachorus.com
<i>Chapter Telephone:</i>	(816) 221-7888

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Heart of America Chorus

ELEVEN-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)
- Arpeggio**
Marlin Weidler (tenor), Rick Dunaway (lead),
Ralph Tallmon (bari), Don Newman (bass)
- Crosstown Four**
Dale Neuman (tenor), Gordon Coleman (lead),
Ron Abel (bari), Val Putzier (bass)
- Heartland**
*Rick Kready (tenor), David Krause (lead),
Matt Moore (bari), *Dale Comer (bass)
- Mother's Guys**
Joe Mathieu (bass), Rick Mathieu (bari),
Rob Mathieu (tenor), and Mike Mathieu (lead)
- New and Used Parts**
Jerry Garrard (tenor), Mike Neff (lead),
Grant Hunget (bari), Keith Schweer (bass)
- Sound Alibi**
Tom Elefson (tenor), Jerry Garrard (lead),
Shawn Jeffries (bari), Don Koehnlein (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)
- Tone-Henge**
Bruce Wenner (tenor), Dan Henry (lead),
Jim Bagby (bari), Keith Schweer (bass)

*Member of other chapters

NEW YEAR, NEW TOOL FOR HOA'S DEDICATED

(Continued from front page)

Music Veep **Keith Schweer** tells you that on occasion—but he seldom notes that he's among the four guys who work hardest: the section leaders. Keith heads the basses, **Grant Hunget** the baris, **Mike Neff** the leads and **Carter Combs** the tenors. Mike and Carter, of course, double as members of the arm-waving staff. Those four record our learning media, which are produced by **Mark Fortino**. **Phil Veltkamp** and **Ron McIntire** help with duplication and distribution. **Bruce Wenner** is always on-the-spot with necessary musical and arrangement revisions. We're lucky to have all these fellows helping HOA.

Our next major chapter function is the Jan. 10 installation and awards dinner (see details in this issue). I hope to see everyone there! And by that time, please tell me you've signed up for the March show, where we'll debut our new contest up-tune.

I'm most grateful—but not surprised—for the outpouring of sympathy and support after my brother died Dec. 13. We had a simple but moving memorial service in Idaho Springs, Colorado, or Dec. 16. It included the playing of several quartet and choruses numbers that would be familiar to you.

Finally, to state the obvious, it is a privilege, joy and honor to be the HOA chorus director.

From Joann and me, best wishes for a happy, healthy, harmonious new year! ~

Thank You, HOA!

Jim,

Thanks so much to you and all the guys who freed up their time last week to sing for Dave. He would have been very honored at the large number of chorus members who participated. The songs were perfect. Someone told me that this was the first time music had caused them to cry at a memorial service. You sounded so great!!

I have sent a check to SPEBSQSA for the Harmony Foundation representing the HOA Chorus in memory of Dave.

With much appreciation,
Donna

Dearest Brothers-in Harmony,

I want to express my heart-felt Thanks for taking time off work and/or your busy schedules to come & join your voices in tribute to **Rod!** It was awesome, and so many hearts were touched & moved by your beautiful voices!!

I hope Rod was looking down from Heaven, as I know he'd have been so pleased! He loved singing/quartet/chorus so much!

Love/hugs,
Sandy



BOARD MEMBERS FOR 2004

by Marty Oldehoeft

As we approach the new year, HOA's board for 2004 is in place and hopefully will be able to conduct the chapter business in a manor that will reflect the valuable traditions built thru the years. The board members (not in order of importance) for 2004 are:

- President* **Martin Oldehoeft**
- Exec. V.P.* **Steve Carruthers**
- Music V.P.* **Keith Schweer**
- Program V.P.* **Jerry Garrard**
- Marketing V.P.* **Dick Korek**
- Operations V.P.* **Chuck Ames**
- Chapter Development* **Ken Neujahr**
- Secretary* **John Winfiel**
- Treasurer* **Charles Ramirez**

Agreeing to serve in the vacant immediate past president position **Dick Irwin**

I would offer a heartfelt thank you to **Carter Combs** and **Val Putzier** for serving on the board with us in 2003. ~



FROM THE HEART IS HERE

by Dale Neuman

Our first-ever CD is now available. We got some shipped "overnight" to us in time for the Holiday Show and the rest arrived last Thursday (Dec. 11). Since then, I have been busy filling orders and taking orders for more. Before I get too busy, I want to take time to thank a number of people—mostly by category of help rather than by name as that would entail reproducing most of our membership list. (This list will be long even in the short version.) *Here goes:*

To the more than 70 men who gave up two entire Saturdays in May and June to make the recordings at UMKC. Special kudos to the soloists.

To the Music Team and individual directors for preparations before and hard work during the recording as well as at the control tracks sessions.

To the several basses, baris, tenors and leads who gave up a number of additional nights to re-record the control tracks at the sound studios we used in Kansas City and Lee's Summit in August, and September.

To the many members who took part in the pre-paid pre-sale so that our cash flow could survive the project.

To **Jim Porter** who handled the pre-sales paperwork for several months and took in over \$7,000 in this effort.

To *SureFire!* and *Sound Alibi* for re-learning to sing "America the Beautiful" in the in-between key the chorus sang the "Overlay" so that the two would work together.

To the folks at UMKC's White Recital Hall for working us into their schedule and being generous in their assistance.

To **Dan Israel** and **Mark Fortino** for the numerous hours spent recording and then more hours listening and mixing.

To **Keith Kavanaugh** who made sure that the "musical heart" of HOA found wonderful expression on the CD cover.

To **Keith Schweer** who encouraged me to offer my help to **John Stucker** and who continued to help me at several junctures in this process.

To **Bruce Wenner** who spent days chasing down the license and rights holders so that we could get the legal permissions to record the songs on the CD.

To *12th Street Rag* and the *Rural Route 4* for generously sharing songs with us to fill out the CD.

To the late **John Stucker** who got the ball rolling on this project and kept it headed in the right direction as long as he was able.

Many heartfelt thanks! ~



ANOTHER GREAT HOLIDAY SHOW!

by Kent McClean

Holiday Show photos courtesy of Matt Bostick

Once again we put on a fabulous show. Holiday Harmony Spectacular 2003 was a great time for all—choruses, quartets, and especially the audience. Many thanks to all the HOA participants:

Dick Korek did his usual masterful job with publicity—flyers, radio, newspapers and more. Once again he designed the beautiful program.

Monte Duerksen sold nearly 300 tickets to groups, by far the best ever.

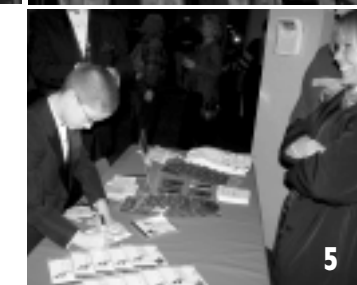
Bob Rutherford took on the awesome job of ticket sales and did it flawlessly, always with a smile on his face. **Dale Neuman** coordinated ticket finances and generally helped wherever needed. **Mike Schumacher** and **Chuck Ames** did nearly everything to design and set up the stage and auditorium facilities. **Don Young** organized the immensely successful and low-cost afterglow.

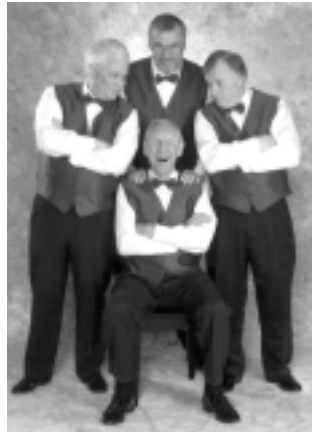
Very special thanks to the 70+ HOA Chorus members who put on one heck of a show. Of course, equal thanks go to the many Kansas City Sweet Adelines committee members and performers who did every bit as much as we did to make our weekend so special.

Producing an artistically and financially successful show takes a lot of hard work and plenty of good ideas, so we are always interested input from anyone. If you have comments on what went very well or what might be done better, please e-mail Kent at kmclean00@aol.com.

Thanks again to all. ~

From top to bottom: HOA shows its intensity with Jim Bagby at the helm, then the combined choruses of HOA and the Kansas City Chapter of Sweet Adelines blend for a wondrous round of harmony, both chapters provided stellar quartets to entertain the large crowds on attendance, Anthony Fortino has no problem selling and autographing HOA's first-ever CDs to a smiling customer!





HERE'S WHAT TONE-HENGE HAS BEEN DOING

by Ol' Dan

Music team meetings, board meetings, recording-mixing, overseeing production of new HOA cd, coaching, directing, more coaching, more directing, writing *Harmonotes* articles, visiting relatives there, relatives visiting here, partying (well, just a wee bit), etc, etc, etc.

Singing? *Naw.* ~

A TIP OF THE HAT



1. To **Jim Kinyon** for finding his "Do you hear the people sing" tape and to **Ron McIntire** for editing out the section that we didn't sing this year, making some CDs and tapes for distribution and to **Jerry Garrard** for putting it on the website. (**Phil Veltkamp** 12/1 email).
2. To **Dick Korek** for producing an excellent show program for 2003 Heart of America/Kansas City Sweet Adelines Harmony Spectacular.
3. A big TOTH to **Mike Mathieu** for setting up and organizing the 2003 Salvation Army Bell Ringing performances at Metro North Mall and all the work he does with the Salvation Army.
4. To **Jim Porter**. You never get enough praise for handling the attendance jackpot drawing each Tuesday.
5. To **Val Putzier** for hauling the risers to Metro North Mall for the Salvation Army Bell Ringing.
6. To all the men who participated in the Salvation Army Bell Ringing on Saturday, Dec 20th. ~

Barbershopper of the Month!

Dale Neuman

In grateful appreciation for handling the pre-sales effort of the new 2003 Heart of America Chorus CD, "From the Heart."



"Extra Mile" Awards



OCTOBER 2003
Vince Perry

In grateful appreciation for your devotion and hard work to managing the 2003 CSD Convention and contest registration and making sure that all members of the Heart Of America Chorus had room reservations.



NOVEMBER 2003
Brooke Meyers

In grateful appreciation for your work to make sure that all members of the Heart of America Chorus had up to date uniforms for the 2003 Holiday Harmony Spectacular.

HARVEST OF HARMONY A GOOD TIME

by Jim Porter

My neighbor invited my wife and I to go with her Saturday, Oct. 25, to the *Harvest of Harmony*, which was the *Olathe Trails West* chapter's Fall show, at the Olathe Covenant Church, which is just one block from my home. It is too bad that most of the Kansas City chapters practice on Tuesday nights, since that effectively eliminates the option for membership in more than one chapter in the area. A visit to some of these other chapters is a step back in time to when barbershop night was fun, relaxing, and a time of good fellowship.

I considered going with a Kansas City chorus shirt on, but decided not to. If anyone asked or wondered, or if I got into more than a "hi, how are ya" conversation with one, I let on I was from *Heart of America* and offered them one of the little green cards advertising our holiday show. But I thought it best not to make a spectacle of myself, since I was only seeking to enjoy the evening with my wife and my neighbor.

The evening kicked off with a chili dinner, as each of the chorus members was invited to bring along a potful of their favorite chili. As we arrived, we were greeted at the door and invited to make a contribution to the Trails West Music Scholarship Fund, but there was no required admission to this chili-fest. Their chorus director, a genial fellow named **Russ Craig**, handed me a badge and invited me to be a judge. That seemed like an interesting challenge, as it had me to go about the room and sample every one of the 12 or so offerings. Of course, they ran the range from quite mild to zesty, some beef, some chicken, some with lots of tomatoes, some with none, most a taste delight. Since I had that "Judge" badge on, they all sought to be as nice and friendly as they could! Of course, my personal preference for a meaty, tomatoey concoction with some zest colored my judgment, but that was expected, as they had a half-dozen people doing the judging.

The show followed, and it ran only about an hour. The hall had seating for about 300 people and it was comfortably full. We began with an invocation from the church pastor, then the Good Shepherd School choir, a group of 20 or so 8 to

12 year olds took over, led by the wife of the chorus director, **Nancy Craig**. They sang a half dozen numbers, and most also were audience sing-alongs. We got our exercise with "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean" as we did the stand-up sit-down routine with the "B" words (I've seen this done at a convention).

Next was a mixed quartet from the church (the bass voice was one from the chapter), who sang one song "Soon and Very Soon." A parade of quartets followed, each doing one song, including two from Leavenworth chapter, *Escape from Leavenworth* and *Pocket Change*. One was a high school quartet—*Trickling Tones*—from Shawnee Mission Northwest H.S. Two other quartets were from the Olathe Trails chapter, and there was also a comedy interlude as two men from the chapter appeared with guitars and rural clothes to sing a parody whose punch line was "Olathe ain't no fun, that's why I'm moving to Edgerton!"

After that, the chorus gathered together, all 14 of them, every one of which appeared to be 50 years old or older. They did just two songs, "Darkness on the Delta" and "Hard Hearted Hannah." After that, they sang "Let There be Peace on Earth" and all of us were invited to sing with them, as the words to the song were on the program. That was the program, it was time for the afterglow and it was only 8:15 PM. We lingered for most of it, and

enjoyed "Escape from Leavenworth" and the high school quartet again, as they saved their best songs for the afterglow. It was probably not like afterglows in our chapter, as we were in a church, after all. Most of the people were gone by the time we left, and the chorus members were busy about the task of cleaning up the room. I took time to thank them for a fun evening, and they thanked me for coming out.

All in all, it was a thoroughly delightful and relaxing evening—a good time in a completely informal setting fellowshiping with a group of guys who love to sing and show off, just like we do. Hopefully, next year I'll find out about it enough ahead of time that I can invite you to come out. Who knows, perhaps they'd welcome a quartet or two from our chapter to contribute to the evening. ~



To All Registered Kansas City Chapter Quartets

from Grant Hunget, 2003 Show Chairman



This criteria has been adopted by the Kansas City Chapter Music Team, to determine which quartets are selected to perform on our Annual Spring Show. It is subject to change each year, as determined by the current Music Team.

The Music Team must determine which quartets exhibit the most suitable level of talent and entertainment for the Show, and must adhere to a determined time allotment for the Show.

Quartets may (or may not) qualify with one or more of the following criteria:

1. Being a registered Kansas City Chapter quartet does not automatically secure a performance slot for your quartet on the Show.

2. Chapter Participation & Contribution: If all 4 quartet members are regular attendees, and contribute considerable time or effort to the betterment of the Chapter, likelihood of performing on the Show increases.

3. Performance Level: If the quartet has achieved an acceptable performance level (singing, music, presentation, overall entertainment), and/or has achieved an acceptable placement in competitions, likelihood of performing on the Show increases.

4. New registered quartets after this notification subject to same criteria.

5. To promote youth participation, outstanding Harmony Explosion groups may also be invited to perform, at the discretion of Show Committee.

The Show Chairman will contact quartets regarding selection. Quartets not selected for their own slot may be invited to assist with chorus repertoire lead-ins, cameos, etc. ~

JUST FOUR FUN

Feel free to submit humorous anecdotes and/or thought-provoking quotes to the Editor!

WHAT ONE WORD DOES THE FOLLOWING DESCRIBE:

It's greater than God,
More evil than the devil,
Rich people need it,
Poor people have it,
And if you eat it, you will die.

„Nothing“ :Answer

Went to lunch with a friend today to a new chicken place. We asked how they prepare their chickens.

The answer was, "We just tell them they're going to die."

Heard about the new restaurant on the Moon?

Good food,...but no atmosphere!

How do you make a Yugo go faster?

With a tow-truck.

DEADLINE FOR THE FEBRUARY ISSUE OF Harmonotes

Articles and photos are due by

TUESDAY, JAN. 20

For more information,
call Todd at 816-373-8633

Ten Years Ago: January, 1994

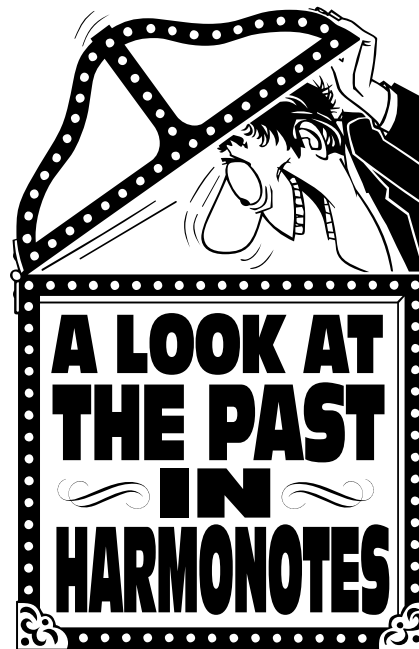
Show Chairman **Dale Neuman** reported that ticket brochures had been mailed to the nearly 9,000 addresses on the HOA mailing list. Dale also announced that the Music Hall organ would not be raised due to incomplete plans for a new orchestra pit. Our own **Dr. Marvin Faulwell** would perform on the organ from the stage.

Our *Harmonotes* editor reported that **Joyce's** failing health would prevent him from participating in the HOA show, his first miss in ten years as an HOA member. (He had already missed the "Winning Ways" show, the bellringing for the Salvation Army and the annual chapter Christmas party. It turned out that the chapter meeting on Jan. 1 would be his last.)

Mike Schumacher was picked as HOA's "Barbershopper of the Year" for 1993. Way to go, Michael!

Membership VP **Ron McIntire** reported that HOA had taken on 36 new members during 1993! Wonder how many of them are still with us?

The men of the Kansas City chapter mourned the passing of **Vic Stensrud** who died on Dec. 1 of complications of heart surgery. Vic joined the Oklahoma City chapter in 1981 and transferred to HOA in 1986. In a brief eulogy in the Jan. 1994 issue of *Harmonotes*, **Monte Duerksen** said, "In one word, Vic represented commitment—to God, to the moment, the person, the idea, the goal, the organization and the task at hand." Vic was only 64 years old. (Continued on page 3) →



By Wade Dexter, Editor Emeritus

Twenty Years Ago: January, 1984

There's a report of the efforts of Chairman **Jim Bell** and his public relations committee to work with **John Tibbetts** of KSHB-TV (Channel 41) to arrange a five-minute appearance on TV of two HOA quartets—the *Prairie Crooners* and the *K.C. Connection*. This was followed later, again through John Tibbetts (who was a classmate of my son, **Steve**, at Leavenworth High School), of the two quartets on radio station KXTR. **Gil Lefholz, Steve Leone, Jim Bell** and **Bruce Wenner** provided commentary. In addition to Jim, the PR Committee members were **Larry Poisner, Bob Burdick, Bob Cass, John Hill, Al Moritz, Bob Nash, Barney Wasson** and **Phil Youngs**.

Thirty-Five Years Ago: January, 1969

Bob Nash and **Dave Ritz** were newly appointed editors of *Harmonotes*. At one point in this, their first edition, Dave refers to Bob as the "Executive Editor." Wonder what that was? Do you suppose that Bob did all the work, while Dave took the credit? Nah!

The late **Bob Gall** was president of SPEBSQSA during 1969. **Bernie Geier** was the new K.C. chapter president. Editor Dave headed up Bernie's column as "Bern's Turn." Kinda cute, don't you think?

The BMA Skyliners (**Barney Wasson, Gerrey Kelly, Nile Abbott** and **Al Moritz**) were the featured entertainers at the recent Salvation Army Bellringers Victory Dinner. The guest speaker at the dinner was **Claude DeVorse**, former barbershopper who sang for many years with the *Air Capitol Four* from Wichita.

Guess who was the chairman of the committee for the 1969 annual show? Yep. Ol' **Dan Henry** himself, who had exclusive claim to all of the front page space in this issue. Dan mentions a "rotating shell/stage monster." I don't remember that, but I do recall the "bouncing ball" in a later show that came off perfectly. ~

HEARTBEATS ...READY FOR 2004!

by Carol Ramirez



The *Heartbeats* are off to a great start with a new slate of officers for 2004. Congratulations to President, **Sharon Oldehoeft**; Vice President, **Joan Korek**; Secretary, **Sandy Rule**; Treasurer, **Marilou Coleman**; and Board Members, **Linda Schumacher** and **Dessie Gathright**. **Estyl Bowser** has graciously agreed to remain the Sunshine Chairman.

Thanking the officers who worked diligently for two years with me is a must. Thanks to **Jan Putzier**, Vice President; **Sandy Rule**, Secretary; **Marilou Coleman**, Treasurer; along with **Joan Korek** and **Donie Peck**, Board Members.

Thanks also to all the friends of the *Heartbeats* who have been so supportive and willing to send "goodies" to countless send-offs and luncheons and participated in our fund raisers.

I'd love to congratulate the *Heartbeat of the Year* for 2003, but not knowing exactly when this issue will come out, I'll just say the winner is a well deserving lady whose award has been long overdue. ~

HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the following chapter members!

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

THE AMBASSADORS CHRISTMAS SHOW

by Jim Porter



Roberta and I got tickets for the *Ambassadors* show Saturday, Dec. 13—well in advance—so the fact that we awoke to 4 inches of snow that morning posed a challenge. After verifying that the show was on (the snow had not yet gotten to St. Louis), we set out anyway, leaving an hour early. No way would we allow a little snow to prevent us from taking in this marvelous show. The roads were dicey, but passable, and our only real delay was 20 minutes in Columbia behind a two-truck pileup. We arrived at the theatre with 10 minutes to spare.

It was well worth the trip. Our brethren in song look and sound like the International champions they may very well be 7 months from now.

In a way, the *Ambassadors* Christmas show hasn't changed much from the days more than a decade ago when I was on stage with them. A good portion of their songs are songs I sang with them then, and I could imagine that I was right up there with them, adding my voice to that beautiful sound. However, they get better every year, and they add just enough new stuff and pizzazz to have their audiences come back for more. On this snowy Saturday afternoon, the theatre was filled, and it was just one of 5 shows they were doing that weekend. The chorus portion was entirely Christmas music, with the first half focusing on the fun things (toys, Santa Claus, etc.) and the second half focusing on the birth of **Jesus Christ**. The end of the first half featured four quartets, *Expanded Sound*, *Cadence*, *Vocal Spectrum*, and *Gas House Gang*, with **Mike Slamka** at baritone. *Vocal Spectrum* is a college quartet from Lindenwood University. The other three are, of course, familiar names to you all.

The curtain opened, and the entire chorus was there dressed as elves in what looked much like their Toyland set from recent contests past. The several songs were interwoven about a skit where Santa Claus is invited to go to California and soak up the sun by **Arnold Schwarzenegger** and the elves were left to prepare for Christmas without him. Enter **Mr. Stench** to take his place, one of these corporate manager types we've all heard about. It was a laugh riot, and in the end, St. Nick comes to his senses and returns (he hears the verse to "White Christmas" and becomes convicted) and sets things right. They close that part with their rendition of "12 Days of Christmas," with its sight gags throughout that keeps you interested through all of those repetitious verses. The curtain closes after the entire chorus falls flat like in that ad you see on TV these days and sings the last bars from a prone position.

Expanded Sound came out dressed as monks and built their part of the show around that. Not much Christmas, but they were at their usual best.

Cadence followed, and they are sounding better than ever. You'll be hearing more about them in later years.

Vocal Spectrum was next. Here is a group you should see in the Collegiate contest in Louisville. They sounded good enough to be a medalist. **Jim Henry** has been coaching them, and has done well with them.

Most of us were waiting, of course, for the *Gas House Gang*. It seems surreal to see them there, three guys we know well, but who is this tall guy with no hair in Rob's place? Mike Slamka is a heckuva singer and he has his own gold medal to prove it, but he's not Rob Henry. It was a great performance, and their rendition of "Mary Don't You Know" was awesome, but our hearts were in our throats as we listened to it. We may very well continue to have a quartet in future years known as the *Gas House Gang*, but they'll never completely replace **Rob Henry**.

After intermission, we heard *Voices Only*, a group of 16 or so male & female singers from Lindenwood University who are students under Jim Henry. These young singers are a testimony to Jim Henry's skill as a vocal leader. They were awesome. One of their songs had an 8-part bell chord in it and they absolutely nailed it. They will be joining the *Ambassadors* and *Vocal Spectrum* on a European tour next spring.

The last act was the Christmas story. They started with our Hanukkah Medley, with *Cadence* leading off with the "Rock of Ages" segment. The narrator, dressed as **Joseph**, started the story of Christmas with the Hanukkah story and let it lead naturally to the rest of the segment. The various songs were linked together by the narration of the Christmas story and came to a climax with the "Hallelujah Chorus." After that, they concluded with "Silent Night," proceeding offstage as they sang, so that all were arrayed around the outside of the audience at the end. We all then sang the first verse with them, and the show was over. They left first for the lobby, where we all could go out and meet them individually.

After the show, Roberta and I had opportunity to meet and talk with many of our old friends, and I presented both **David Wright** and **Jim Henry** with a copy of our new "From the Heart" CD, thanking them for being the first to show me the joy of singing with a good group and teaching me to sing at their level, and noting that I will be on International stage once again after a 14-year hiatus with the *Heart of America Chorus*. Many of the fellows there were not aware we were in the lineup at Louisville. I let 'em all know we were pulling for them to win the gold—so HOA could win the District next year! ~

MUSICAL NOTES

By Keith Schweer, Music Vice President



It is the goal of the Music Team to continue to improve the performance capabilities of the chorus. We intend to do this by addressing all three of the judging categories—Singing, Presentation and Music. We are putting together our coaching schedule for 2004 and will publish it when it is completed. We have also established some specific

competition goals for 2004, namely to finish in the top 10 in Louisville and to achieve an overall average per song per judge score of 85. This represents an increase in our Singing and Music scores up to a level that is equal to our Presentation scores. We believe these are lofty, but achievable, goals. In order to make them a reality, everyone will have to do their part. The chapter administration and Music Team will have to provide leadership and planning so that we have the tools and chapter meeting environment we need to improve. I'm hopeful we can increase the size of the competition chorus, both through attracting new members and bringing back some existing members who have, for one reason or another, not been active recently. Achieving our goals will also require the commitment and dedication of every person on the risers. I've seen us do it before. When we all work together to achieve a common goal, we're bound to be successful. I'm looking forward to a great year for HOA. ~

GENTLEMEN OF NOTE CURRENT STATUS

by Jon, Monty, Rich

The past month has been a very difficult period of adjustment for **Jon**, **Monty**, and **Rich** as we accept the loss of our dear friend **Rod Rule**. We have decided that we will attempt to keep the quartet moving forward with an active search for a tenor to fill those very large shoes.

In the interim, **Mike Mathieu** has done an excellent job filling in to meet a few of our obligations, such as promotion of the Holiday Harmony Spectacular on the **Mike Murphy** program. Mike also provided tenor for us at the annual Mike Murphy Salvation Army radiothon. **Carter Combs** has also come to our rescue on a couple of occasions in the past month. We really appreciate the support of these guys during this time of uncertainty for *Gentlemen Of Note*.

As we have a desire to continue as a Senior quartet, we are seriously looking for a tenor that is at least 55 years of age, has a willingness to rapidly learn a few songs in the repertoire, and perhaps has the ability to put up with three set-in-our-ways curmudgeons. Well maybe one out of three will be ok!

We hope to be able to continue to support HOA in the manner that GON has consistently tried to do in the past.

Wish us luck in our quest!! ~

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING MINUTES

by John Winfiel, Secretary



November 4, 2003 Special HOA Board Meeting

The board discussed how much of the marbles fund to present as our Harmony Foundation contribution at the upcoming COTS meeting. **Keith Schweer** moved we give the whole amount collected to Harmony Foundation. **Rich Huyck** seconded the motion. Motion Carried.

Keith Schweer moved we pay Chorus Manager **Vince Perry's** expenses incurred on the familiarization trip to Louisville. **Jon Gathright** seconded the motion. Motion carried. ~