

Harmonotes

The Monthly Bulletin Of The Kansas City Chapter • SPEBSQSA

Volume 2004, Issue 5



Heart of America



May-June Calendar

- May 8** Dwain Brobst coaching session
- May 15** Chapter Picnic
- May 18** Don Kahl coaching session
- June 1** Bill Biffle coaching session
- June 4-5** CSD Harmony Happening, St. Joseph
- June 15** Dwain Brobst coaching session
- June 22** Louisville sendoff

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CSD CONVENTION PROVIDES AN "UNBELIEVABLE" WEEKEND FOR 12TH STREET RAG

by Mark Fortino

Qualifying for Internationals, finishing in 1st place, and being named Barbershopper of the Year! Somebody pinch me, I think I need to wake up!!!!!!

Why is it that every time *12th Street* experiences an awesome convention, HOA is the host chapter. Remember KC Internationals ...first TOP 20 finish! What can we do to get HOA to host every convention for the next 10 years!!!!????

Seriously, **Barry & Micah** were commenting during the weekend, just how overwhelming the love and support from HOA is to this quartet. I don't think you all know the impact that has on us, as well as on our performance on the contest stage. We are so excited that HOA is going to be at Internationals with us for the first time in a very long time. With HOA there, *12th Street* can't help but succeed! What a boost!!!

Although we're not real excited about the scores, these scores mean very little except that we will be singing on the International Stage again. This being the 11th straight trip for *12th Street*, and the 6th straight for this foursome, we've come to find out that the placement going in means very little as to the final outcome. We've seen quartets place in the 30s going in and finish in the Top 20, and visa versa! Contests spread across the country, at different times, among 100 or so judges, pretty difficult to compare scores.

We will let the International panel decide our true placement, and have fun entertaining 10,000 people in the process!

Thanks again for all that you do to keep *12th Street's* dream alive! HOA is like the "5th man" in our quartet, giving us energy, emotion and drive to succeed. I only hope I can give back to this chapter as much as I receive. It is truly OVERWHELMING! ~



Society for the Preservation and Encouragement
of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America
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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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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 Lankebau (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)
- Gentlemen of Note**
Mike Mathieu (tenor), Jon Gathright (lead), Rich Huyck (bari), Monty Duerksen (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)
- 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)
- Tone-Henge**
Bruce Wenner (tenor), Dan Henry (lead), Jim Bagby (bari), Keith Schweer (bass)

*Member of other chapters

WHITHER AWAY, HOA?

by Jim Bagby

I confess the day-to-day swings in the life of HOA produce similar shifts in my mood. We seem recently to have had a history of one great meeting and then one that's less successful. Attendance, or lack of it, is usually a key factor, but there are many others.

So I'm pondering how we can be more consistent; what I can do to help, and what you can do.

Was anyone else surprised at the response when **Harry Stewart** asked a few weeks ago: "How many of you are doing the four minutes per day of work requested by Rosemary Calderon?" I shudder when I recall how few hands went up. This from a chorus that says it wants to be in the top 10 this summer? (Or as I said at the CSD Showcase performance: within 8 or 9 of St. Charles).

After another meeting, I got enthusiastic feedback about the new individual vocal coaching. We know this is a program that can and will make a difference—particularly if each member makes it his own responsibility to apply what he learns in these sessions.

We went up and down all in the space of a few minutes at the late-night CSD performance. "Friends" was about as good as we can sing. "ALS" coughed and sputtered. What was the difference? I suspect it's application and concentration: staying in the moment. It was a somewhat artificial performance situation because (a) we were literally touching the audience and (b) they responded as if each hiccup had overtones—so perhaps we got a false sense of confidence.

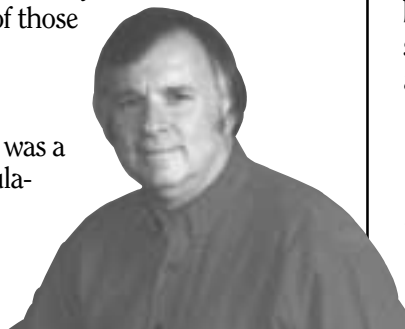
But it was a good lesson about the importance of mental preparation and adapting to a different environment. Some of us did not sing the way we practiced—or sing to the feel. With minimal warmup time, we did not adopt the approach that allowed us to establish: this is where we were when we left off this song, and that's where we want to start with this performance. I take the responsibility. But sooner or later, as in any learning process, the responsibility must shift to you—each of you.

So let's use that as a learning experience, and be more ready, more involved, more attuned to the performance. That's going to be much easier when we learn (or re-learn) all the staging, and reach the point we don't have to think about mechanics or fundamentals in the performance.

MEANWHILE, we owe a major debt to *New and Used Parts*, engineer **Mark Fortino** and our reproduction team for getting our new contest learning media (plus the HOA Tag) out in latest form. My fervent wish: that you will sing with your section leader, word for word, note for note, inflection for inflection—and then switch channels to sing the same thing with the other three parts.

We also owe much to the 17 members of six quartets who did double duty on contest weekend, singing with us Saturday night at the end of a busy weekend. Four of those quartets made the top 10, *12th Street Rag* topped the field AND was named CSD Barbershopper of the Year to boot.

Barbershoppers of the Year? Whatever, it was a real highlight of the convention. Congratulations **Micah, Mark, John and Barry!** ~



MAKEUP! by Jim Davis

We know, most of you guys hate it 'cause it makes you look like a "sissy", etc., but here's the skinny on why it's necessary. Under the mega-watt, ultra bright stage lights, even the ruddiest of complexion gets "washed-out," and if you're as pale as most of us are after being inside all winter, without it you look like a corpse (before the mortician makes you look "natural")! In other words, makeup adds life and expression to your face, even when you're NOT as involved as you should be (and we all have lapses, don't we **Shawn?**). Our intention is to brighten and liven your face by giving it color, and we try to do that while still making you look "natural." The base or pancake adds color, warmth and uniformity, smoothes-out some wrinkles, and hides some blemishes, and the rouge and lipstick adds the color your face would have after being outside in the cold, or after exercising or after taking a brisk shower. You've probably all heard or used the expression "looks like a fresh-faced kid."

Most everyone could learn to do his own makeup, but since that probably isn't practical, the Makeup Committee could use some additional help. **John McConnell** and I will teach you what you need to know, and I must add that it is the only time you really get up-close and personal with your fellow members, even the ones who stand next to you! I have learned more about most of you while doing makeup than I ever would have just sharing the risers. The next time we use makeup for a show or competition, remember, we're only trying to help each of us present a better "picture" to our audience, soooo, be cooperative, don't complain and DO show-up so we can all LOOK, as well as sing our best! ~

P.S. Thanks also to the following for their help at the show: **Carl Turlin, Neil Johnson, Mike Schumacher and Al Higgins.**

ANNUAL SHOW LETTERS

From KC jazz singer **Tony Gates-Grantham**, a regular at Quality Hill Playhouse:

Dear Jim,

That was one hell of a concert... My husband and I were at the 2 p.m. show - WOW - there were sooo many people there and I was terribly impressed! It's been so long since I've heard a good men's chorus and yours is spectacular to say the least. I don't think there's a whole lot better than voices united, do you?

My favorites were "It's a Grand Night for Singing," "In My Room" (was just gorgeous - Chris really liked this one, too),

Toni-Henge I MEAN, *TONE-HENGE AND NOT BECAUSE I'M BIASED, YOU GUYS WERE JUST GOOD, OKAY?* "I Have Seen the Light" was nice, too; my favorite guy in that trio was the one closest to you. He sounds like he can wail. His voice is fabulous...

Anywho, thanks for putting on such a high quality performance. I had a ball and I was really proud to say "I know the director, he's my new friend!"

Take care,
Toni

March 25, 2004
The Kansas City Star
1729 Grand Blvd.
Kansas City, MO 64108



FIRST CLASS

SPECIAL DELIVERY

Gentlemen:

I was surprised and disappointed to find no review of the March 13 barbershop harmony show at the Music Hall. It was one of the most enjoyable performances I've had the pleasure of attending in the Kansas City metro area.

My wife and I support the symphony and the arts. I am enjoying a retirement career as a jazz and classical piano player. I have no connection with the *Heart of America* barbershoppers, but if I were a singer of that caliber, I'd certainly consider joining their group. The show was fast-paced, high quality and incorporated some excellent quartets as well as the chorus.

It was obvious that what appeared to be a near-capacity audience enjoyed the presentation as much as I did.

I can think of no other Music Hall event that does not rate a *Star* review, so I hope you will consider adding the barber shoppers to your list in the future.

Sincerely,
Eugene C. "Gene" Hall
1029 W. 66th St.
Kansas City, MO 64112
(816) 333-1131

"INSPIRED AND BLESSED"
Letter from **Harriett Gall's** daughter-in-law, wife of No. 1 son Joe:

March 17, 2004

Dear Jim & Joann,

I just wanted to drop a note to tell you how much we enjoyed the show last Saturday night. Getting to hear the *Rural Route 4* again, and seeing those two little guys on stage—what a hoot!

You showcased some wonderful talent, the musical selections were superb and I left the show feeling inspired and blessed. I can't even imagine the amount of work that went into the production of such a show, but I just wanted to tell you again what a magnificent evening it was.

Sincerely,
Ann Gall



Show Photo by **Matt Bostick**

HOA DOMINATES SPRING CONTEST BY

Carter Combs

When HOA hosts a convention, we REALLY host it! Not only did we provide most of the men & women needed behind the scenes to run the entire event, we also supplied all the MCs, a brand new chorus, and were represented by six, count 'em, SIX of the 18 performing quartets!

Yes, the "Part of America" mini-chorus set the proper tone on Saturday morning, mic-testing before the small chorus contest. It must be noted that POA has the singular distinction of delivering both their debut & swan song performances at the very same time!

The quartet contest started out right with the microphones being thoroughly tested by our own District Senior Champs, the *Gentlemen of Note*. They then resumed their other weekend duties of coaching the judges... that is, carting them around, to and fro, here & there, hither, thither and yon...

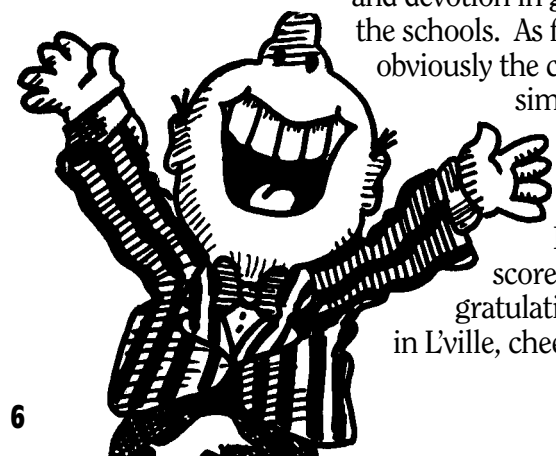
Our next-busiest foursome of the weekend was *Sounds Like Treble*, who not only turned in a fine performance competing as a quartet, but also helped the Leavenworth chapter to their well-deserved Most Improved Chorus title. (My "spy" in the audience informs me that **Dr. Niel** was "emotin' like crazy...**Shawn** would be proud!")

Speaking of Shawn (and those other three guys), *Sound Alibi* has worked hard the last few months, and is delighted they broke into the Top 10! Keep it coming, guys...we're proud of you!

And don't believe any rumors or stories you might have heard about *SureFire!* I have it on good authority that **Grant** was not really sick...the quartet just decided to scratch the finals to enjoy the once-in-a-decade spectacle of Old **Dan** performing his MC shtick on Saturday night.

Transforming from bums to gentlemen, *Grandstand* delivered strong, smooth performances to leapfrog over two prior District champs, and placed 2nd for the weekend! Watch for these guys to go to the Big Show, perhaps even this year, wildcards permitting! (If they can just get that rookie lead up to speed...)

What can we say about *12th Street Rag*? They join *Gas House Gang* and *Rural Route 4* in being named District "Barbershopper of the Year." They have certainly earned the title for all their hard work and devotion in getting barbershop into the schools. As for the contest, they were obviously the crowd favorite. They simply came out and did their usual spectacular show, walking off with 1st place and the only International qualifying scores of the weekend. Congratulations gents...we'll ALL be in Lville, cheering you on!



SPRING FLING REPORT!

by Rob Mathieu

We had a great turnout for the 2004 Spring Fling. A grand total of 8 quartets competed to win the intra-chorus spring fling championship, held in Kansas City.

A special thanks goes out to all 29 men who participated. The competitors were as follows:

1. *Stew and Brotts*
2. *To Be Determined*
3. *Fore!*
4. *Four Cryin' Out Loud*
5. *Beards "R" Us*
6. *The Quad Squad*
7. *"Yes!"*
8. *Fourplay*

Our bronze medalist: *The Quad Squad*, with members **Rob Mathieu, Mike Mathieu, Dennis Kinghorn** and **Doug Brott**.

Our silver medalist: *Fourplay* **Rob Mathieu, Thom Tisdall, Alex Scott** and **Chris Meeks**.

Our gold medal winner: *"Yes!"* **Tom Elefson, Jerry Garrard, Eric Webber** and **Dick Irwin**.

Congratulations to all thanks for your efforts!



WHAT A CONVENTION!

by Al Higgins

"We've just experienced another very successful convention" are the words of Central States District President **Ron Morden**. There were many great things that happened.

We set a new record for registrations, making this the most well-attended Spring Convention in CSD history. We set a record for the most collegiate quartets competing this year in any district and a new collegiate scoring record as well. We had choruses competing that had not competed in years

(Florissant Valley, MO had not competed in over 30 years).

It was a banner time for HOA as the host chapter for the convention. We had more attendees at the Ladies Breakfast, the VIP Dinner, the Showcase, the church service and the contest sessions than what we had projected. We did great business at the Marketplace and the History exhibit used the most space ever at a CSD convention.

HOA did not tarnish it's reputation as the best convention host chapter in the district. The work done by all of the committee chairs and their teams was outstanding. All of their work received rave reviews from competitors, barbershoppers, district officers and convention team members.

I want to extend our thanks to the Doubletree Hotel staff and management for their unbelievable energy and assistance in hosting this convention. And a tip of the hat to the Overland Park Convention and Visitors Bureau for their support.

A special thanks to the *Heart of America Chorus* for their Showcase performance and congratulations to all of the HOA quartets (including collegiate quartets *Random Harmony* and *Po' Boys*) for the great job they did.

And finally to *12th Street Rag*, CONGRATULATIONS for qualifying (the 11th time) for the International competition in Louisville. And the topper...2003 Central States District Barbershopper of the Year. A very popular choice and a well-deserved honor.

A personal note. My heartfelt thanks to the HOA directors, music team, officers, board members, HOA membership and the *Heartbeats* for your cooperation and job very well done. You are the best and because you are the best, it makes HOA the best.

Thank You!





Ten Years Ago: May, 2004

HOA Music VP explained why the first-ever HOA "Spring Retreat," originally scheduled for the weekend of April 10-12 and to be held at the Elms Hotel in Excelsior Springs had to be postponed.

By Wade Dexter, Editor Emeritus

Said **Ron Abel**, "... with only 35 in attendance, it just wouldn't have been practical. But we been busy, and many of us just couldn't commit to another weekend right now." The event was later rescheduled for the second weekend in September.

HOA Music Director **Jim Bagby** announced a proposal for the organization of a "Day Chorus" to perform for daytime audiences. Said Jim, "I hereby volunteer to handle the initial organization and to serve, at least at the outset, as the primary musical director for such a group." Jim went on to explain "...the daytimers would try to take some of the performance offers other groups are too large, too busy, or otherwise unavailable to fill." Sounds as though this group would resemble the "Harmony Handful" mini-chorus that operated for a number of years from the Kansas City chapter. Wonder what ever happened to the proposal.

Thirty-Five Years Ago: April, 1969

The *Heart of America Chorus*, along with three chapter quartets, the *Skyliners*, the *Merry Mugs*, and the *Implausibles*, were booked to put on a show for the students at the school for the deaf in Higginsville, MO, on May 17. Someone who signed his name "Dave" (could have been **Dave Ritz**, then editor of *Harmonotes*, or **Dave Larson**) had this to say about this performance: "For those of you who have not yet been there, we can assure you of a wonderful time. We sing once in the afternoon for

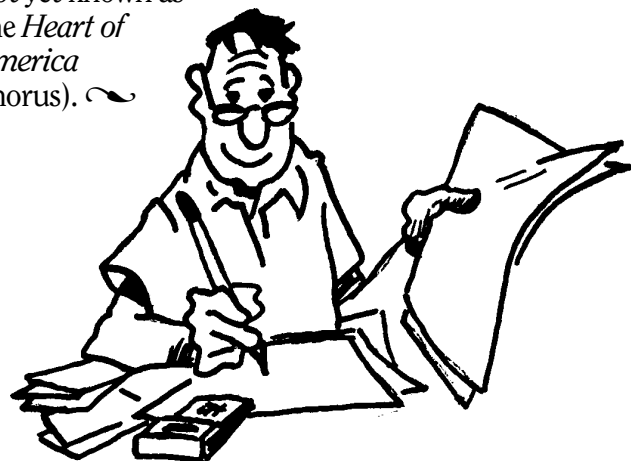
the children and then in the evening, after some beer and barbecue (all free), we perform for a big audience of adults. The show is the chief source of income for the Parents' Association of the school. They use the funds to purchase equipment and materials for more and better therapy for the kids." I seem to recall that at one time, this was almost an annual affair. Wonder why it was discontinued.

Forty Years Ago: May 15, 1963

This edition of *Harmonotes*, edited by **Warren Edmonds**, contained a brief account of SPEBSQSA history by **Ray L. Koenig**. He first reports the death on August 15, 1953, of Society founder **O. C. Cash**. After starting a chapter in their own home town, **O. C. Cash** and **Rupert Hall**, with about 40 other from Tulsa, organized the second chapter in the Society right here in Kansas City.

The CSD quartet contest was held on October 17 at Pittsburg, KS (choruses were not included in competitive events at that time). The *Orphans* of Wichita won the championship.

The Ninth Annual Parade of Quartets was held on April 24 and 25 at the Music Hall. The theme was the lobby of the Headquarters Hotel in our convention city. Quartets and Society members are seen arriving and being greeted by old friends. Guest quartets included the *Clef Dwellers*, International medalists from Detroit; the *Barber Q Four*, Illinois District champs from Chicago; the *Orphans*, CSD champs from Wichita and the *Kernels*, International semifinalists from Omaha. Local quartets were the *BMA Gamboliers*, the *Hi-Powers*, the *Londonaires*, the *Rudy Fick Royalties*, the *Mid-Americans*, with **L. Fred Stern** as desk clerk and MC, and the four *Hands of Harmony*. **Don Stephens** directed the Kansas City Chorus (it was not yet known as the *Heart of America* chorus).



MUSICAL NOTES

by Keith Schweer, Music Vice President



Recent Words of Wisdom

Bill Biffle: "Sing to the feel." It means fewer adjustments from one venue to another. Bill went on to say, whenever a coach or director says "that's it!, do it that way!", you should be aware of

how it felt to you when you did whatever it was that made him say that. That way, you can recreate the good sound regardless of where you are, dead stage, live stage, whatever.

Bill Biffle: "Neck-free does not mean relax or roll the neck—just allow it to be free all the time." You don't eliminate tension by actively doing something. You eliminate the tension by not doing things that cause tension.

Rosemary Calderon and **Bill Biffle** agree: "You must build stamina, through giving your all to the performance, whether that comes at the first or the last of the rehearsal." You should also do this type of practice at home, by doing the complete contest set start-to-finish, with all the staging. The performance should be as entertaining and energetic as if there were an audience watching. Oh, and when you finish the set, do the whole thing all over again.

Rosemary and **Harry Stewart** agree: "4 minutes per day for working the visual is minimal", but so far, only a handful of HOA folks seem to be buying into that. Like most things in life, the more you put into something, the more you get out of it.

The Music Team has no doubt that we can achieve our goals for Louisville, but the greater the commitment, the greater the reward.

Musically Speaking

"I don't know anything about music. In my line you don't have to." - **Elvis Presley**, 1935-1977

"I can hold a note as long as the Chase National Bank." - **Ethel Merman**, 1909-1984

"We don't like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out." - Decca Recording Company, on rejecting the *Beatles* in 1962

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
to the following chapter members!

Chuck Ames	May 1
John Starcke	May 2
Wade Dexter	May 5
Anthony Fortino	May 6
Carter Combs	May 7
Jonathin Shinn	May 7
Dan Bowser	May 9
Stew Grosser	May 12
Kevin Beauford	May 13
Dale Neuman	May 20
Walt Patterson	May 21
George Park, Jr.	May 22
Joe Mathieu	May 24
Dominic Pedotto	May 31

DEADLINE FOR THE JUNE ISSUE OF

Harmonotes

Articles and photos are due by **TUESDAY, MAY 18**

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

"E" IS FOR ENCOURAGEMENT by Jim Porter

I was looking forward to the CSD Spring Convention for many reasons, but the biggest was the chance to meet a friend from St. Louis, one I sang with in the *Ambassadors of Harmony* in the early 90s, but who is now not with them any more, as the AOH leadership team included him with a group of men they judged were not up to the standards of their chorus. **Gerry Mohr** took this hard, as he was part of AOH for many years, since the days they were known for their afterglows much more than for their competitive singing ability. In time, Gerry sought out barbershop harmony in another area chorus, the Florissant Valley chapter. I was delighted when Gerry told me Florissant Valley had decided to come to the convention and sing in the competition, after 33 years out of the contest picture.

Saturday morning, I showed up at the hotel at 8:30, dressed and ready to sing with the *Part of America* group as the mic-tester chorus. I sought out Seattle 3, where the Florissant Valley chapter was gathering for their preparations to sing in the contest, first out of the box after HOA kicked off the day's activities. Gerry wasn't the only man in that chorus with AOH experience. Their assistant director, **Rod Mehlberg**, is also an AOH alum, and he was delighted to see me there, and introduced me to everyone in the chorus. After that, I was an audience of one as they considered adding a bit of pizzazz to their first song, but in the end decided not to change the program (good choice!). They worked at it for about 45 minutes, then adjourned to get into their tuxes while I went over to the

school to join the rest of the HOA guys for our part of the program. Before we went out to sing, I dropped into their warmup room for a final bit of encouragement before they followed us onto the stage.

Later that day, I had a chance to meet with several of the Florissant Valley men, and they were pleased with their score, just a bit shy of 60%. Their expectations were, of course, much lower than ours would be, they only wanted to give a good account of themselves after 33 years out of the loop, and they accomplished that, finishing 7th out of the 10 choruses in the contest. I invited them to consider doing it again in Omaha, but most of them figured they would not be welcome at that competition. I let them know it was an open competition and any chorus that wanted to take part would be allowed to participate.

In the end, Gerry, who hasn't been to a District or International competition since AOH invited him off the risers, has decided to come to Louisville. I've invited him to look us up there and watch us prepare for the contest just as I watched them. Rod Mehlberg is ready to bring his chorus back next spring, and I've challenged him to set a goal of earning the *Most Improved* trophy then. Who knows, maybe they WILL come to Omaha after all. I am looking forward to seeing Gerry in Louisville, and maybe he'll show me that cluster of seven medals he has, something any one of us at HOA would love to be able to claim for our own, perhaps someday down the road. ~

REGISTER FOR...



Harmony College is a week of great fun and total immersion in the barbershop style. Dates are August 1-8, 2004 at Missouri Western State College, St. Joseph, Mo. To register, go to www.spebsqsa.org/hcdc or call Linda Neuenfeld at 1-800-876-7464 x8591.

TEN LITTLE WORDS by Carter Combs

You've all heard the story. It's the big game...half-time...coach is giving the pep talk: "Boys, it all boils down to ten little 2-letter words..."

IF IT IS TO BE, IT IS UP TO ME."

No matter how we say it ("I'm talking to you!") it means *individual commitment*. In a volunteer organization, a leader can only lead the willing. And heck, we MUST be willing...we even pay for privilege of singing together every week!

So, how can we maximize our potential? Here's a little list of 10 little things. None of us can do all of them all the time, but all of us can do some of them most of the time, and the more of them we all do, the better we will be!

On your own:

- Hydrate
- Sing every day
- Tape & evaluate yourself singing
- Practice & mental-loop the visual package
- Stay healthy (reasonable diet, moderate exercise, avoid smoke, etc...)

All together now:

- actively participate in rehearsals
- listen twice as much, talk half as much
- stay open to incorporating new ideas & techniques
- strive to improve at least one thing every time you sing

There you have it. 10 little things that will make a BIG difference!

Excuse me? What's that? You say there are only nine items on the list? Glad to see you're paying attention! Item number ten is for you to decide.

We are all different, and different things motivate us, so, what works for you? Add it to the list.

Personally, my #10 is: learn from the best. I buy the recordings of the gold-medal choruses & quartets, and I listen to them a lot. Sometimes just for the entertainment, and sometimes critically. Why was that good? What could have made it better? How did they do that? How can "I" do that?

Anyway, enjoy finding your own number 10, and I'll look forward to singing with you! ~



A NEW ACCOMPLISHMENT FOR TONE-HENGE

by Ol' Dan

The Denison, Iowa, chapter show is always a good one, the 2004 version was no exception, and *Tone-Henge* was delighted to be a part of it on April 3rd.

The *Happiness Express* chorus was in fine fettle, and local quartets, *Voice Over* and *Voice Exchange*, were just great! *Tone-Henge* opened the 2nd half and *Two State Four*, our 2002 District Champs, headlined. Fun times! But I wanna tell ya about the "accomplishment".

It happened on the afterglow, which was held at the Denison Country club, in a room with a ceiling fan...which was running full tilt. You know the balloons we shoot while singing "Bubbles"? Well, **Bruce** accomplished the impossible. Taking brief aim, he fires and hits the fan's whirling blades dead on. Obviously the balloon's demise was accompanied by a loud report, and the audience applauded as if Ol' **Errol Flynn Wenner** had been practicing this Robin Hood routine for months! Bruce said he was aiming for it. The rest of us think it was dumb luck. Either way, if there's a ceiling fan at our next afterglow, we'll take bets on Bruce's ability to repeat.

Further proof that quartets who lack some singing essentials may find success in slapstick. ~