

September 2004

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!*

ARM-WAVER'S OUTLOOK by Jim Bagby

Fall: it's my favorite season. The arrival of September means the fall contest is upon us, Christmas (my favorite holiday) is looming, Missouri has its most pristine weather of the year and, best of all, football is back.

If you sing with *Tone-Henge*, you have to be a Chiefs fan, because their coach is our age.

As a Big 12 writer and activist, I look forward to a great season, North and South divisions. And as a Sooner fan since growing up in Norman during the glory years of **Bud Wilkinson**, I eagerly await a conference champion rematch with the Aggies (with a different outcome). I pull for Mizzou and the Huskers and those purple folks right up until they meet the Big Red.

I mention Wilkinson because the philosophy he developed is applicable to what HOA is trying to accomplish now. For the "youngsters" in our midst, Bud was a standout athlete at Minnesota, a national championship coach at Oklahoma—where the Sooners set an NCAA Division I winning streak of 47 games that may never be equaled—and a special sports council adviser to **President Kennedy**.

Wilkinson said success is the result of enthusiasm—enthusiasm for the task at hand, for study and learning and for accepting responsibility. That should ring a responsive note with us, because we've pledged to accept responsibility for individual musical and performance improvement.

I find this equally compelling: Wilkinson believed enthusiasm is the natural by-product of exuberant good health, largely the result of adequate rest, proper diet and sufficient exercise. He said that gives us vigor and, in his words, "produces the energy each individual needs to accomplish the task at hand."

We talk often about the physical demands of our hobby. **Stew Grosser** and his "weight'll you see me" program before Louisville paid dividends for some, but the battle of the bulge and staying in shape are an ongoing challenge for many of us.

But no matter what your goal, there's no need to be discouraged. Wilkinson seems to say that instant success is almost an oxymoron. He sounds as if he's talking to us when he says competence results from sustained, consistent, self-disciplined effort over an extended period of time.

We can do that! We're enthusiastically pursuing that success right now. ♥



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Charles Ramirez enjoyed the experience, even without a beanie!

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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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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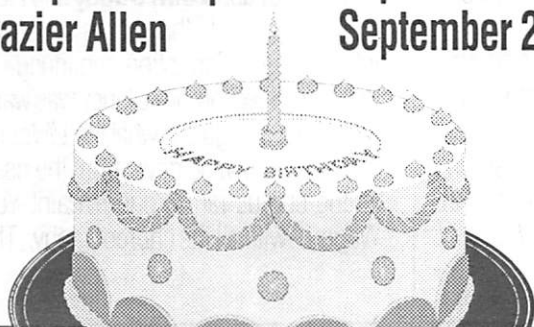
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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

to the following chapter members!

Thom Tisdall	September 5
Gerald Garrard	September 6
John Braden	September 8
Richard Huyck	September 10
Walter Bates	September 13
Ron Abel	September 15
Harold Solomon	September 16
Phillip Veltkamp	September 23
Frazier Allen	September 24



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)

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

AN EVENING WITH THE VOCAL MAJORITY

by Jim Porter

Outside of barbershop, my other interest is the *Gideons International*, the Christian organization that, among other things, provides the Bibles you find in your hotel room. The *Gideons'* international convention this year was in Dallas, which gave me the opportunity to visit the best barbershop chorus in the world.

The meeting place for the *Vocal Majority* happened to be on the road between my hotel in Dallas and the place where the *Gideons* met downtown. Even better, I recalled a young fellow who sang with HOA three years ago for a few months before his life's journey took him to Dallas, and **John Landry** provided me with his name and e-mail address. I got in touch with **Andy Kvasnica**, who took me to the *VM* hall, although he said he had not been to a *Vocal Majority* practice since January. His schedule was full with needs for schooling, family and work, so he wasn't with them in Louisville. HE was the one who was greeted as a long-lost friend by all the guys at the door, and only after a few minutes could I get the attention of them so I could be welcomed as the guest I was. They then thanked me for bringing Andy back to them!

As you might expect, lots of barbershoppers visit the *VM*. That evening, there was also a visitor from the *Cedar Rapids Harmony Hawks* and another from England. I let the *VM* know I was there to sing, and they welcomed me, invited me to a position on the 2nd row and found a guest book for me. What a guest book! As I sized up this four-inch thick binder that weighed about 10 pounds, one of the fellows near me noted "And that's not all! You don't have any of our Christmas music there."

Promptly at 7, **Jim Clancy** strode forward, called the meeting to order, and the 120 or so men began the evening with **David Wright's** arrangement of "Harmony, Harmony" that I heard the *Ambassadors of Harmony* do as their show opener just prior to the Louisville convention. I manfully tried to keep up as they launched into this wonderful up-tune with a vigor that belied the fact that this was their first time singing together in three weeks. After that, they did warmup drills for 15 minutes, and yes, that "one, one, one, one" exercise is a staple of theirs. I was beginning to feel comfortable with them, and they encouraged me to keep on.

They then went to the new music. A Clancy arrangement of **Simon and Garfunkel's** "Bridge over Troubled Water" was passed around, and Jim went right to it with them. The chorus shifted around on the risers to be arranged by sections, so I was among the leads. The first time through was a bit rocky. How about that? These fellows have the same problems learning a new piece that I do! The next few minutes set the tone for the evening, as I saw an attitude on the part of everyone that could best be described as "**VM Pride**." The men knew they were not at their best, and some nearby were almost apologetic to me. They were also very determined to NOT let it go until it was right, and Jim Clancy was determined to take them through the tough sections time and time again until they got it right.

It didn't take long before the room was filled with that beautiful sound the *VM* is known for, and my voice was right there with them. Before the evening was done, we would take on three other songs in similar fashion, including a Clancy arrangement of "In My Room," for which my *Heart of*

America experience wasn't very helpful. Before the break, we went to section rehearsal on the new songs. Just like in Kansas City, the leads get to stay put on the risers, together with the tenors, while the other parts adjourned to other parts of the building. **Greg Clancy** is the lead section leader and took charge. Greg is learning well at his father's feet, as he patiently worked with the men, going over the difficult parts time and time again until it was right.

At break time, there were announcements, and passing out of gold medals sent from Kenosha to replace those given to the *Ambassadors* in Louisville, and a time to welcome guests. I realized in my excitement that I hadn't signed their guest book, so there was a last-minute rush to take care of that, so I could be properly welcomed. The guys were given 10 minutes to relax, for which I was thankful as my leg goes to sleep if I stand on it too long! It was at this point I found out the class of Jim Clancy. He approached me, welcomed me personally and congratulated me on hanging in there with his chorus. I shared with him my experience in 1989 when I was on international stage the first time with the St. Charles chorus, in Kansas City, and how the words he said then about David Wright and the chorus made me feel so good. After 15 years I got to thank him for that, and he told me he remembered the time well.

I then shared with him some of my story since, including coming to Kansas City, joining the *Heart of America Chorus* and returning to the International stage with HOA in Louisville. He had some nice things to say about **Jim Bagby** and HOA.

After the break, the chorus re-formed into "shotgun" formation continued. At this point, I reckon Jim Clancy was wanting to show the guests what the *VM* could do, so I was invited down from the risers as the chorus ran through "Paint Your Wagon," with all the choreography. This

they did with all the vigor and pizzazz we've come to expect from the *Vocal Majority*, and it was overwhelming to see and hear this performance so close. Up until this point, the chorus seemed to be subdued, reined in, as they struggled to learn the new music. They were in their element here, and they let it all come out.

But then it was back to work. Before the evening was done, we would work all four of the songs again, and there would be another section rehearsal. As I watched Jim and Greg Clancy work with the men, it became clear why they are so effective as leaders. I felt comfortable in this learning experience because it was so easy to figure out what I was expected to do. The Clancys' words, gestures and body language were such that even I could know just when to come in, when to cut out and how loud I should sing. In addition, there were never any distractions from anyone else in the chorus.

It was interesting to note that very seldom was I expected to sing LOUD. For the most part, the chorus sang easily and softly, yet it seemed that the sound filled the hall. As time wore on, it began to come together for the men, and they knew it. I could see it in their faces. They seemed as excited as I was to be part of the experience. They weren't apologizing to me any more. Instead they were asking me if I was having fun. I responded "You bet I am! I'm singing with the best barbershop chorus in the world!" They encouraged me greatly as they let me know that I was doing just fine, and they began to bring up the idea that I ought to consider moving to Dallas. One nearby told me "I moved 1,400 miles to join this chorus! You can do it, too!" (Not to worry, HOA. I am content to let this remain a once-in-a-lifetime experience. My wife would never permit me to do such a thing!)

I also noted another thing about Jim Clancy. When the chorus sang through "You're So Beautiful" one more time, and rang the tag in fitting *VM* style, HE got all excited like it was his first time visiting! He gushed about how great his guys were and what a privilege it was for him to be in front of them. This, from a man who has been doing this for 30 years and has already es-

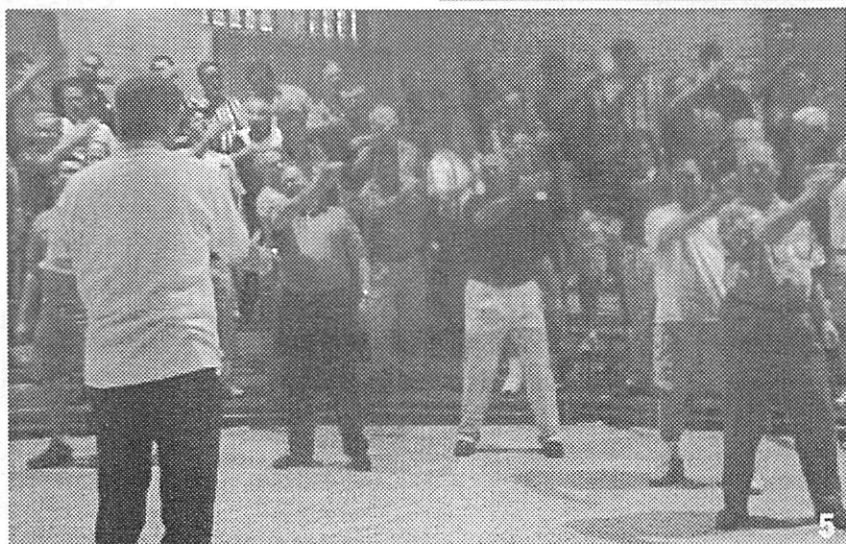
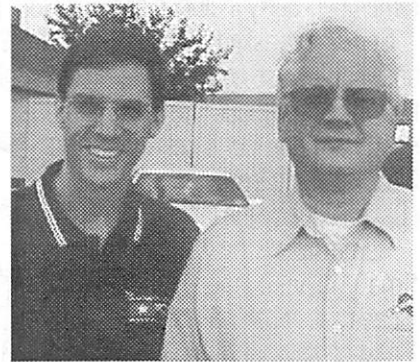
tablished a reputation that no one else has ever achieved! It's easy to see why the men are so enthusiastic for him. The love he shows to his men as he leads them is something to behold.

The Vocal Majority goes at it until 10:30 p.m. It sure didn't seem like over three hours had passed, but it was time for the last song. The group reassembled in shotgun formation to sing one of *VM's* great inspirational songs, a medley including "I Believe." They allowed me to stay with them this time, as I told them I knew "I Believe," but not, of course, Jim Clancy's arrangement of it. I didn't bother with the huge guest manual (I had set it down long ago), I just listened to what was going around me, watched Jim Clancy, and added my voice in as best I could. As we sang, it seemed that Jim Clancy was watching me as intently as I watched him. We hit the tag, I was right on with them, and for one of the few times all evening, let it all come out and felt my voice a part of that wonderful sound that closed the evening.

As the group dispersed, Jim Clancy came to me once more. He smiled, shook my hand and told me "I am impressed! I was watching you all evening. You are a quick study. You picked up on those songs very well, and I know that if you were to move to Dallas, you would be welcomed into this chorus!" After I recovered my composure enough to say anything, I thanked him and told him he had once again made me feel 10 feet tall, just as he did 15 years previously in Kansas City. ♥

From top to bottom:

VM member **Andy Kvasnica** and *HOA's* **Jim Porter**, ...time to grab a guest book: four-inches thick, 10 pounds, ...the chorus rests while receiving coaching from **Jim & Greg Clancy**, ...*Vocal Majority* members let it all out during a run through of "Paint Your Wagon."

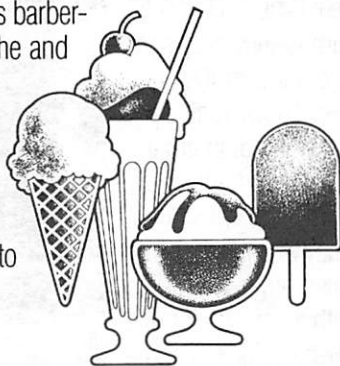


A WOW EVENT HAPPENED TUESDAY, JUNE 15!

Remember the special gift by **Jerry Sheridan**? What a great surprise to be welcomed by the treat of all-you-can-eat *Sheridan's Frozen Custard*. Not only did we enjoy that custard but, if you remember, Jerry included some six toppings!

Some guys asked, "Why did he do this?" Well, the only honest answer is 'cause he wanted to do something special for a group he truly cares about. He loves barber-shop harmony but it seems he and his son have a frozen custard tiger by the tail!

Remember Jerry every time you visit one of the *Sheridan's Frozen Custards*. He went way out of his way to give us a "special" treat. ♥



December 4 will be here soon!
Make plans NOW for the 7th annual...

HOLIDAY HARMONY SPECTACULAR

Those of you who have been around a while know that this is always the most FUN event of the year. Here are the details:

- Joint show with the *Kansas City Chorus of Sweet Adelines* (many time International competitor and Medalist).
- Saturday December 4, 2004 - shows at 2 and 7:30 PM at the Unity Village Activities Center. Technical rehearsal Friday evening.
- HOA will sing 25 minutes on our own plus seven songs with the combined chorus.
- Guest quartets include *ZING* (SA Regional Champions) and *Jubilee Transfer* (mixed gospel quartet with **Calvin & Willard Yoder**).
- Cast Party at Yellow Rock Barn (same as last year).
- Joint rehearsals Monday, Nov. 1 (at their meeting), Tuesday Nov. 16 (at our meeting), and Sunday afternoon Nov. 21 (at Mission Mall).

SELL TICKETS! We have a great opportunity for a sellout with your help. Order forms will be available on the table at all meetings. Or call 913-814-8268 to order tickets. Remember, all seats are reserved and the best seats always sell first, so the early bird gets the best seats. ♥

A REVIEW: MUSIC IN THE PARK

Great weather, great audience and a great turn-out of HOA men. Thanks once again to **Dan Henry** for the jump-start for the evening of quartets and the chorus.

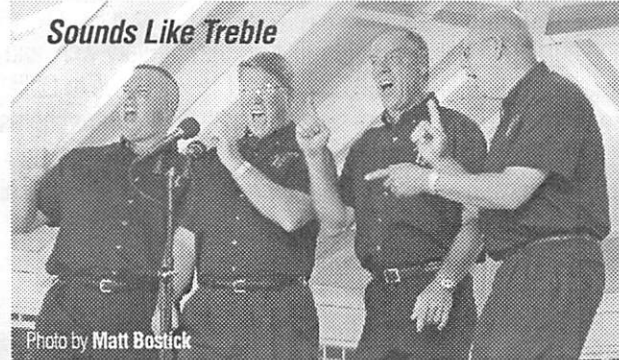
7th Heaven, *Sounds Like Treble* and *New and Used Parts* (shown below in order) got the evening started then 67 members of HOA took over and the crowd of about 800 folks were treated to the best in barbershop harmony...HOA style!

For those who need to know...

The barbershop sound first started being heard at downtown Overland Park in 1996 - it consisted of just quartets. In 1999 the chorus made it's first appearance and has been a regular ever since. ♥



Sounds Like Treble

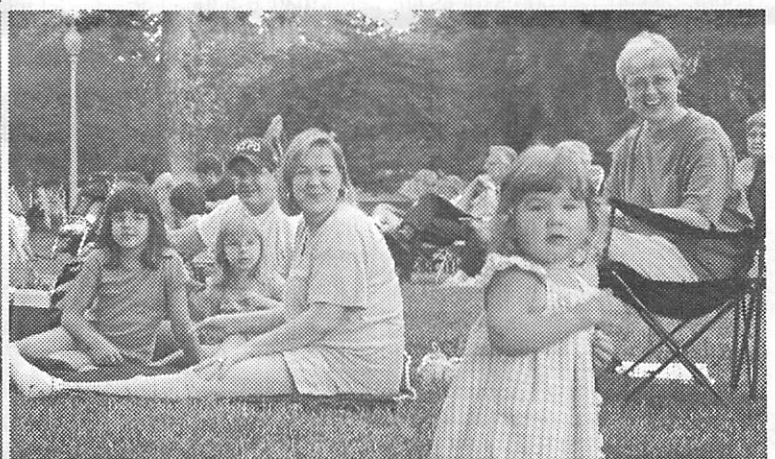


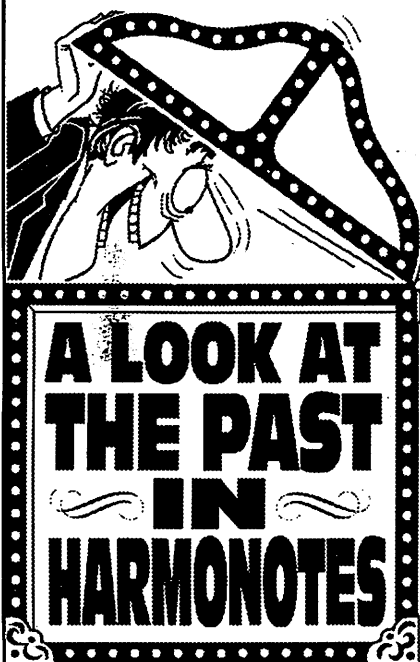
New And Used Parts



Heartfelt editorial thanks goes to Matt Bostick who collected these wonderful moments in time!

Above: *The Heart of America Chorus* fills the air with golden tones—in an idyllic setting—in front of hundreds of music lovers. **At left:** As night falls, the charm of the moment is enjoyed by all. **Below, from left to right:** Families were in abundance. Who knows? We may have been in the presence of future society gold-medallists! **At bottom:** “Drawn by Harmony,” a large crowd and a colorful array of lawn chairs decorate the park as HOA sets the mood. What a grand night for singing!





By Wade Dexter, Editor Emeritus
jedexter@mailstation.com

others talk of their barbershopping experiences and wonder if I could survive in a lesser chapter than Kansas City. Now I will find out." In a recent e-mail to the men of HOA in which John congratulated the chorus for its fine performance at the International in Louisville, John mentioned that he had finally found a chapter that would promise the same pleasure and enjoyment as HOA did, but it requires a 134-mile ONE-WAY trip each week. Wonder how many of our current HOA members could demonstrate that level of dedication. As I recall, John didn't mention the location of his new chapter. Incidentally, John and Peggy were planning on building a house in the Punta Gorda, Florida, area. If they were still living there, I wonder how they fared during the recent advent of Hurricane Charley, which came ashore at that precise point. If anyone has heard how they are, please let me know. And oh, yes, if you're wondering who stepped forward and accepted the job of pro-tem president for the remainder of John's term, it was the guy you might have expected to do just that in an emergency—**Mr. Dale Neuman**.

How many of you old-timers remember the *Day Chords*? They were a group of HOA members (plus one or two from the Overland Park Chapter) who were retired or worked nights or were otherwise available during the day and who banded together to provide a capability to respond to requests for entertainment in situations where it would be difficult to assemble the entire chorus. Music Director **Jim Bagby** reported that the group would be meeting on a weekly basis at the Community Christian Church Annex at 46th and Main Streets from 2:30 p.m. until 4 p.m. Sounds like a heck of a good idea but I wonder what happened to the group.

TEN YEARS AGO: SEPTEMBER, 1994

The entire front page of the September 1994 issue of *Harmonotes* was dedicated to a "farewell" letter from HOA President **John Pendleton**, who was departing for a new job in southwest Florida. John had lots of good things to say about how much he enjoyed his membership with HOA. Said John, "To all our friends, we can only say, come and see us. I hear

THIRTY YEARS AGO: SEPTEMBER, 1984

Editor **Dale Neuman** devoted several pages in the September 1984 issue of *Harmonotes* to a summary of comments, suggestions, and recommendations that came out of a "town meeting" and "rap session" that was held subsequent to HOA's performance at the 1984 International contest in St. Louis. Much of the discussion dealt with two major issues: whether to continue emphasis on chorus competition and how to go about qualifying members to perform with the competition chorus. "**Ron Abel** served as moderator and set the tone for the session when he called for '...open, friendly but candid discussion...' among the more than 60 members and guests present." Some of the participants felt that the emphasis should be on having fun rather than working so hard preparing for events such as district and international contests and the annual show. Some of us are convinced that that's where the fun begins.

New members were **John Bryant, Paul Allen, Avin Solsaa, and Bill Hull**.

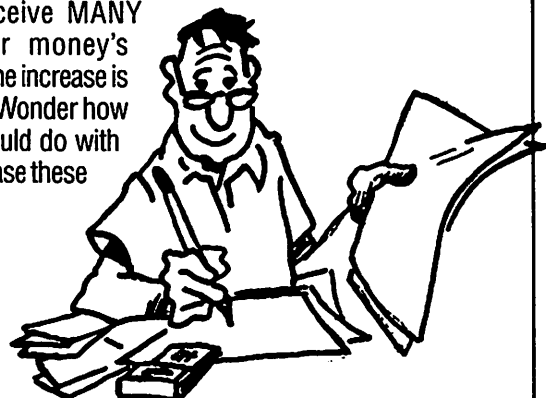
FORTY YEARS AGO: SEPTEMBER 15, 1964

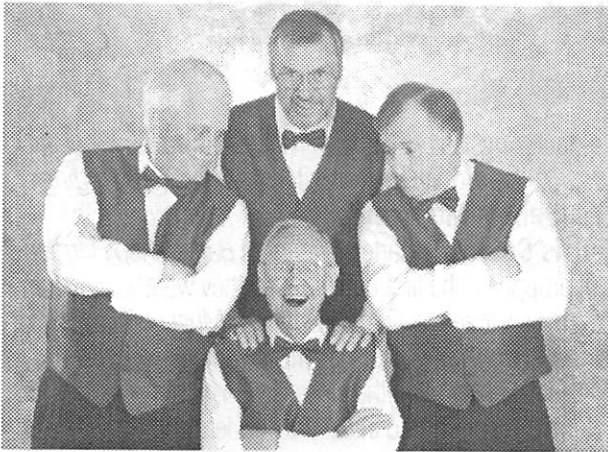
Harold Robinette was busy arranging for train transportation for the chorus for the trip to Omaha to participate in the district contest. Barbershoppers traveled a lot on the train back in those days, singing all the way there and back, of course. And get this, a round-trip ticket to Omaha cost only \$6.50.

Editor **Warren Edmonds** tells how the Topeka chapter paid a recent visit to one of the HOA meetings. The two choruses sang together under the direction of Topeka's **Dr. Herschel Stroud** and our own **Don Webb**. A high point of the evening came when **Dan Bowser** heard the Topeka bunch sing one of his own arrangements. Didn't know Dan was an arranger, did you? Oh, yes. He made an arrangement at one of the local motels the other weekend, but his wife found out about it and he had to cancel it. Just one of your old jokes, Dan.

One of the items on the agenda of the House of Delegates meeting at the Omaha convention was a proposed increase in district dues. The district board was to propose that current dues of \$2.50 per year would be DOUBLED to \$5.00! District President **Bob Gall** had this to say in a memo to the HOD membership, "I don't need to tell you that this is a sizable increase, but please bear in mind that ALL THINGS ARE RELATIVE, and I am confident I can show you that

you will receive MANY TIMES your money's worth when the increase is approved." Wonder how much you could do with a \$2.50 increase these days. ♥





TONE-HENGE THROWS A PARTY

by Ol' Bruce (Wenner)

The biggest moment this month for *Tone-Henge* was a visit to brother **Gil Lefholz**. Gil's having some trouble getting out and around very much, so we threw a big party at his house on his and **Donna's** wedding anniversary. The eight of us organized the operation, brought the food and drinks, and spent Sunday afternoon with Gil and some of his other close friends. One of the highlights was a mass tag sing, including Gil contributing those dulcet tones we know so well. *Tone-Henge* had numerous requests, but we sang anyway.

And, the old dogs are learning new tricks. Three numbers, in fact. One of them represents a concession the three beer drinkers are making to **Jim**—it's called "Chocolate Whiskey and Vanilla Gin." Sounds revolting, doesn't it? We'll do our very best to make it so. The only trouble with the three new tunes is that they're all afterglow numbers—so, that brings our afterglow program up to fourteen songs. We just won't tell the host chapters about this until they've already hired us. ♥

DICK KOREK GOES TO JAIL

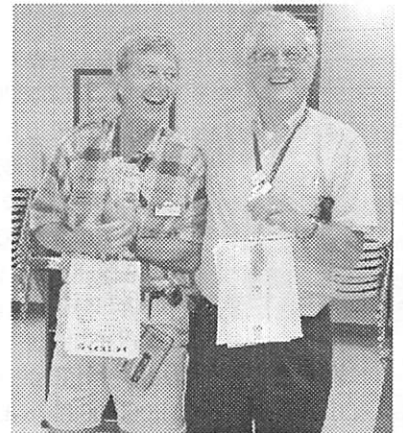


Today, Thursday, August 26, 3 p.m.... I was greeted by firefighters representing the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA). Wearing an orange jump-suit and handcuffed I was led from my home and delivered to the EBT Restaurant to deliver the money I had collected for MDA. THANKS to HOA, clients and friends over, \$1,000 was delivered. Thanks again to everyone in the chorus for "digging" to help get me "out-of-jail" and support a cause that is very near to my family. ♥

STEWART WINS!

Harry Stewart arrived early for practice Aug. 10, but it wasn't until just before practice began that he realized he needed to get his raffle tickets for the Harmony Foundation drawing, so he stopped **Jim Porter** from his place on the risers just before **Jim Bagby** started the evening's activities and bought his tickets. At the end of the evening, the ticket was drawn, the number read off, and no response came from anyone. Jim was about to throw it in the bucket and draw another when Harry called out "Hey, that's mine!" He then came forward, drew a marble, clutched it in his hand out of sight of all, then opened his hand, and there it was, the white marble! Harry had won the \$533 jackpot!

The Harmony Foundation has so far this year garnered \$1,849 in donations from our chapter. At this point last year, the total was \$1,685. Thank you all for playing, and let's start building the pot for the next big winner! ♥



Harry Stewart shows his winnings to Jim Porter during the Aug. 10 meeting!

ALLEN WINS TOO!



*Frazier Allen:
draws the
marble and
collects his
prize!*

It seems unfair in a way. In the early stages of the Harmony Foundation raffle, with all the marbles in the bag, the odds against drawing the white marble are longer than they are later on, yet the pot is smaller. This fact didn't bother **Frazier Allen**, as he happily accepted his \$60 winnings on Aug. 24, just 2 weeks after **Harry Stewart** walked off with a \$533 pot. With thanks to all who play, Harmony Foundation's total contribution to date is \$1,916, compared to \$1,735 at this point last year. The first drawing for the new cycle took place at our Guest Night Aug. 31, which should have gotten us off to a fast start toward our next big winner, ... which could be you! ♥

A WEEK AT HARMONY COLLEGE

by Charles Ramirez



Ever toyed with the idea of attending Harmony College? Quit playing around and prepare to go! I had a great time as a first time attendee, thanks to the *Heartbeats* selecting me for the **Orvil Wilson** Scholarship. Thanks also to the HOA Board and the *Heartbeats* for providing the funding for the scholarship.

When I arrived, **Daryl Flinn** checked me in and gave me some good pointers about where to go next, but he didn't give me a beanie.

I got to my room and met my roomy for the week, **John** from Springfield, Mo. Nice guy, didn't snore too loud, kept his part neat. He'd been to Harmony College four times previously and gave me the lowdown on what to expect. He got a beanie his first year; I didn't.

The first night the General Session was something I won't forget. **Greg Lyne** led the meeting and directed a couple of songs. He's a fairly decent director. **Jim Clancy** gave the keynote address. He does o.k. as an amateur speaker, and he also directs some chorus somewhere. I got to sit in about the 5th or 6th row, pretty much in the center (When you get there early, seats are open). The group opened with *The Old Songs*. When they hit "songs," I about lost it; I've not been in the middle of such a big, wonderful sound as that ever before. Imagine the floor rumbling, sound driving through you, and overtones screaming—makes the goosebumps rise just thinking about it.

After the General Session, I made it over to the cafeteria for some harmonizing and to start eating my portion of ice cream. There are a lot of different ways to eat ice cream. I only tried 23 ways over the course of the week. One of my favorites was chocolate or vanilla Ice Cream in a cup of coffee. Just another way of adding cream and sugar to my coffee. Fortunately, I didn't have to worry about getting my beanie dirty; I didn't get a beanie.

Classes started. I learned a lot and, more importantly, learned a lot that I didn't know I didn't know.

I took *Physics of Sound* with **Jim Richards**; *Tune It Or Die* with **David Wright** and **Joe Liles**; *Sight Singing* with **Dennis Morrissey**; and *Vocal Techniques* with **Farris Collins**. I started *Theory of Barbershop Harmony* but dropped it the first day because they were way over my head. I switched to *Fundamentals of Music* with **Jerry Knickerbocker**, which was much more appropriate. Master teachers filled the classes with great in-depth information presented in easy-to-understand ways. I was


always surprised when the class ended.

The fellowship of the barbershoppers was tremendous. Every one of the guys was approachable and friendly. I felt as if I could sit anywhere with any group and be welcomed. I met people from all over the

world: **Thomm** from England; **Arvin** from Australia; **Joseph** from New Zealand; **Dick** from Texas; **Ann** from South Africa; and **Joe** and **Mike** from Canada. I truly believe that the men (and women) who attended magnificently exemplified the brotherhood of this great society. We were one. Oh, by the way, did I mention I didn't get a beanie?

Since this is a singing society, I expected to hear and, maybe, participate in some impromptu songs with the fellows. Never in my wildest dreams did I expect to sing with the likes of **Farris Collins** and **Joe Liles**. I was sitting at a table eating dinner with **Jim Richards** when he started describing a tag with weird harmonic sequences. **Burt Szabo** must have overheard since he came over and sat down at our table. He and Jim started to talk shop about the tag. After a few minutes, he and Jim rewrote the tag, taught it to us, and we introduced the tag to the world right there at our table. Wasn't too bad a tag from a couple of beginners.

So did I have a good time? You betcha! Would I go again? Absolutely! Do I recommend Harmony College? With complete confidence! Why don't we form a group and go next year? Mark your calendars now for July 17-24, 2005. Maybe you will get a beanie. ♥



*Classes started.
I learned a lot and, more
importantly, learned a lot
that I didn't know
I didn't know.*

MUSICAL NOTES

by Keith Schweer, Music Vice President

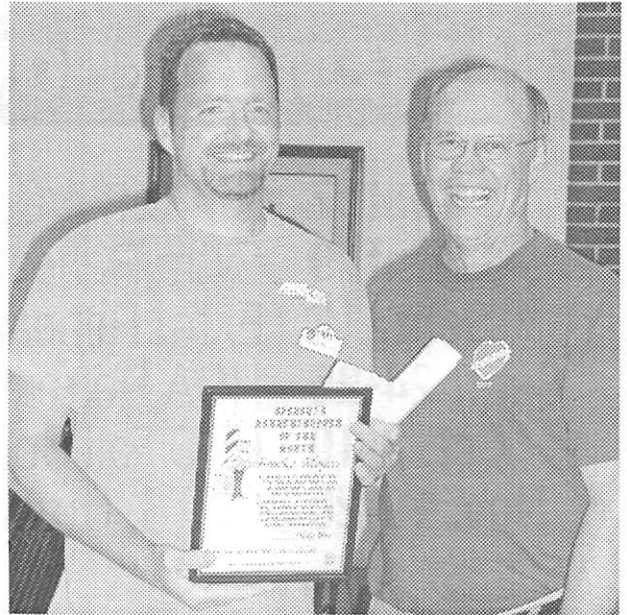


It's only a few short weeks 'til Omaha. There are lots of good things scheduled to help us achieve our peak performance level by Oct. 9. We've got Tuesday chapter meetings (Aug. 24 and 31; Sept. 7, 14, 21 and 28; and Oct. 4) extra Thursday rehearsals (Sept. 9 and 16), section rehearsals (Aug. 24 and others), a Singing coaching session with **Bill Biffle** (Sept. 7) and our annual retreat in Atchison (Sept. 24-26) with **Dwain Brobst** and **Kevin Keller**. These all represent terrific opportunities for us to work together and improve. Everyone's attendance, participation and effort is needed.

In addition to these things, we are asking everyone to do a little more than they have in the past. We are encouraging everyone to tape themselves at rehearsal on a regular basis, then take that tape home and listen to it critically to see if you are applying the good singing techniques that are being taught each week in our regular rehearsals, section rehearsals, coaching sessions, etc. Are you breathing through an open throat so that you don't hear yourself breathe? Are you producing a sound that is open, free, resonant, full, pleasing to listen to? Or is it pinched, strained, thin? Are you singing in tune or are you just hanging on to the bottom side of the note? Are you getting to the target vowel sound immediately or are you just a shade behind the rest of the chorus? Do you make vowel sounds that are pure – OH, AH, EE, IH, EH, OO, UH, etc.? Are you turning diphthongs the way you need to? Are you employing solid breathing techniques so that you are able to finish phrases as full and supported as you began them? Are you still going strong at the end of *Dixie* or are you gassed?

All of these things have been taught and worked on in the various settings mentioned above (chorus rehearsals, section rehearsals, coaching sessions, etc.) As much as the chorus has been exposed to these techniques, I believe you are capable of recognizing when you are employing the techniques properly and when you could improve. In this way, every member of the chorus can become his own personal coach. How much could the chorus as a whole improve if every member was able to individually improve from one Tuesday to the next? As always, if you have concerns or questions, please see your section leader or someone on the Music Team. Happy coaching!! ♥

MAY 2004 BARBERSHOPPER OF THE MONTH



Brooke Meyers receives the award from HOA Prez Marty Oldehoeft for Tuxedo updates which gave HOA a new look at International!

"EXTRA MILE" AWARDS



*Left to Right: Recent "Extra-Milers" include Lud Einess - Senior Advisor for Spring Contest, April 2004, and Jim Kinyon for arranging the Worlds of Fun workday in May 2004!
Way to go, guys!*



Heart of America



SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- Sept. 7** Bill Biffle Coaching
Sept. 9 Extra Rehearsal
Sept. 16 Extra Rehearsal
Sept. 24-26 HOA Retreat, Atchison, KS
Oct. 8-10 CSD Fall Contest & Convention, Omaha, NE
Nov. 19-20 COTS, Omaha, NE

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