

Harmonotes

The Quarterly Bulletin of the
Kansas City Heart of America Chorus

CHORUS AND QUARTET SINGING
IN THE BARBERSHOP STYLE



SECOND-OLDEST CHAPTER IN THE
BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

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AUTUMN ATTACKS!

by Carter Combs, Chapter President



It seems to happen every year. We are enjoying a pleasantly-paced summer, then WHAM!... autumn attacks!

We have had a few major event since the last *Harmonotes*. For instance, planner extraordinaire **Jerry Meier** put together one of the most successful and best attended inter-chapter guest nights I've ever seen. Several dozen members of the *Cody Choraliers*, *Olathe Trails West*, and new International Silver Medalist *Central Standard* joined us, along with scores of family and friends, for some fine fellowship and fun! And although the ice cream was yummy, the highlight for me was joining together with all the other barbershoppers there, to sing *That Old Quartet Of Mine* under the guiding hand of HOA Director Emeritus **Jim Bagby**.

A couple weeks later, both director **Jerry Garrard** and associate director **Bob Velazquez** headed for Harmony University, to hone their directing skills. Both came back energized, having been, as **Bagby** often says, "hot-dipped in barbershop!" While both of our front-line directors were gone, yours truly got to spend some time in front of HOA. That is something I wish each of us could experience from time to time. It is hard to imagine how fine we sound from within the chorus.

Our annual retreat was at a new location, and another in a long string of successful events planned by our indefatigable chorus manager **Vince Perry**. Remember to thank him next time you see him for all he does behind the scenes to keep this chapter going! Our sensational Singing coach **Steve Scott** worked our alignment and got us each performing our individual best, and master Music man **Evan Boegehold** got us moving and emotionally motivated. By the end of the weekend, we were tired, but I know that was some of the best performing we've done all year. (Continued on page 2 ➡)

Harmonotes

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Chapter meets at 7 p.m. each Tuesday night, at:
St. Peter's United Church of Christ
110th & Holmes · Kansas City, Mo. 64131

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HOA Board meetings take place at 6pm on the second Monday or Tuesday of the month, at St. Thomas More Church, 118th & Holmes, Kansas City, MO 64131.
Chapter members are welcome!

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



(Continued from front cover)

Well, I'll just come out and say... not everything works out as expected. For the past few years, as a chapter fund-raiser, we have followed the Balloon fest to various locations, serving as ticket-takers, bouncy-house monitors, etc. This year some of us even helped set up the stage for headliners Los Lobos and Travis Tritt. **John Erwine** did his usual thorough job coordinating our volunteers, including several from the *Kansas City Sweet Adelines*. But as we went about our duties Friday and Saturday, we noticed attendance was pretty light. And then Sunday was completely canceled. We soon learned that the promoters were having trouble paying the vendors, and, well, at this point it looks like the balloon fest was a bust.

Those few events carried us through the last few months, but the next few are going to be jam-packed! First up, we are returning to the Blue Springs Family Fun Fest again this year. They were delighted with our performance last year, and immediately invited us back.

This year's postponed annual show is up a week after that, this year in the northeast corner of the metro, instead of our usual southwest. This gives us an opportunity to attract some new audience. We'll be at the Liberty Performing Arts Theatre, headlined by perennial goofy guys *Hot Air Buffoons*. Should be one of the most fun shows we've done in a long time!

Just a few days after the show we will once again hold our Annual Golf Scramble. Chairman **Kent Miller** has grown this event the last several years to be one of our best fund-raisers. And tons o' fun to boot!

Then we are off to Cedar Rapids for the CSD Fall Convention. More than just a contest, this is a time to meet old friends (and make some new ones), sing old tags (and learn some new ones), enjoy old favorite quartets (and find some new ones)... you get the idea. And of course we get to strut our stuff, and show everyone what our coaches taught us at the retreat!

All of that is just in the next month! After that we have our Holiday Harmony Spectacular, Caroling Caravan, Annual Awards and Installation Dinner—it's enough to make a guy wish for the slow days of summer... *almost!* ♥

Harmony Foundation Report

by Jim Porter



Note that we will have our raffle each time we meet in our regular location. All of the proceeds of the raffle not given as prizes or used for expenses of the raffle goes to Harmony Foundation at the end of each year. In return, we are able to have the Foundation designate up to 30% of the funds given to chapter activities such as Harmony Explosion.

As of Sept. 21, after 36 drawings (17 since the last report):
The total collected for Harmony Foundation since the last report is \$414.
The total collected for the calendar year to date is \$812.

We had a big winner, **Gordon Coleman** won \$537 on July 19.
The carry-over jackpot as of Sept. 21 is \$108. ♥

THE BALLOON THAT POPPED!

by John Erwine, Volunteer Coordinator



This is the 4th year that *HOA* has volunteered to help the formerly known Great Midwest Balloon Fest in a fundraising opportunity for the chapter. This years' Rhythm 'n Balloons event didn't even get off

the ground – so to speak.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature stepped in never allowing them to fly. The Festival itself did open on Friday but closed early evening due to severe weather. Saturday also was up and running, but with a much less-than-expected crowd.

The Sunday event was abruptly cancelled in entirety citing weather and poor attendance. This caught vendors, entertainers, volunteers and service people completely without warning. Most are still wondering if they will ever receive payment for even their expenses.

For us, I imagine it will be a day of good deeds. On Saturday, our volunteers made Travis Tritt's band a happy one. It seems that the union crew scheduled to unload his equipment truck walked off the job for some reason. As our people had nothing to do because of lack of customers, they volunteered to do the job themselves. *HOA* to the rescue!

A heart-felt thanks from me to all you volunteers (both Gents and Ladies) for doing your part and more. Next year? ♥



ARE YOU A HARMONY EXPLOSION VOLUNTEER?

by Jerry Meier

Most of you know about Harmony Explosion! and it's wonderful impact on young singers. Can you help? Yes you can!

Consider being a Quartet Coach. It's easier than you think! Simply share your barbershop knowledge with the students – it's the most beneficial service that we can provide. All you have to do is give it a try!

The students want to sing their songs for the coaches. They are eager to get suggestions on how they can perform better. Your presence with a young quartet will help the students practice their songs. Just one or two days prior to Feb. 18 is all it takes – usually at 3:15 pm during the school day (sometimes at 7:15 am). Just 30 minutes of coaching can make a huge difference in a student's ability to sing on stage. Don't you wish that someone would have coached you when YOU were in school? Please talk to **Jerry Meier** about this opportunity – you will enjoy every minute of it. ♥

HARMONY EXPLOSION!

Who: YOU!
What: Harmony Explosion! 2017
When: Saturday, Feb. 18 from 8 am to 5 pm
Where: Olathe East High School, 14545 W. 127th Olathe, KS 66062

You are invited to participate in a very exciting opportunity to support our youth – Harmony Explosion 2017! – to be held at Olathe East High School on Saturday, Feb. 18. Harmony Explosion! 2017 is a one-day clinic that introduces Middle School and High School students and teachers (and family members and friends) to the 4-part a cappella harmonic sounds created by singing Barbershop style music. *The Kansas City Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society* and the *Kansas City Chorus of Sweet Adelines* join forces to sponsor this event, as we have done for more than 20 years.

Harmony Explosion! 2017 includes vocal music activities for students that wish to sing Barbershop music in quartets or in larger groups – with a common goal to promote 4-part a cappella singing in a mistake-friendly environment that encourages participation and performance with plenty of support and fun!

- Goal #1 – get the students to sing on stage!
- Goal #2 – get the students excited about singing a cappella music on their own and with their friends!
- Goal #3 – get the students to understand that singing is a life-long hobby – they can participate in school, in college, as young adults, and throughout their lifetime.
- Goal #4 – provide excellence in vocal music singing through demonstration and education with wonderful Featured Quartets such as *Harmonium*, *Legacy*, *BoomTown*, *Premium Blend*, *HEAT*, and *ZING!*

Getting the students to sing on stage is a HUGE accomplishment:

1. Builds character and self-confidence
2. Improves their self-esteem
3. Teaches them responsibility and accountability
4. Uses Barbershop Music as the vehicle for fun!

The schedule for the day will look something like this:

8:30 am Registration Opens
9:00 am Opening Session
10:00 am Preliminary Quartet Performances
12:30 pm Quartet Finals Announcement
2:00 pm Quartet Finals Performances
4:45 pm Awards Ceremony

Make plans now to attend. You will thoroughly enjoy the experience – **I GUARANTEE IT!** ♥

Jerry Meier, Harmony Explosion! Director

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AWARDS BANQUET SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY, JAN. 7, 2017

by Jerry Meier

Make plans NOW to attend the Kansas City Chapter's Annual Awards Banquet on Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017 in the Jack Stack Martin City Private Dining Facility. Recognize that name? Yes, we LOVE Jack Stack BBQ and we booked it again for 2017.

Details at a glance:

Kansas City Chapter's Annual Awards Banquet

Time: 6 pm to 9:30 pm

Date: Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017

Location: Jack Stack Martin City
Private Dining Banquet Room

Address: 13645 Holmes Road, KC, MO

Dress Code: Somewhere between formal and casual

Note: The private dining facility is one block south of
he Martin City BBQ Restaurant

(Our meeting is NOT in the Restaurant. It's in the Private Dining Facility).

We will continue to enjoy an All-You-Can-Eat menu of Rolls/ Butter, Buffet-style Beef, Chicken, Turkey, and Pork Entrées with traditional Jack Stack sides (Hickory Pit Beans; Creamy Cole-slaw; Cheesy Corn Bake), served with Coffee / Tea / Water and Dessert. Is your mouth watering yet? The cost will be about \$35 per person for an absolutely DELICIOUS meal and a wonderful evening of fellowship.



Plan to arrive after 6 pm to partake in the cash bar. Dinner will be served at 6:30 pm and the events will start promptly at 7:30pm. Speeches and jokes will be kept to a minimum so that we can complete all award presentations and depart at 9:30pm. Stay tuned for ad-

ditional details, but make plans NOW to attend. Be sure to notify and invite fellow members like **Al Moritz** that do not regularly get e-mail updates. Please give them a call to check on them, and then tell them about the wonderful HOA Awards Banquet! Bring your spouses or significant others to share in this fellowship. ❤️



IT'S GOLF ROUNDUP TIME!

by Kent Miller



Still time to round up your scramble foursomes for The Heart of America's 10th Annual Golf Fund Raising Scramble on Thursday, Sept. 29! By the time you read this it will still be a couple of weeks away.

Flyers and posters are available. If you would like copies, email me at kmiller268@aol.com and I'll send them to you. Also please let me know if you already know you will have a foursome.

The Scramble is still at Falcon Lakes, we still anticipate at least \$2,000 in prizes (again!), and it's still \$95 per player! As usual, the \$95 includes green fees, carts, a burger buffet, and door prizes chances. What a deal!

We have sponsorships available from \$100 to \$2,500. Please contact me if you would like to be a sponsor or you know someone or some business whom you think would like to be a sponsor. Sponsorships at the higher levels (details in the flyer) include a foursome, tickets to our shows, and other benefits.

As usual, the prizes in this tournament are likely to be triple or quadruple the prizes of other tournaments your golfer friends are used to. They love it and they come back year after year! They really will appreciate you telling them about it.

So please do! ♥



COMEDY QUARTET, HOA CHORUS HEADLINE SEPT. 24 SHOW



One of the funniest quartets in the Barbershop Harmony Society descends on the Kansas City area this month when the *Heart of America Chorus* presents its 77th annual show. The *Hot Air Buffoons*, from Cleveland and Toledo, Ohio, will appear Saturday, Sept. 24, at the Performing Arts Theatre in suburban Liberty. Show times are 2 and 7 p.m.

Joining the *Buffoons* and the *HOA Chorus* from the host Kansas City Chapter, second-oldest in the Society, will be the *Armchair Chorderbacks* from Kansas City and *Priorities*, from the Kansas City and Leavenworth, KS, chapters. The *Chorderbacks* are the 2014 Central States District Senior Quartet champions, and *Priorities* are one of the fast-rising foursomes in the five-state district.

Hot Air Buffoons formed in 1996 and have been a semifinalist seven times in international competition. More important to them, they won the Buckeye Invitational Comedy Quartet Contest at Columbus, Ohio, in 2001 – sort of the Olympics of comedy foursomes. Says quartet lead **Mark Lang**, "Despite our successes in competition, our true love is to entertain."

The *HOA Chorus*, under second-year director **Jerry Garrard**, is a 13-time champion of the CSD, and has competed 19 times on the international stage. Its membership comes from across the Kansas City metro area, as has been the case since its formation in June of 1938.

The master of ceremonies for the show is Chorus Director Emeritus **Jim Bagby**.

Tickets are \$20, or \$16 for groups of 10 or more. Call the theater box office at 816 439-4373 or go on line to www.lpat.simplenetix.com ♥



Check out the pictures below from previous Heart of America Annual Golf Scramble Fund Raisers. Shouldn't you be getting in on some of this fun? This year's tournament is Thursday, Sept. 29.

SIGN UP ON-LINE at www.hoachorus.com (click on the golfer),
OR E-MAIL Kent Miller at kmiller268@aol.com



10th Annual Four-Person Golf Scramble Thursday, Sept. 29, 2016

OVER \$2,000 IN PRIZES LAST YEAR!

Falcon Lakes Golf Course – 5 miles north of I-70 on Highway 7

Hole prizes • Longest Drives • Longest Putt

Mulligans • Player gifts • Fabulous Raffle • Flight prizes • Door prizes

ENTRY FEES:

\$95 per player if paid by Thursday, Sept. 22, 2016

\$105 per player if paid after Sept. 22 up to & including the day of the event.

Kansas City Chapter - Barbershop Harmony Society

816 W. 121st • Kansas City, MO • 64145

HEART OF AMERICA CHORUS GUEST NIGHT

WELCOMING ALL FOUR KANSAS CITY AREA CHAPTERS!

By Jerry Meier

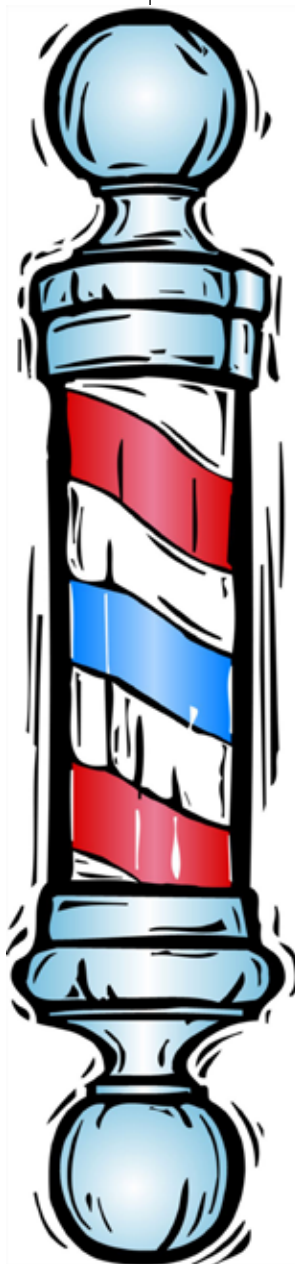
I got a crazy idea about a month before the International Barbershop Convention: why not host a Guest Night in mid-July, after International, before Harmony University, and serve ice cream? This Guest Night would create an opportunity for HOA to perform for others and give the Chorus a jump-start into its Fall music plans. Then I thought it would be nice to invite the other local chapters to our Guest Night, so HOA could sing for them. Then I thought it would be nice if all four local chapters could perform for each other at this Guest Night. Then I thought it would be nice for all four local chapters to sing together -- under the direction of Director Emeritus **Jim Bagby** — at this Guest Night. Well, the rest as you can say is history.

HOA invited the *Cody Choraliers* from Leavenworth, the *Olathe Trails West Chorus*, and the *Central Standard Chorus* to its Guest Night on Tuesday, July 19. The concept was dubbed an "Ice Cream Social / Celebration of Barbershop Harmony in the Kansas City Metro Area" after the second place Silver Medal performance by *Central Standard*. It was truly necessary to recognize and celebrate the tremendous achievement of the Central States District in the 2016 International Barbershop Chorus Contest where the *Ambassadors of Harmony* placed first and *Central Standard* placed second. It was nice to know that the 8-time Gold Medalist Chorus *Masters of Harmony* competed in the International Chorus Contest, only to finish third in a Central States District contest. Wow! HOA's very own Dual Member **Greg Busch**, Cardinal District President, is probably the only other person to match our beloved **Don Fuson's** delight in the results from the 2016 International Contests — the Cardinal District produced back-to-back Gold Medal Quartets *Instant Classic* and *Forefront*.

Getting back to our Guest Night, the agenda for the evening was simple:

- 7 pm The Old Songs / Tune-ups / Tag(s)
- 7:30 pm Chorus Performances by *Heart of America*, *Olathe Trails West*, *Cody Choraliers*, and *Central Standard*
- 8:30 pm *That Old Quartet of Mine* Rehearsal and Group Performance

- 8:50 pm *Friends*, Announcements;
Keep the Whole World Singing
- 9 pm Ice Cream!



There were 36 or so members from *Central Standard* in attendance, along with 8 - 10 members each from *Olathe* and *Leavenworth* to accompany the 30+ members from HOA. Warm-ups for all singers were shared between *Heart of America* and *Central Standard* Music Team members; both demonstrating different methods and techniques for the group to enjoy.

Heart of America sang three songs, followed by quartet performances from *Arm Chair Chorderbacks*, *First City Harmony*, and *Priorities*. *Central Standard* then took the stage (i.e. the risers) to demonstrate and explain their warm-up techniques used at International. Then *Central Standard* sang 4 or 5 wonderful songs to the delight of all in attendance.

All singers were then asked to join *Central Standard* on the risers to briefly learn and rehearse one of HOA's favorite songs: *That Old Quartet of Mine*. Director Emeritus **Jim Bagby** did the honors of teaching the arrangement for a final performance around 9 pm. A video of this performance was posted on YouTube - click on this link to view the video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=4-0k3VdDosg) or search HOA Guest Night to find it online.

Timing was perfect for this Guest Night, as *Olathe Trails West* and *Cody Choraliers* both rehearsed on the previous Monday night and were free to join HOA and *Central Standard* on Tuesday Night.

Conclusion? Everyone enjoyed the evening; everyone enjoyed the ice cream! It truly was a terrific social event for Kansas City Barbershoppers. I think we can organize a similar event for 2017. Same time, same place, MORE people! ❤️

Heart of America Chorus

GUEST NIGHT PHOTOS!

Courtesy of Jerry Meier





The Opening Number!

REPORT FROM JULY 19 GUEST NIGHT!

Article and Photos all courtesy of Jim Porter

The hall was filled with over 80 barbershoppers from all four chapters in the Kansas City region, as *Heart of America Chorus* hosted its most successful Guest Night of this century on July 19th. *Central Standard*, just 10 days after winning the silver medal in Nashville, came with 36 men, all dressed in their casual singing uniforms, wearing their medals. They were joined by 8 men from the Olathe chapter, 10 men from Leavenworth, and about 30 men from *Heart of America*, including a half dozen that have not been regular attending chapter meetings this year.

Director **Jerry Garrard** started with some warmup exercises, then assistant director **Andrew Rembecki** of *Central Standard* took over and taught a few of *Central Standard*'s warmup exercises to everyone on the risers. The chords were really ringing this evening, and a lot of fellows who had not been this close to *Central Standard* were in for an exciting evening of harmony!

Heart of America Chorus then took the risers as everyone else took to the chairs to hear them sing a couple of repertoire songs, which were greeted with a rousing ovation from the audience. This was followed by songs from three quartets that were fully represented, *Armchair Chorderbacks*, *Priorities* (Leavenworth) and *First City Harmonizers* (also Leavenworth). After that, *Central Standard* took the risers and **Andrew Rembecki** first described a bit their experience in Nashville (two practices every day), then had the men sing the tag of their contest ballad, pointing out that it was not quite dead on. He worked a few repetitions and pronounced it good, after which they sang the entire song. Most in the audience was probably wondering what that was all about, as it sounded so good EVERY time they sang that tag! They then sang a couple of their new repertoire songs, then invited members of the audience to ask questions. It should be noted that when they were asked how many of them were over 50 years old, about 15 raised their hands. This is not a strictly young man's chorus! **Don Young**, at 71 years, is their oldest member. *(Continued on page 11)*



Heart of America



Armchair Chorderbacks



Priorities



Central Standard!

(Continued from page 10)

After that, the other barbershoppers got on the risers with the *Central Standard* men and we all sang "That Old Quartet of Mine" with **Jim Bagby** directing. For many, this was a new song, but sheet music was distributed and Jim worked the ensemble through the song a section at a time. Jim has been a director quite a long time, but he never had this level of talent in front of him before. He made the most of it, had a good time doing it, and after about 20 minutes, the group was ready and performed the entire song as a closer for the evening.



**Jackpot Winner:
Gordy Coleman**

At that point it was time for the marbles drawing. **Jim Porter** had his hands full at the outset selling tickets, since he visited both *Central Standard* and Leavenworth during the week before and told them about the drawing and the \$500-plus prize that awaited the winner. The volume of ticket sales was the highest in 6 years, and the winner of the drawing **Gordon Coleman**, one who has not been active with *HOA* for 5 years (but participates with *New Harmony Handful*) drew the

white marble and claimed the \$537 jackpot. That was the biggest jackpot for that drawing in four years.

It was time for *Keep the Whole World Singing*, which for *Central Standard* is a time to put your arms on your neighbor's shoulders and rock back and forth. Some of the rest got taken up in that, but they kept their shoes on this time! Then it was time for ice cream and socializing. All in all, it was a fun evening for all, and most were delighted to find the men of *Central Standard* were quite friendly and welcoming. Truly, it is great to be a barbershopper, regardless of your talent level! ❤️



First City



Olathe Group



A Great Audience!

FOCAL POINT

John Erwine: *Up Close and Personal*

By Ron McIntire

If you've got a front porch minute (that's most of day around these parts) ask **John Erwine** about his life, he'll probably throw his head back and let go with his characteristic laugh, flash a twinkle in his eye and give you an ear full. He may even start with how he pronounces his name if you ask. "Mom pronounced it with a long "I" like Er-wine (the drink)," he says, "Dad pronounced it with a short "i" like "Ir-win." I answer to both, and usually pronounce it with a short "i".

As much as can be told, John has done one of about everything from his first paying job driving a hay wagon tractor at age seven, earning \$.25/hr, to ice cream jeep driver, to Coca Cola vacation relief driver, to Toy Dept. Mgr., where he met his wife, Nancy. He still remembers the brass box staple she pulled out of his finger when they met. He took a job at the Fisher Body plant in the Leeds area and eventually worked his way up from dough wiper cleaning window sealant from back windows of cars on the line to pit repairman fixing anything wrong with the cars as they were built.

Through the years John graduated from Graceland College, in Lamoni, IA, then a two-year college, graduated from computer programming school and landed a job with Fleming Foods Company, an independent food supplier. He spent the next 32 years working his way up from computer operator in the days of computer punch cards, to Computer Department Manager (now called I/T Manager) to I/T Mgr of the Heartland District responsible for MO, NE, KS distribution centers. Looking back, he said "I would never have made a good programmer. I loved management. It's what I do."

In 1996, he had a heart attack leaving him with a bad atrial flutter requiring a defibrillator. In 1998 he negotiated his retirement from Fleming and immediately bought a new motorcycle, his second since before his heart attack. For several years thereafter he enjoyed the open air and bugs on his teeth. Retirement didn't suit him much so, at the suggestion of a close friend, he studied for and passed his Missouri and Kansas Boards for Master Appraiser then spent the next ten years giving lenders an honest and true market value of property. He retired again, in 2008.

John was born in 1941 in Lamoni, IA, population 1,600, in 1941, situated on the Iowa-Missouri border, near the middle of the state. His family lived on a rented 160 acre farm, four miles outside of town. They had no running water or indoor bathroom facilities and no electricity until 1949. "The county roads," he says, "up to the highway were dirt ruts that became muddy when it rained. I would like a nickel for every time we pulled the car to the highway with a team of horses, mules or the tractor." Later, they moved to a smaller farm where his dad began a new career as a heavy equipment mechanic. For the next 3-1/2 years, John furthered his education in a one-room school house. In 1952, the family bought a 20 acre farm three miles from Lamoni and he was able to attend a "town school."



John's mother played the piano when he was young and wanted to teach him to play but he wouldn't have it. He did learn to play the trombone in the 6th grade, however, and continued playing through high school and through his two-years of college. "I was in the high school concert band, orchestra, pep band, marching band, college concert band and orchestra," he said. "I think I only sang two years in the high school concert choir and in college."

John was never in the service but he did keep an eye on his draft number during the Vietnam war years. He tried to join the Air Force, but he was reclassified 4F because he was married. "I still have a feeling of guilt because I lost some dear friends over there. My brother, who was there, tells me that I shouldn't feel that way but I'm still conflicted."

"After my heart attack in 1996, I joined the same cardio-rehab class at St. Luke's Hospital directed by **Jim Bagby**. It was a small group that performed for family and staff at Christmas and the summer picnic and he invited me to join. I still sing with the group, but at the time resisted joining HOA because I was heavily involved with my Kiwanis Club and just didn't have the time. In December, 2005 I made the leap. I only wish I had jumped sooner."

John has been an active member in the Kansas City Chapter since he joined in 2005. He has served as Board Member at Large, VP Chapter Development, Executive VP, President, Immediate Past President, Singing Valentines Chair, Balloon Fest Chair, Phone Tree and Sunshine Chair. When asked if he has ever turned down a job in the chapter, "No, not that I recall."

He recalls many great times with the guys in HOA but especially with the *New Harmony Handful* which he joined shortly after it re-formed. "When we perform for Alzheimer's and retirement homes, perhaps a dozen or two folks that are either under their own power, in wheel chairs, or in their own world somewhere else and unable to move or communicate, is when the magic starts. That's when it's hard to control our emotions. To see someone unable to speak a word for days or weeks, then silently singing along, tapping a finger or smiling a little. That's the magic."

People may be surprised to know that "During my 2nd, 3rd, 4th and early 5th grades I attended the same one-room schoolhouse where my Mother taught years earlier. My teacher was one of her first students there. I walked to and from school exactly one mile summer and winter--uphill both ways. Whoever heard of 'snow days'?"

John has an interesting genealogy too. He can trace his lineage back to the Irvins of Castle Fortagh, Scotland and he is descended from William de Irwin, an armour bearer and aide to Robert the Bruce, Earl of Gar-rick. That was during the Bruce's war years with England in the 1300s. But that's another story. ♥

Charles "Charlie" Leslie Green 1925-2016

By Ron McIntire



If you knew **Charlie Greene**, you'd know he was a Shriner, a barbershopper, a Shrine Greeter and a man who loved to play the harmonica – for anyone, at anytime and for any reason. And, if you knew Charlie well, you'd know he had a heart of gold. That trait was never more evident than on the day he sang for the patients at a nursing home in Blue Springs. Why we agreed to sing and who contacted us is left to the memory of a few. There were only two of us, plus my wife, that day. We had agreed

beforehand that we would only bring lyrics to a few simple songs the patients might know and invite them to sing along with us if they could. Charlie, however, showed up with a box of doodles - sand paper blocks, washboards, drumsticks and other noise making gadgets. Early on, he was clearly in tune with the folks who lived there. Some of the patients joined in song, some had Alzheimer's and weren't aware of their surroundings and some, in various stages of declining age, only sat and listened. That didn't faze Charlie. He seized the initiative circulating through the room helping the folks keep time with the music, scrubbing on washboards, rubbing sand blocks together and tapping drumsticks on desktops all the while singing with them. At one point he brandished his harmonica and did some serenading. I didn't know Charlie well then but the love he showed the people that day gave me a new appreciation for him and a new tolerance for his impromptu harmonica solos.

Charlie was an Eagle Scout in his youth and graduated from high school in 1943. He earned a B.S. degree in Education at Northwest Missouri State College in Maryville, Missouri and taught in the Kansas City Missouri public school system. Later, he did some graduate work in counseling at Missouri University and took some courses at CMSU in Industrial Safety. After a few years of teaching, he went to work for the Santa Fe Railway Co. and later for Kansas City Southern Railway. In 1972, he joined the Kansas City Chapter and sang lead in the *HOA Chorus*.

It's not known if Charlie ever served on the chapter board or in any other capacity in the chapter but he loved *HOA*. Toward the end of his life, he would visit the chapter once in a while to see his friends and to check up on the chorus. In private conversations, he often indicated he'd like to come back and get active again, even though he hated the qualification taping. But advancing age and complications with knee infection following surgery put a damper on his aspirations.

Charles "Charlie" Leslie Greene, age 91, died Aug. 4, 2016 at his home in Kansas City MO from congestive heart failure and kidney disease. There's no proof yet, but rumor has it that he may have taken his harmonica with him just in case he found an audience. ♥

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

**...to the following
HOA MEMBERS!**

| | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| September 5 | Thom Tisdall |
| September 6 | Jerry Garrard |
| September 7 | Frank Lasta |
| September 8 | John Braden |
| September 10 | Rich Huyck |
| September 11 | Willard Yoder |
| September 13 | Dan Wager |
| September 14 | Matthew Fortino |
| September 15 | Ron Abel |
| September 16 | Sam Solomon |
| September 16 | Michael Meier |
| September 23 | Phil Veltkamp |
| October 1 | Wendell Shaffer |
| October 2 | Steve Keisker |
| October 5 | Lucas Pherigo |
| October 14 | Brad Dawdy |
| October 27 | Rob Varney |
| November 3 | Larry Colburn |
| November 8 | Tom Gray |
| November 10 | Kent Miller |
| November 20 | Dick Korek |
| November 22 | Tom Millot, Sr |
| November 26 | Dick Henderson |
| November 28 | Todd Anderson |
| November 28 | Vince Perry III |
| November 29 | Paul Winans |
| December 7 | Jim Davis |
| December 9 | Ron Fortino |
| December 16 | Val Putzier |
| December 24 | Darrell McCune |



NEW HARMONY HANDFUL

By Tony Strub

There are many synonyms in the dictionary for the word fun. Most of them fit the activities of the 20 guys that make up the *New Harmony Handful*.

Even the monthly rehearsals with the hard work and the “Bagby no quit until it’s right” approach find a way to provide fun with joking, jests and good humor.

So far in 2016, the *NHH* has scheduled 25 performances. One of the major performances is upcoming Oct. 23 at the John Knox Village Pavilion, when we join the *Methodist Men of Note* from Lee’s Summit and the *John Knox Singers* for our annual “Men’s Choral Spectacular” to benefit the JKV Food Pantry. This year we’ll be boosted by our own *Arm-chair Chorderbacks*. We invite you to put this free 6 p.m. concert on your schedule.

All of the *Handful* have fun singing to the wide variety of adult audiences on our schedule. We perform for award banquets, retirement complexes, church services, nursing homes, adult social clubs, fund-raising events and special calendar days of celebration. The audiences love the singing and even the jokes of Director **Jim Bagby**.

My favorites are the church services. The guys don’t quite understand my enjoyment, but after singing at a church service I feel really good.

I can’t end this article without giving some special credit to **Martin Oldehoeft** and **Bob Howard**, who recently provided our guys with a new uniform short-sleeve MULBERRY shirt. The ladies think that the shirts are really cool.

And we want to wish our baritone section leader and dedicated pitch piper, ageless **Ron Abel**, many happy returns after he turned 90 last month.

Our biggest joy recently was a stop to see, sing for and with *HOA* leader **Bob Burdick** when we were performing not far from his home. As you can see above, Bob is still limited in how much he can move, but he can drive his scooter, operate his phone and other instruments. He’s a whiz with several voice-activated aids. And his bass is still almost as strong as his smile. Sandy took this picture. ❤️

Guest Night 1946



Mike McGee was in town yesterday interviewing *Rural Route 4* for a book he's working on. He had come roundabout via St. Louis, where he met with *Gas House Gang* and *Vocal Spectrum*, and Nashville, where he researched the archives for pictures. He scanned this one (above) that was identified as an HOA guest night in 1946, which drew about 300.

My guess would be the Phillips Hotel; **David Krause** might have another idea. We met in more than one downtown hotel in those days. Note the dress code, and the record player: they did have programs! Anyone spot **Joe Stern**?

The barber pole is a nice touch, if not the cigarettes. but those were a given; we had smoking in our Unity Temple meeting room into the early '70s. - **Jim Bagby**

HOA Retreat Chorus

Retreat pictures taken by Vince Perry III



Coach Steve Scott demonstrates vocal alignment with Assistant Director Bob Velazquez



Coaches LtoR Steve Scott and Evan Boegehold



Minigroup session!
LtoR Ron McIntire, Barry Sanders, Mike Templer, Marty Oldehoeft, Director Jerry Garrard, Steve Keisker



A quick tag before lunch break at Salty Iguana
LtoR John Braden, Ron McIntire, Bob Velazquez, Rich Huyck

Blue Springs Concert!



Before the show, LtoR: Ron McIntire, Vince Perry IV, Tony Strub, Marty Oldehoeft, Bruce Wenner, John Braden, Charles Ramirez. Photo courtesy of Vince Perry III



Harvey Shapiro
Photo courtesy of Vince Perry III

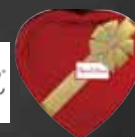


HOA Blue Springs Chorus courtesy of Carol Ramirez)



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HEART OF AMERICA CHORUS CALENDAR

Saturday, September 17 - 5pm
Blue Springs Family Fun Fest

Saturday, September 24 - 2pm & 7pm
HOA Annual Show • Liberty Performing Arts Center

Thursday, September 29
HOA Four Person Scramble Golf Tournament

Saturday, October 8
Central States District Chorus Contest • Cedar Rapids, IA

THE KANSAS CITY CHAPTER OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

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