



BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

All the News that's Phit to Print from  
The Polk-Burnett County Chapter

## The Smoke Signal



Chapter sings Monday nights, 7:30 pm in the lower level of the Polk County Government Center at the NE corner of "I" and "46" — [www.indianheadchorus.com](http://www.indianheadchorus.com)

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Barbershop Harmony Society, 110 7th Avenue N., Nashville, TN 37203-3704 [www.barbershop.org](http://www.barbershop.org)

Land-O-Lakes District - LOL home page: [www.loldistrict.org](http://www.loldistrict.org)

1,000 Lakes Division -Probe Member

## Our fifty-seventh year – Issue 8, August, 2014

### Upcoming performances –Dan Valentine, coordinator

Sat., Aug 9th Threshing Show- 10 AM performance –Almelund, MN

Sun, Aug 17th Church Sing out –MN boarder area

Sat., Sept 13 -Amery Fall Festival Parade

Sun., Sept 21st VLQ Almelund Church sing and Apple fest

Fri., Oct 10 Dress rehearsal Annual Show

Sat., Oct 11th -Annual Show @ Amery HS 2 PM & 7:30 PM

Sat., Oct. 25th - Rochester District Contest

Sun., Dec. 7 - Amery stroll



Our Assistant Director, Karl Wicklund attended Harmony University. This is one of the classes.

## **Harmony University Report**

If you haven't noticed, I've been gone for a while. A part of this was family vacation. Another part was Harmony University (HU). In the following months, I'll be writing about my experiences there, as well as a short article about my visit to International Champion Chorus Ambassadors of Harmony.

I'll start out this series on HU with an overview of the week. In future months, I'll speak to the particulars of curriculum over the week, and what we learned outside of the curriculum.

**This week-long school** is put on by the Barbershop Harmony Society. It began in the early 1970s as Harmony College, a collection of general classes; it was later rebranded Harmony University, with separate courses of study for Quartets, Choruses, youth and general interest barbershoppers. I enrolled in Directors College, along with sixty or seventy other directors, assistant directors, aspiring directors and music educators.

**Tuition** was \$640. This included not only classes and materials, but excellent meals, and a double room in the dorms. (The furnishings were bare bones, but most of us spent few of our waking hours there). I was granted a ½ scholarship by the Society; our chorus graciously agreed to fund the rest of tuition and my airfare.

**The faculty** is drawn from the high ranks of barbershopping – many of the instructors are international level directors and quartetters. Most of them are professional performers or instructors. All of them are warm, knowledgeable and deeply passionate about music. For many years classes took place in St. Joseph, MO, but the event has recently followed the Society Headquarters to Nashville. We met on the campus of Belmont University, a wonderfully accommodating, beautiful facility.

**Each of the six days** began with a General Session at 8:45, followed by five classes, the last wrapping up at 9:45. Meals were fitted in between these sessions. As a first year student in Director's College, my classes were mostly chosen for me.

I arrived late on Sunday morning and our first formal event was a general session that night. I was one of about six or seven hundred students there from all over the North America and Europe – there was even a few from New Zealand. The majority of us came from the BHS, but I'd guess ten percent of the attendees were women from Sweet Adelines or Harmony Inc.

- **General Session** followed a daily format: Warm-ups, led by a different person each day – wonderfully instructive and fun; announcements; a full

song, led by a different person each day – also excellent and enlightening; finally a new tag.

- Session One was **Sound Management**, dealing with easy and beautiful vocal production, both from an individual singer and from a full chorus. We studied some physiology, some psychology, some acoustics, and a lot of artistry.
- Session Two was **Conducting Techniques**, dealing with hand skills, and helping the director stay out of the way of the chorus.
- Session Three was **Music Theory IV**, dealing with specialized chords and voice leading. This was the final level of Theory – I was able show proficiency in the other levels, thanks largely to the year of theory I took in high school (thank you, Stan Marczak) and the semesters I took in college.
- Session Four was **Directors Chorus**. This was an optional class, but most of the seventy-some directors took part. We arrived with two songs learned and spent the week polishing them.
- Session Five was **Leadership**, dealing with making the most of our weekly meetings, and helping each one of us be the musician and the person we want to be. If any of you attending Chuck Green's Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meetings workshop, you have a hint of what kinds of work we did here.

After that, **all-you-can-eat ice cream** was available till the wee hours (official, till 11PM, but the food service staff held off if singers were still indulging). People were generally up far later, planning performances for later in the week, working on a little homework or just singing. Every stairway, every entranceway, every corner of every empty room seemed to be filled with singers, old and young, men and women, learning and polishing tags. Even after eating dairy, voices were free and clear, if sometimes a little overzealous.

**One last note**, this about our fellow barbershoppers: The Indianhead Chorus tends to be a little isolated from the rest of the Society, simply because of our location and the personality of our closest neighbors. I was greatly pleased by the warm fellowship at HU; certainly, some amount of this comes from the setting – a week of freedom to focus on nothing but meeting new singings and learning about singing. Still, I have felt a lack of this at our district functions, and I think I am not alone in this. I and several classmates from HU have pledged to bring this sense of brotherhood back with us to District Convention in October and the District Leadership sessions in January. More on this later.

***Karl Wicklund***, Assistant Director

Gentlemen:

*I'm writing this to share with you what one chapter is doing with a school in its region, and urging each chapter to make contacts with youth in your area. You will see that this is not an instant response but one that took time and eventually the stars lined up. A newspaper article is attached that describes how the Rochester Coulee Chordsmen laid the groundwork, provided resources and now are seeing the results of their work at the Byron High School, Byron, Minnesota. Seeds were planted, nourished and now both the school program and the Coulee Chordsmen are reaping the benefits.*

*We all enjoy our hobby, we all want to see our chapters and our society thrive and grow, and I believe that we all know how we can achieve this goal. Our future lies with the youth in our communities.*

*My reasons for sharing the Coulee Chordsmen's experience include:*

- 1. Look at the resources you have as a chapter at your disposal that you can offer to music programs in your communities and where you can share them. Many of the chapter resources do not cost the chapter a red cent and the rewards you will benefit are amazing. Also, don't limit yourselves to school programs: think church programs, youth clubs, after school programs, Community Theater, and so many more.*
- 2. Look at your chapter's potential to sponsor a YIH festival as a standalone chapter or do jointly with other chapters, both Barbershop and Sweet Adeline or Harmony International chapters. We have examples of both types in our district.*
- 3. Bring at least one young man to the LOL District YIH Festival in Rochester, MN in October. There is not one chapter in our district that cannot bring at least one young man. As you know, it is a one day festival; the young men rehearse all day long, with a couple breaks to watch some chorus and quartet competition and then they perform for us in the evening. This will be an experience they will never forget; don't be that chapter that deprives your community's young men that experience.*

*Good luck and I will see you in Rochester.*

*"SING" cerely,*

**Jon Buss,** LOL District YIH Director / 715-410-7324



Performing October 11, 2014 on our annual show are The Indianhead Chorus, local quartets, After Hours and St Croix Crossing quartets, as well as the St Croix Falls High School choir. We have two shows: one at 2 PM and one at 7:30 PM. Tickets are \$8 in advance. Call any chorus member or 715-483-9202 or email [kbmett@hotmail.com](mailto:kbmett@hotmail.com). Indicate which show and how many tickets.

### **Lunch List:**

- AUG 4, CLIFF MANWILLER
- AUG 11, KEN METTLER
- AUG 18, DUANE MORRIS
- AUG 25, LOREN NELSON
- SEPT 1, MARK NELSON
- SEPT 8, STEVE OSERO
- SEPT 15, PAUL PEDERSON
- SEPT 22, CARL PETERSON
- SEPT 29, NEIL PICKARD
- OCT 6, ALAN SALMELA
- OCT 13, HARLEY SCHAEFER
- OCT 20, BRYAN SHOBE
- OCT 27, BILL STEVENSON
- NOV 3, DUANE STONE
- NOV 10, STEVE SWENSON
- NOV 17, DAN VALENTINE
- NOV 24, MARK WESLANDER
- DEC 1, ED BONESKY
- DEC 8, CHUCK WILLIAMSON
- DEC 15, KARL WICKLUND
- DEC 22, JON BUSS

## **Barbershoppers find right notes for success**

***Trend began at Byron High School in 2006*** -By Andrew DeZiel

At Byron High School, 22 eager young men and an enthusiastic veteran barbershopper are helping to "Keep America Singing" long into the future.

The Byron Boys Barbershop program, a highly unique, unusual offering for a smaller high school, began with conversations between Ms. Braun, the high school choir teacher, and Dennis Schilling, a longtime barbershopper whose grandson Jason was in Ms. Braun's choir. Mr. Schilling's beginnings as a barbershopper trace back to 1961, when he became a charter member of a group in Poughkeepsie, New York. Four years later, Mr. Schilling moved to Rochester and joined Rochester's barbershop group, Rochester Music Men.

When the concept of a boys barbershop chorus was first suggested by Mr. Schilling, Ms. Braun liked the idea, but was unable to drum up enough interest to get a group going. But in 2006, with students settling into the brand new high school building, Ms. Braun decided to have the school's boys choir try some barbershop music.

"The kids had a blast with it!" she said. "And so" she continued, "I said 'Hey, why not do this as an ongoing thing?'"

Over time, both younger and older students became increasingly interested in barbershop music. Ms. Braun was determined to keep them in the same group, so that the older students could share their experience and wisdom with younger students. This meant that the group would have to move towards the model of being an independent, extracurricular activity, with a small activity fee (although Ms. Braun still introduces barbershop music to all 9th and 10th grade guys in choir). Still, the popularity of the barbershop ensemble has grown - having started with 12 singers, the group's enrollment has increased to 22 as of last year.

Ms. Braun attributes the group's success to several factors - in particular, how older singers are mixed in with younger ones. Older singers frequently help the younger singers to learn the traditional barbershop repertoire.

"The older kids love to show the younger kids what they know and help them lead through their parts and learn their parts a little faster," Ms. Braun said. In addition, singing barbershop is a more comfortable and rewarding experience for many younger guys, as their voice may still be in the process of changing, and their ranges can fluctuate a great deal. According to Ms. Braun, "it gives them some reassurance that their voice can fit, no matter where it's at - you know, last month they were singing bass, now they're singing lead. Or they were singing tenor, now they're singing baritone two months later. So that is a great thing for their vocal development."

The group has also received a great deal of support from the Rochester Music Men. Mr. Schilling comes to Barbershop practice from time to time, to check in with the guys and give the group pointers. The Rochester Music Men has given the group live demonstrations on the unique structure of four part, a capella barbershop harmony, which Ms. Braun says has been very helpful. The Rochester Music Men even paid for Ms. Braun to go to "Harmony University", a two week crash course in conducting barbershop. And this spring, the Rochester Music Men and the Byron Boys

Barbershop Chorus held their very first joint concert at the middle school auditorium.

A favorite tradition of the group has been to sing at a Minnesota Twins game in the summer, along with other barbershoppers from the Barbershop Harmony Society's Land O' Lakes District, which includes all of Minnesota, Wisconsin and North Dakota and the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, as well as parts of Michigan and Ontario. The assembled group ranges from men with decades of barbershop involvement, such as Mr. Schilling, to those just beginning to sing Barbershop.

For his part, Mr. Schilling is confident about the future of Barbershop singing, in Byron and across the nation. Reflecting on his work mentoring young Barbershop singers here at Byron, he says ""I just enjoy getting the boys to sing Barbershop... I know they're all going to scatter all over the country, but maybe they will pick up barbershop sometime, and that's the important thing. I just feel singing one of those things that you never stop doing."

Ever had deja moo?

It is when you know you've heard this bull before

Ever had dejan voo?

it is when you've seen this mustard before



Chorus sings at 2014 Almelund Threshing Show

## **Public Relations - It is fun and addicting!**

Texting, Facebook, Tweeting, surfing the web - all are mediums of connection that people have been accused of if not found guilty of being addicted.

That is good news for those of us in marketing or public relationship roles. We can leverage these tools to continue to promote our shows, our choral group, and barbershop in general.

The only cost is time but it doesn't have to be that much time if we all pitch in! We all need to reflect on what our responsibility is to our chapter and the barbershop Society.

I would ask that you consider one of our responsibilities as an individual member is to promote barbershop so future generations can enjoy what each of us enjoy about being barbershoppers.

It is my goal to make promotion easy for you.

First, try to make it a habit of communicating the "old fashion" way and talk to a friend about barbershop. Maybe once a month is your goal, which would be 12 conversations a year to new people about our society.

Second, if you are a Facebook user, please like our Facebook page "Indianhead Barbershop Chorus."

Then invite all your Facebook friends to like our page.

We should really have 500 likes within a few months!

If you would like to become a Facebook user or need help using your current Facebook page, please let me know.

Finally for those tweeters, start tweeting barbershop themes once a week and follow other barbershoppers. Who knows you may become addicted to social media but this addiction will only help our chapter and the barbershop society!

The best ideas of promotion I trust are with you. Please email or call me or catch me before Monday practice, not during practice, of course!



Guess who sang in Stillwater? Yes, Dan, our performance coordinator, arranged for Chariot to perform at Log Jam Days on July 29<sup>th</sup> in Stillwater. Thanks Harley, Clint, Dan and Larry for bringing a little joy to our neighbors to the South. It looks like they had an additional (very youthful) voice in their last number. Also, helping Dan with the bass (in the background) is a fellow named Ted Bear. He fit in real good, since you need gray hair to sing in this quartet.

