



**"HARMONY
IN MOTION"**

The Chordsmen Chronicle



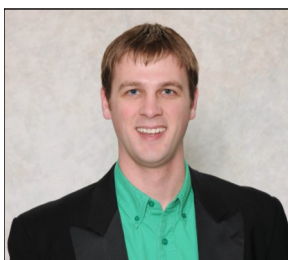
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Volume 41 Issue 12~ December 2016



*The Christmas seasons marks the beginning of the coaching season for our contest appearance in April of the new year.
Ed.*

Directly Speaking



Trevor Garrabrant

I am super excited that contest rehearsals have begun for us and I am looking forward to being on the stage with all of you in April.

I believe the best part of competing is that it pushes every one of us to be the best member

of the chorus as possible.

First and foremost, it pushes every guy to sing at his best. We have also made strides as a chorus by implementing a qualification process for going to contest.

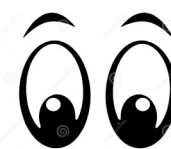
This tool is to hold every member accountable for his part. The tool is not meant to scare people away or to be a negative experience. It's meant to push every member to a high level of performance. This will allow us to compete at the highest level possible for our chapter.

Secondly, it pushes the directors to dive into grave detail to set us up for success. We will open up our ears up to hear everything possible.



We will bring in fresh ears in the forms of coaches to help hear things we don't and push the chorus in different ways.

We will have our eyes focused on making sure we are delivering a story to the audience.



Lastly, the bond created from competing together. After walking off that stage, there is something different about the group.



We've shared a musical experience like none other and that comes back with us to Mansfield. No matter the outcome,

whether good or bad, this bond is undeniable. Memories and stories will be made!

There are so many great things about contest between the brotherly times had by all, to showing JAD what Mansfield has to bring to the table.



Listening to other choruses and quartets singing at a high level. Singing tags with other barbershoppers, some we haven't seen in a few months and some new guys we will meet for the first time.

For those of you who have never participated in the contest arena, you're in for a new, great adventure, I hope you all are excited about April. Go Chordsmen!

The will to win, the desire to succeed, the urge to reach your full potential... these are the keys that will unlock the door to personal excellence.

A Christmas Mem'ry

By: Rod Nichols

"Where ya bound on Christmas mornin'?" called the blacksmith as Lou passed.
"Jest headin' out. I plum fergot.
One day seems like the last."

Lou nodded, once, then rode on off.
What he'd said was partly true:
a man alone on Christmas day
don't have a lot to do.

"Where ya bound on Christmas mornin'?" yelled the storekeep and his bride.
"Jest ridin' out to check the stock."
Again he knew he'd lied.

Them folks was well intended, seemed,
but they wouldn't understand
how Christmas weren't the same fer him,
a lone and lonely man.

"Where ya bound on Christmas mornin'?"
asked the Rev'rend by his gate.
"I got some work that needs be done.
I'll likely be out late."

Again that weren't the truth a-tall,
but he couldn't tell him then,
how Christmas service made things worse
each time he'd ever been.

Where ya bound on Christmas mornin'?
If they really cared to know,
to an empty, cheerless cabin
after ridin' in the snow.

Then the day began a- fadin',
and the snow to coverin' tracks.
He reined about to head on in
to a one-room, gloom-filled shack.

But, he sensed a change about him
as the wind blew bitter, strong.
The snow was growin' deeper, and
the way back, now, seemed wrong.

Lost in thoughts of bein' lonely,
he had failed to note his path.
He found himself alone, indeed,
and facin' winter's wrath.

Where ya bound on Christmas mornin'?
Oh the truth behind his lie:
to a grave, out here, a fool alone.
who'd surely freeze and die.

Then the sound of voices singin'
Little Town Of Bethlehem
now caused ol' Lou to turn and see
a glow now flick'rin' dim.

Through a mile of deepened snowdrifts
he had reached a cabin wall,
and, there, within, a Christmas scene
like those he once recalled.

There were logs a-blazin' brightly
and a tree close by the fire
all decked in popcorn garland strands,
and folks in dress attire.

Such a vision stirred his mem'ry
and he thought across the years
of another time at Christmas.
His eyes began to tear.

Now he recognized the faces
of the folks he saw within.
There was Smitty and the storekeep,
the Rev'rend, all his friends.

He opened up the door a bit,
"Why, it's Lou. Where did you go?
Come in and have a cider mug
and shake off all that snow.

Ol' Lou was grinnin' ear-to-ear.
While he'd been out there bummin',
his friends had warmed his cabin for
a Christmas Day homecomin'.

That evenin' 'fore Lou closed his eyes
he'd a prayer, long overdue,
"God bless my friends and neighbors, Lord,
and Merry Christmas, too."

Marathon session for the Chordsmen board of directors results in the first three year Strategic Action Plan

It's often been said that "if you don't know where you're going, you'll never know if you get there." Sometimes it seems that the Chordsmen have had trouble in determining "what do we want to be when we grow up?"

The chapter board of directors, agreed it was time we had a strategic plan of action to guide the members and leaders to grow the chapter. The starting point was a five hour "skull session" on Saturday morning, November 5, at Southside Christian Church. It would be impossible to start with a clean sheet of paper and expect to get anything accomplished in the meeting.

R.F. Miller drafted a Strategic Action Plan "boilerplate," which is just ideas from which to begin the process.



The draft was put on Google Docs and thanks to **Stan Popp** who had provided an internet hot spot, those who brought computers could follow the draft. Our resident "techie" **Jim Frye**, provided equipment so the draft and agreed upon changes, could be reflected on a big screen.

There were many ideas, comments and changes to the draft. Finally, the first five major goals with accompanying objectives were set with the agreement of the board members.

The final version of the goals and objectives are being

put in final form to be shared with all members of the Fun Center Chordsmen.

There was coffee and donuts in the morning to kick things off. Perhaps the biggest decision of the day was what kind and how many pizzas were ordered for lunch. Look close at the screen in the picture below. You'll see the result of **Jim Frye's** research on pizzas.



As you might have guessed, the first three major goals dealt with membership and how to attract guests that ultimately become long standing members. Items discussed were ideas such as incentives for members to implement the BAG principle (Bring a Guest), rewards for obtaining a Man of Note in a calendar year.

These goals, with objectives and time frames will be published in the very near future so that each member can do their part in realizing the goals set forth to the betterment of the chapter.

Board members were assigned to be the lead person responsible for the timely completion of each of the goals. Metrics, or measurements were put on each objective to determine if the goal was met and if not, why not.

All member of the chapter are encouraged to buy into the action plan and to move out their comfort zone to aid in accomplishing the goals and furthering the chapter's future.

We Can, We Will, We Must!

Bravada does double duty

By: R.F. Miller ~ Bari ~ Bravada



Bravada, as a quartet, has performed for many types of occasions which include mother/daughter banquets, weddings and wedding receptions, conventions, reunions, birthdays, singing the National Anthem at the Mid Ohio Sports Car Course and we've sung at several churches during their morning worship.

Rev. **Gary Proietti**, pastor of the Calvary United Church of Christ in Crestline, Ohio, asked Bravada to sing several songs for his service on Sunday, November 13. The bass of Bravada, **Dan Crow**, was injured on duty as a fire fighter-paramedic and was not available. **Stan Popp** filled in on bass.

So Bravada showed up at the church at 9:30 to warm up for a 10:00 service. Just after warm ups, the choir director approached Jim and Trev and asked us to please sing with the choir that morning. It seems that only six ladies and no men showed up.

At 9:50 we had one run through of the anthem, "We Worship You," sight singing for sure. We understood why we were needed. In the anthem there was a part for women only and a part for men only. And we did it well according to reports.

We've sung for churches before but this is the first time for the double duty routine. The ladies were grateful for our participation. 🎵

179th Airlift Wing Base Honor Guard helps Chordsmen honor Vets



We live in the home of the free, because of the brave! With that thought in mind, each year, close to November 11, the Fun Center Chordsmen host a Salute to Veterans performance at the First Congregational Church in Mansfield.

And for the past four years, the Honor Guard of the 179th Airlift Wing has been an integral part of the ceremony. This year the Salute to Vets was held on Monday, November 7. **Ron Cline** was the guest speaker presenting a history of Americas Flags.

Six of the Chordsmen, one by one, processed each flag down the center isle, stopped front and center, then turned to the side to show the flag. Then Ron gave the history of that flag followed by the flag bearer posting the colors on the left or right of the front of the church.

All three of the chapter registered quartets, **Good Company**, **Bravada** and **Home Edition**, presented two songs each.

To conclude the program, the Chordsmen sang the Armed Forces Medley. As an introduction to the song, the Emcee asked the Veterans, when the military song representing their branch of service is sung, to please stand and be recognized. As each Veteran stood, the audience exploded with applause indicating their thanks for the service that the Veterans had provided.

The 179th have already been secured for our Salute to Veterans in November 2017. 🎵

Drafted rookie ends four year run

By: Jim Frye ~ Chapter President



After being hooked by a tag in Willard about five years ago, I was encouraged (drafted by force) to become the Chapter President. After being a member for only a few short months I had not yet learned how to say no.

I was honored to be asked to fill such a vital role and a little concerned to take on such a huge responsibility.

This will be the final article I write as current President of the Fun Center Chordsmen. I cannot believe how fast the last four years have flown by. I can truly say that it has been a fulfilling experience and remain honored to have served you all.

I am also extremely confident that **Stan Popp** will do a great job as incoming President-elect. Let's all get behind Stan and support him in any new initiatives he may bring.

As I exit the office of President, I am excited to be moving into my new role as VP of Music and Performance. A big note of thanks to Trevor for his service in the position the past two years. Here are a few of my goals during the next two years:

- Work with the Music Team to annually plan our music program
- Oversee the audition process for our annual show and district contest (if applicable)
- Coordinate bringing in outside coaches
- Attend specialized trainings if/when available
- Work with the Financial Team in planning and executing a realistic budget
- Encourage and support current quartets, and work with any members interested in starting or joining a quartet.

My challenge to everyone, as the new VP of Music and Performance, are the three P's:

Prepare: Come to every Chapter meeting 100% prepared. I have challenged our director to have the chapter meeting agenda emailed out no later than the Wednesday before the upcoming Monday. This will give each of us five days to get our music out, learning tracks loaded, and woodshedding time in our homes/cars.

Produce: Whether we are in our chairs or on the risers, we are giving our directors our absolute best. Remain focused on the critique being offered by remaining quiet and in tune with what is being shared. Sing every phrase with emotion and as though we are singing to a live audience.

Perform: Performing is far more than just singing. Performing demands facial expressions, body integration, and yes great singing. How you sing/act on a Monday night should be no different than how you sing at our annual show or district contest.

So, there you go. I leave you with this quote by J.R. Tolkien, "All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us."



***JIM, FOR FOUR YEARS OF
GREAT LEADERSHIP. GOOD
LUCK AS THE NEW VP OF
MUSIC AND PERFORMANCE***

Are you giving your best

Author Unknown

Ed:

As you read this article, one thing is clear, there is no mention of singing in any form. But you should read between the lines to see how this individual's thought process can be applied to your participation in the Fun Center Chordsmen chorus.

In the classic western movie "High Noon," Gary Cooper played the role of Kane, a lawman who had brought peace and order to his town. After years of service, he decided to get married, take off his badge, and leave town.

Minutes after his wedding ceremony, he received word that a gunman whom he had arrested years earlier had been let out of prison and would be arriving in town in less than two hours. His cronies were waiting at the train station to join forces and walk down Main Street to kill "Kane."

Kane decided to stay and fight, even after the other men of the town refused to join him. He put his badge back on and faced the gunmen alone. He had given the townspeople his best for many years, and now, in his time of need, they left him to be gunned down...alone.



It is hard to judge what will happen when you give your best. You will probably be supported and appreciated. But giving your best may also result in a backlash of jealousy and rivalry.

You may be accused of selfish ulterior motives; you may win false friends and true enemies; you may be shot down by small men and women with small minds; you may witness the destruction of what you spent years building; you may be attacked by those you are helping; you may be left to fight the good fight alone.

Think about it. What kind of person doesn't give his or her best? Why would anyone want to deliver a second-rate performance?

Certainly tact, strategy, and timing are important. You can look for the right opportunities, or create the right opportunities, to give your best. But even as you work to improve your skills so that you can do better in the future, there is always something that you can be doing that represents your best right now.

Giving your best is not something you do later, it's something you do every day. You are already unique. You already have something to offer.

The cost of giving your best can be high. The only thing that costs more is not giving your best. If you aren't giving your best, you aren't who you are supposed to be.

Never forget that you are unique. You are genetically unique, and you are unique in your combination of talent and experience. That means you have something special to contribute...you make that contribution by giving the world your best.

If you're not giving the world your best, what world are you saving it for? 🎵



Point to Ponder

Ever wonder if all the hard work will pay off?

An Editorial



Since I joined the chorus in March of 2000, **Mark Blake**, **Steve Kovach**, and **Doug Smeltz** have all conveyed the same message, just in different ways.

Now **Trevor Garrabrant**, in his own unique style, preaches the same message every Monday night. What is the message you ask?

The message is, if we can do it right once, why not all the time. Steve used to say "That's one in a row." Trevor says, after getting us to do it right once, "Why can't you do that every time?"

Each of these front line directors have dedicated their time, talent and experience, to make the Fun Center Chordsmen the very best men's barbershop chorus possible.

It would take more space than one page to elaborate the times T-Rev has had to repeat the same message time and again. Things like correct posture, breathing, vowel targets, dynamics, correct notes and words and the use of recording devices. And of course, working on these things on our own between Monday night practice. Mondays nights should be used for polishing, not learning.

Hard work you say? You bet it is! Trevor does his part every week. It's obvious that he's prepared. Are we? Have you ever heard Trevor say, "That's your homework for next week?" Only a few hundred times since becoming our front line guy. So do we do our homework? Here comes more hard work.

We owe it to our front line director and the assistant directors to do our part on Monday nights and be prepared for Monday nights by working on the Tuesdays through Sundays. If we use Monday nights to both learn, practice and polish, it's a little bit of wasted time.

But that's where the hard work comes in. When we do the hard work required, it sometimes pays off in unexpected ways. .

Chordsmen gave a great program

I want to publicly thank the Fun Center Chordsmen for the program they presented Nov. 7 at the First Congregational Church.

The main focus of the program was to honor all veterans and to promote allegiance to our great country. To that extent, they gave 100 percent.

Thanks to Ron Kline who gave a history lesson of the wars of our country and a simple description of the flags of our nation.

A very informative and truly enjoyable program.


Way to go, Chordsmen!

Mary Jane Ford
Lexington

From the Letters to the Editor column in the November 20 issue of the Mansfield News Journal.

After reading this letter to the editor, I tracked down **Mary Jane Ford** and called her. The call was to thank her for taking the time to write such a notice. It turns out she loves barbershop music.

She not only attended the Vets Salute, a friend of hers told her about our performing at the New Life Church for their thanksgiving banquet. She didn't come for the banquet...she came to hear us sing. Remember those seats along the back wall that were for visitors? She was there. She told me she enjoyed every minute of our performance.

You don't get that kind of recognition without putting in some hard work. We must be doing something right to get this kind of response. So let's keep doing the hard work necessary to have others feel the same way Mary Jane Ford does. 

2016 Chapter Leadership

President ~

Jim Frye

Exec. VP ~

Stan Popp

Music Director ~

Trevor Garrabrant

Assistant Directors ~

Jim Frye

Dave Kracker

Chorus Coach ~

Vacant

VP Music & Performance ~

Trevor Garrabrant

VP Chapter Development ~

Ed Farrar

VP Marketing & PR ~

R.F. Miller

VP YIH ~

Dave Kracker

Secretary ~

Lee Cook

Treasurer ~

Lorin Weaver

Immediate Past President ~**Board Members at Large:**

Bob Gibson

Terry Loughman

Mike Craze

Mitch Gale

*The Chordsmen Chronicle is the official bulletin of the
Fun Center Chordsmen.*

Editor: R. F. Miller (RFMiller1@gmail.com)

***“It’s great to be a
barbershopper in
*Mansburg, Ohio”
(*Mansfield)***

2016 Man of Note honor roll

New Member	Sponsor	# of MON
Jim Foley	R.F. Miller	12

Plenty of room for your name



Chordsmen Quartets

(alpha order & year founded)



Bravada (2001)

Jim Frye (T)

Trevor Garrabrant (L)

Dan Crow (B)

R.F. Miller (Br) (419) 884-2441 (contact)

Chordially Yours (2004)

Gayle Ray (T)

Vacant (L)

Stan Popp (B) (419) 756-0098 (contact)

Frank DeWitt (Br)

Good Company (2008)

Tom Webb (T)

Lee Hull (L)

Mike Craze (B)

Chris Rumas (Br) (419) 886-3163 (contact)

Home Edition (1991)

Jim Frye (T) (419)-989-9895 (contact)

Jerry Starrett (L)

Bill Herdman (B)

Dave Kracker (Br)

