



**"HARMONY
IN MOTION"**

The Chordsmen Chronicle



www.FunCenterChordsmen.com

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Chordsmen and the Veterans put Rehab Telethon over the top ~ \$110,351



The Fun Center Chordsmen men's a cappella chorus directed by Trevor Garrabrant (far left)

It's just something we do! Every year, in the first part of February, WMFD Television in Mansfield, Ohio produces the Rehab Telethon, a 12 hour marathon for fund raising mixed with various forms of entertainment. The proceeds go to provide needed human services to the less fortunate. This year was the 25th anniversary of the Telethon and the Fun Center Chordsmen chorus was again part of this community outreach event.

On Saturday February 6, during the 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm time slot this year, the Korean War Veterans organization man the phones to take the pledges called in after **Doug Theaker** from the Korean War vets, and **Chelley Kemper** from WMFD TV speak from the stage to "drum up donations."

During this time frame, the Fun Center Chordsmen stand by waiting for a queue from the TV director

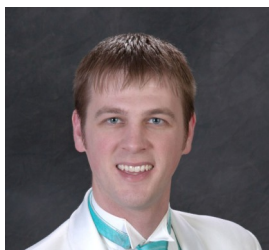
when to sing. Over the course of the hour, the chorus sang a total of three songs, Hello Mary Lou, When I'm 64 and Blackbird Medley. When the telethon went to a commercial break, the chorus sang a "bump" leading out of live coverage to the commercial.

From the stage Doug gave a huge thank you to the Chordsmen for the support the chorus gives the veterans each year, all year long. Chelley gave a good on air plug for the Singing Valentines program.

Even though the Chordsmen participate in many community events the two that stand out are "Christmas at Malabar Farm" five hours in December and the "Rehab Telethon." one hour in February. For the Telethon, we are privileged to work with the Korean War Veterans. Since many of the chorus members are Vets, it makes it special. It's just something we do! 🎵

Directly Speaking

By: Trevor (T-Rev) Garrabrant—Director



For us to continue our mission of improving our sound, it is very important for us to put in time at home. One of the first things you can do at home is follow the Jay Giallombardo Learning Method. This tool is very useful and will help all of

us to memorize the song. There are four main parts to this learning method:

1. **The Listening Step** – Listen to the learning track four times while watching the notes. No singing in this step (that's the toughest part)
2. **The Doo-doo-doo Step** – In this step sing your part on "doo" four times with the learning track, focusing on pitches and rhythms. No looking at the words!
3. **Muscle Memory Step** – Silently mime the song four times. Focusing on the lyrics and performance of the song. No singing in this step either (we aren't very good at the not singing part)
4. **Full Singing Step** – Put it all together and sing and perform the song with the learning track, yes you guessed it, four times.



Behind the scenes

To the casual observer, these guys may be taken for granted and overlooked. They do their work without a lot of fanfare or recognition.

- **Gayle Ray:** Did you ever stop to think who it is that makes sure the lights are off when we leave rehearsal.
- **Bruce Van Hesteren:** When the lights are off, the

After you have completed these steps you will be amazed with how well you have learned the song. Some will need to go through this process a few times before you have it committed to memory.


A more detailed document of Giallombardo's method is located on our members only website. It is listed as *Song Learning Method* under the Documents Tab.



Jay Giallombardo

Once you have the song learned and off paper, bring your recorder to rehearsal and record rehearsal work on the song. When you take home your recording and listen to it, you can write in your music the small changes made in the rehearsal. Changes like interpretation, vowel targets, phrasing, articulations, etc.

Now that you have a recording of the song, you should practice at home with your recording. This way, if we change things, you have a recording with all the changes. One suggestion would be to send a copy of your recording to your section leader, so that he can review it and give you tips on anything you might not be hearing yourself.

All of this will lead to much better preparedness and we can focus on moving forward as a chorus. I know I look forward to many more awesome rehearsals. I hope you do as well. 

doors need to be secured. The Key Man, Bruce makes sure that happens.

- **The Riser Guys:** The risers just seem to magically appear all set up. And they disappear in the same manner.

At the next rehearsal, just watch and see these and others working for the chorus.

Many thanks to these gentlemen who serve behind the scenes.

Presidential Briefing (A reflection)

“What do the Chordsmen and a cappella singing mean to me?”

By: Jim Frye ~ President



As we are now well into the new year, I'm sitting here today already doing some reflective thinking and what came to mind was the question above. As you're well aware, I still consider myself somewhat

of a “newbie” to this profession since I've only been an official member for five years. Many of you probably think, “I can't remember back to when I was only a member for five years!”. One thing I do know for sure is I can't imagine life without my brothers in song.

Music has always been a big part of my life. My mom started me on piano lessons when I was five years old and I continued to take for ten years. I started playing the trumpet in fifth grade. When I was a junior in high school I decided I wanted to major in music education to become a high school band director, and selected BGSU for my formal training.

I spent my first fifteen years in education as a high school band director at Northmor HS (86-91) and Upper Sandusky HS (91-01). It was then I decided to leave band directing and head into the world of technology.

As I became a true techie, for whatever reason, I put my trumpet down and hence music became less a part of my days. While life was still good, I could tell something was missing but simply chose to just move on. I know my parents and my family really missed seeing me working with my band programs and their public performances. Then it happened.

I signed up to work the sound system in the tech booth at my church for a singing group that would be performing there, called the Fun Center Chordsmen. **Doug Smeltz** reached out to me since he and I are both from Willard and were associated with First Church. As the membership started to arrive, I watched and witnessed something I'd never heard live before, that being barbershop singing. I could sense the guys were bonded not only as musicians, but also as friends. There was truly a sensation of family, as members arrived and prepared to warm up. I thought, “could this be the group I've been waiting for to help me get my music world going again?” But wait, I've never sung before! I've always hidden behind my trumpet or conducting baton.

After the Chordsmen concluded their performance, up walked **Joe Dove** and **Dave Kracker** and pulled me into a “tag” and well, you know the rest! **Larry Smeltz** invited me to attend an upcoming Monday night chapter meeting. So I hopped in my car on the following Monday and made the journey to the Congo. I was warmly welcomed and invited to pick a part to sing and a tenor I became, and I've been hooked ever since. Since I now have a few years under my belt, I can truly say I fully understand why you all continue to return every Monday night.

Every week has seven nights, but one night always stands out for me. Having chapter meetings on Monday nights let's me have a great start to my week.

Being able to connect with men from a variety of ages and backgrounds who come together due to a special musical genre passion, “a capella singing”, simply means the world to me.

We stand side by side, lifting each other up, both in singing and in life. When times are good, we have brothers to share our stories with. When times are tough, we know we have brothers we can turn to for support.

Let's continue to be accountable to ourselves, our section leaders, our directors, and our chapter as a whole. If we all raise our bar just a little higher, the chapter will rise that much more collectively. 🎵

New member application process updated

The Fun Center Chordsmen chorus is a singing organization. In the past, the only “singing” condition for membership was a voice test to see if the prospective member could match pitch.

But singing a cappella requires more than just matching pitch. A member must be able to sing his part against the other three to be effective in the chorus. Since the chorus is only as strong as the weakest voice, a change needed to be made for membership.

In a recent Music Team meeting, it was agreed that the following change would be made for application for membership. The new membership section of the Information Booklet will read as follows:

Our membership criteria is not very difficult. The prospective member must have a desire to sing, be able to carry a tune, pass a simple audition by singing in a quartet, be able to memorize music over time, and be a congenial man of good character. Although it is not necessary for a member to read music, it is hoped that each will make an effort to learn.

1st Visit - The Guest is;

- Greeted and registered
- Introduced to the Directors and Section Leader.
- Introduced to VP Chapter Development
- After a brief voice check, seated in a section suitable to his voice range.
- Provided a Guest Music packet which should be turned in after the rehearsal.
- Introduced to the chorus at break time.
- Encouraged to meet with the appropriate Section Leader or Director after rehearsal to answer any questions.

2nd Visit

- If the guest is unsure of his voice part, the director will assist him to determine placement in the proper voice part.
- The guest is encouraged to discuss with the Section Leader, their interest in continuing to


attend the Chordsmen rehearsals and ask any additional questions.

- Depending on the interest of the guest, the Section Leader will explain the process for membership.
- An up to date Member Information Booklet will be provided.

Membership Application Process

- The audio learning track and chart (sheet music) for a simple barbershop song such as Let Me Call You Sweetheart, Heart of My Heart, or Mary Lou will be provided to the prospect (guest).
- The prospect will, on his own, study the track and chart, and work with the Section Leader to get all questions answered.
- When the prospect is ready, he will contact his Section Leader and request an audition.
- The audition will consist of the prospect singing his part with three other voices while the director listens.
- The prospect is allowed to use the chart. It is not necessary for the audition to be memorized.
- If the director suggests the prospect is not yet ready to pass the audition, an additional opportunity will be provided.
- When the prospect passes the audition, he is eligible to submit an application for membership in the chapter.

Application for membership

- The completed application will be reviewed by the Section Leader.
- The candidates application for membership will be presented to the board of directors for approval.
- When approved by the board, the application will be given to the chapter Secretary or other officer for signature and submission to the Barbershop Harmony Society.
- The membership packet will be sent to the Chapter Secretary who will present it to the new member. 

I'm often mistaken for Arnold Schwarzenegger NOT!

By: Tom Webb ~ Tenor Section Leader



That's pretty much a massive understatement. No one will ever mistake me for the Arnold for sure. Even without looking at us side by side you

could tell I'm not the Arnold, basically because he's independently wealthy and I'm just, well, independent.

Listen, Arnold and I do have something in common. We both work out, the difference being his is extensive and in depth, for which he reaps the benefits of being ripped and your basic hunk. Mine, not so much.

My work out is brief, around 15-20min. a night, 5-6 nights a week, designed to keep me in decent physical shape, but not to the point that anyone would describe me as a stud. Let's get real here. At 70 my stud days are long gone, but I still want to be able to participate in life rather than sit on the sidelines and wonder what happened.

Now singing is a different animal altogether. While no one would describe me as a Pavarotti or Placido Domingo, I do spend some time at honing my craft, because I flat out love to sing. This barbershop thing has gotten under my skin and I want to do more than just participate. So you will find me on any given day, in my car listening to learning tracks and singing, not to mention performing as much as the limited space of a car allows.

Whether it's going to the bank or traveling on business I spend a lot of time listening and singing. It's where I do 99% of my rehearsing, so that I'm ready to go come rehearsal night. Whether it's for the Chordsmen, the Buckeyes or Good Company my goal is to be as prepared as possible and ready for whatever comes my way at rehearsal. This translates to the actual performance too. Remember the boy scout motto of "be prepared"? Well, in my book practice and preparation separate the best from the rest, no matter how young or old you are.

So, what about you? Are you doing enough to just get by or are you practicing and preparing to be your best? Is all this talk of taking the chorus to the next level just so much hot air to you? Or are you ready to buy into this thought that we can be better than we are now? And are you willing to do what is necessary to get to the next level? If not, you just might find yourself sitting on the sidelines wondering what happened. You don't have to be a Joe Connelly or a Jim Henry to be better than you are now. Just practice more and be better prepared. 🎵



On the left is a **TUIT**. Notice that it is round. This is for those guys who are always going to learn their music when they get "**a-round-tuit**"



Life's a pitch

***Then you
sing!***

I was a newbie at LeadAc

By: Lee Cook ~ new Chapter Secretary



Lee Cook

I had the opportunity to attend the 2016 Leadership Academy (LeadAc) in January in Columbus as the Fun Center Chordsmen secretary. I want to share a little information and my impression as a first time attendee. It was a great experience.

There were great instructors and a lot of good information that will be helpful for me as the new chapter secretary. There is far more to the job of secretary than I had imagined. But LeadAc sure helped me understand it better.

Along with some great classes on secretary I also had the opportunity to attend some classes on basic leadership. One of the leadership classes I attended was called "Be and Grow The Leaders You want". In that class I learned that we, as a board of directors, have to have a clear understanding of the various views of each element of the chapter. The understanding of those views can be accomplished by answering six questions about the chapter.

Four questions out of the six are most important for future growth.

1. What chapter activities provide the greatest satisfaction?
2. What are the chapter's greatest strengths?
3. What areas require the greatest improvement?
4. What changes do you want to see in the chapter this year?

I challenge each of us as a chapter to think about these four questions. If you care to have input to help answer these questions, please talk to any board member at large. You may also send your thoughts to me at leadcook@gmail.com 🎵

Carry Monday night changes home with you

Sometimes it's a little difficult to sing, make notes of changes or areas needing attention and remember them from Monday to Monday. If Trevor has had to say it more than once, it's one too many times.

At one point in our chorus history, **Steve Kovach** stressed the importance of using some form of personal recording device to not only record you as you sing but to record any notations needed to be remembered from one rehearsal to the next.

We're back to square one in that regard. We've gotten away from personal recording at rehearsals. And it's pretty obvious that we haven't marked our charts when Trevor has to remind us of vowel targets over and over. Or it may be that we marked that chart, but didn't look at it before the next week's rehearsal. So, what's the solution?

With the advent of the smartphones you have a built in recording app. Many members carry their smartphone everywhere so it should be handy every Monday.



If you use the old fashion method



of a cassette recorder, (yes it's still an option) just put it in your chorus bag for use Monday nights. But don't leave it in the bag until the following Monday. Really?? Yes, it does no good if left in place without use.

Especially true if you use the recorder to improve your singing. At home, while looking at the chart, listen to the recording and the weak spots and the strong spots will become apparent. It's a tool that can improve you as a singer and the chorus as a group.

Remember, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link and a chorus is only as strong as its weakest singer. Are you satisfied to be that weak link? 🎵

How it all got started

A brief history of the Chordsmen

By: Dave Kracker



Dave Kracker

Joe Vaughn and **Dave Kracker** became acquainted in 1966 when they ended up living next door to one another in a Mansfield apartment complex. Joe became aware of and interested in Dave's extensive interest and involvement in barbershop harmony singing prior to moving to Mansfield. Eventually he visited the Bucyrus chapter of the Society (SPEBSQSA), later joining the Elyria chapter on his own accord.

In 1973, Joe was contacted by a member of the Society staff, Sam Kennedy, who asked Joe to consider starting a chapter in the Mansfield area since that was Joe's hometown.

Tom Hunter remembers responding to an ad placed in the New s Journal about the formation of a barbershop singing group locally. The person on the other end of the phone was Joe Vaughn. They met shortly thereafter and picked a date for an initial gathering of interested men. The place was the Elks Club at the corner of Mulberry and West 3rd St. in Mansfield.

Tom estimates the date of the meeting as being sometime in March of 1973. Neither man could remember how many persons were in attendance, but the group was called "small", including eventual charter member, **Joe Nixon**, several members of the Elks Club and several members of the Bucyrus Chapter (Country Gentlemen). Enough interest was shown to cause Joe to ask a member of the Elyria chapter with directing experience, **Lou Mau**, to serve as the group's interim director. Dave Kracker entered the scene soon into these initial meetings.

Joe explained to Tom that he couldn't continue on with this chapter formation plan because of his extensive involvement with the Elyria Chapter. That's when Tom took over as the prime administrator of the group, becoming President some time later in 1974 when the group was finally chartered by the Society.

Indeed, Tom has a Barbershopper of the Year plaque on his wall that reads 1974! When Lou Mau stepped out of his role, a local musician with the Mansfield City schools stepped in to the directing role. His name was **Glen Fischer**. Not being familiar with the barbershop style, Glen turned the baton over to Dave Kracker by the time the group became officially chartered by the Society in the fall of 1974. And as the saying goes, "The rest is history." 🎵

A Singing Valentines Moment

It's 7:15 PM on Friday February 12 and the Olive Garden Restaurant is packed. Bravada is there to help with a marriage proposal.

A long time purchaser of singing valentines, **Myron**, is about to propose to **Bianca**. Bravada had delivered a singing valentine to Bianca several times before so Myron wanted us to be a part of the formal proposal.

For the past three years, Bravada had delivered the singing valentine to Bianca at her place of business. Not this year.

Myron had made arrangements with Olive Garden staff so they knew we were coming. When the staff saw us come in, all dressed alike, they got excited and knew what was about to happen.

Bianca was seated with her back to our approach. We walked up behind her and then stepped around so she saw us. Her first words were something like, "I thought this was behind me since you didn't show up earlier today."

We presented her with a rose, a card and sang "Heart of My Heart." After which, Myron got down on one knee, in front of everyone in the restaurant, and proposed. Bianca said Yes! Everyone in the place broke out in applause to congratulate Myron and Bianca.

This was the second time in four years that Bravada was asked to help with a marriage proposal. Thankfully, for us, they both said yes. 🎵

Noe's Notes

By: Dan Noe ~ Chorus Manager



Dan Noe

The success of our craft has so much to do with heart and soul – the inner self. What comes out of our mouths starts deep in our spirits. We have the power to foster joy, contentment, tension or bitterness – it's our choice.

Of course the first two character traits produce confidence and success while the second two can derail our best efforts.

Here are a few philosophical ideas to point us in the right direction:

- “The greatest handicap is FEAR
- The best day to sing is TODAY
- The easiest thing to do is FIND FAULT
- The most useless asset is PRIDE
- The greatest mistake is GIVING UP
- The greatest stumbling block is EGOTISM
- The greatest comfort is WORK WELL DONE
- The most disagreeable person is THE COMPLAINER
- The worst bankruptcy is LOSS OF ENTHUSIASM
- The best teacher is ONE WHO MAKES YOU WANT TO LEARN
- The greatest need is COMMON SENSE
- The meanest feeling is REGRET AT ANOTHER'S SUCCESS
- The best gift is FORGIVENESS
- The greatest knowledge is OF GOD
- The greatest force in our world, of course, is LOVE.



Point to Ponder

An Editorial

There is a saying that goes like this...*“If you think you can or if you think you can't, either way, you're right.”*



There are a couple of books in my library by Rev. Norman Vincent Peale. One titled *Positive Imaging* and one called *You Can If You Think You Can*. I think the contents of these books have a lot to do with our craft of barbershop. So with Dr. Peal's permission I'll paraphrase some of the contents that fit what Trevor has been trying to get us to do.

The subconscious mind can't tell the difference between a real experience and one that is vividly imagined. Imaging, the forming of mental pictures or images, is based on the principle that there is a deep tendency in human nature to ultimately become precisely like that which we imagine or image ourselves as being.

So powerful is the imaging effect on thought and performance that a long-held visualization of an objective or goal can almost guarantee success. In imaging, one does not merely think about a hoped-for goal; one *sees* or visualizes it with tremendous intensity.

It must be kept in mind, however, that imaging is not a magic formula that simply, by some kind of mental trick, brings desired results. In an amazing way, it does open doors to problem solving and to goal achievement. But once those doors are open there must be discipline, determination, patience and persistence if the goal is to become reality.

Just remember, when you want to achieve something like a good performance in a show or contest, hold in your mind the picture of yourself achieving it. Then act as if it is impossible to fail. You are never defeated until you accept the image of defeat.

So whatever the situation; learning new music, learning choreography preparing for a show, contest or any other aspect of chorus life, if you **think you can't**, you surely can't and won't.

But if you **think you can** and imagine yourself doing it or achieving it, you surely can. And you're well on your way to being successful. So keep a positive mental attitude and believe!



Craft Corner - Key signatures and sol fege

In case you have not been paying attention or have been sleeping under a rock, something new has been happening in recent chorus rehearsals. Our director, **Trevor Garrabrant** and Assistant Director, **Jim Frye** are doing their best to help us be better “on pitch” singers by teaching us Solfege...you know, Do (Doe), Re (Ray), Mi (Me), etc. Solfege is a music education method used to teach pitch and sight singing.

It all starts with Do as the base line. But how do you know what note Do is. That depends on the key signature which is what determines Do. If the key is C then Do is C. If the key is Bb then Do is Bb.

OK lets examine a very simple way to determine the key signature of a particular song. Lets take the flat keys signatures first. In the upper left hand corner of the sheet music there are one or more flat signs (b). One flat sign is the key of F. Two flats, the key of Bb.

Look closely at the key signature chart and remember the sentence **Fat Babies Eat All Day**.

1 flat- **Fat** (key of F)

2 flats - **Babies** (key of Bb)

3 flats- **Eat** (key of Eb)

4 flats -**All** (key of Ab)

5 flats-**Day** (key of Db)

So in the flat key signatures, Do is F, Bb, Eb, Ab, or Db. In Sol Fege, Do is the key signature.

The same principle applies to the sharp key signatures. Sharp signs now appear in the upper left hand corner of the music instead of flats. The sentence is **Gorillas Don't Always Eat Bananas**.

1 sharp- **Gorillas** (key of G)

2 sharps- **Don't** (key of D)

3 sharps- **Always** (key of A)

4 sharps- **Eat** (key of E)

5 sharps- **Bananas** (key of B)

So in the sharp key signatures, Do is G, D, A, E or B. In Sol Fege, Do is the key signature. ♪

Determining key signatures

Flats	Key	Reminder
1b	F	Fat
2b	Bb	Babies
3b	Eb	Eat
4b	Ab	All
5b	Db	Day
Sharps	Key	Reminder
1#	G	Gorillas
2#	D	Don't
3#	A	Always
4#	E	Eat
5#	B	Bananas

Sol Fege Reference Chart

Sharps (Raised)

	di	ri			fi	si	li			di
do	re	mi		fa	so	la	ti	do	re	
	ra	me			se	le	te		ra	

Flats (Lowered)

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Music Director ~

Trevor Garrabrant

Assistant Directors ~

Jim Frye

Dave Kracker

Chorus Coach ~

Vacant

VP Music & Performance ~

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

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

(*Mansfield)

2016 Man of Note honor roll

	<i>Your name here</i>	



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)

Greg Cole (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)

Jerry Starrett (L)

Bill Herdman (B)

Dave Kracker (Br)

Late Edition (2013)

Keith Shuck (T)

Steve Sommer (L)

Mark Hannum (B)

Doug Smeltz (Br) (614) 537-5184 (contact)

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