



**"HARMONY  
IN MOTION"**

# *The Chordsmen Chronicle*



[www.FunCenterChordsmen.com](http://www.FunCenterChordsmen.com)

Volume 41 Issue 3 ~ March 2016

## *Six things every director wishes you already knew about rehearsing*

*Content By Bill Rashleigh,*

Former Music specialist, chorus director development

Reprinted from the BHS website

### *As a chorus member, what you can do to make those rehearsals be more fun for everyone*

Directors often become frustrated by the famous "I taught that last week" syndrome that seems to plague every chorus. If all chorus members will internalize the following lessons, they can reduce the syndrome's symptoms—if not cure the disease—and help make a better chorus in the process. Here are some things to think about:

1. **For the chorus to improve, each man must leave his own behavioral comfort zone.** If each

singer would improve one aspect, skill, or attitude each and every time he sings, the overall music will get better very quickly. Take ownership of something. Maybe it is a breathing issue, maybe a balance challenge, maybe it is adding more airflow over the break in your individual voice. Simple things like these accomplish immediate improvement.

**Comfort Zone**



**No Parking**

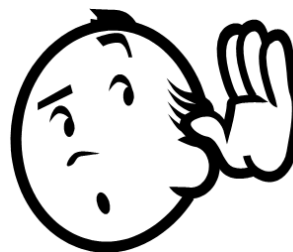


2. **You should be emotionally involved in the music.** Barbershop is a very emotional, heartfelt, simplisti-

cally beautiful style of music. The music doesn't need to be complex to produce complex emotions in the singers or the audience. However, anything less than full effort will result in a less satisfying musical experience for you and your audiences. When you commit to becoming a member of your chapter's chorus, you're committing to being a doer rather than a casual spectator. With that responsibility to put your whole self into the music comes the joy of joining others to bring music to life. What greater purpose in the arts might there be?



3. **Rehearsals will be more productive if you listen—**



and extinguish comments—while on the risers. When your director cuts off the chorus in the middle of a phrase, do you sometimes choose this moment to tell your neighbor that he sang the wrong note or "oo"

vowel? You may think you're helping, but this disrupts the flow of the rehearsal. Remember this: Unlike you,

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## Six Things - Continued from page 1

the director hears exactly what the audience would hear (the macro effect). If he didn't hear what you just heard (the micro effect), the audience probably wouldn't hear it, either. On the other hand, the issues he identifies (both positive and negative) will be critical.

The director can fix many more problems when chorus members withhold their comments and trust him to prioritize which issues need to be addressed at the moment. If the director consistently overlooks something that is bothering you, it is best to discuss it with your section leader or your director after you get off the risers.

**4. Singing well takes a lot of exertion.** Singing requires more concentration, for a longer period of time, than any other activity. Psychologists will tell you the mind works in concentration spurts, about 7-10 seconds, then we think of something else. Most activities that require concentration require it for very short periods of time, but a song lasts 2-1/2 to 3 minutes. That is a very long time. So train your mind, through a variety of exercises, to increase the length of time you can concentrate, and you will be able to handle the demands of the music.



You probably already know how to sing good vowels, sing in tune, balance chords, and outwardly exude what the music demands. You have these skills and have done them in isolation. The challenge is to do them for the duration of the song and beyond if you are in a performance. Practice does help. Use a mirror and sing, karaoke style, some of your favorite quartet songs to see if you look like they sound. Take ownership of

some aspect of singing and practice, practice, practice. Video cameras are also great for giving truthful feedback for such practice.



**5. Skills take time to learn and more time to re-learn.** The instructions in golf are very simple: Hit the ball into the hole with the club, 18 times in a row ... duh! But anyone who has tried that knows it is not easy.

Singing is the same way. The instructions are simple: Sing all the word sounds, perfectly matched amongst singers, in perfect intonation in relationship to the chord and the key, in proper balance, with perfect unity and precision while expressing that in a believable, heartfelt manner creating seamless artistry ... duh! We know it is not easy. Allow yourself the privilege of honing skills and know that it will pay off. Singing is a marathon sport, running over the course of your singing life.

**6. You should have fun when you sing.** Like each other and share in the joys of making great music because you don't know when you won't be able to do so again. ♪



**Harmony  
Magic**

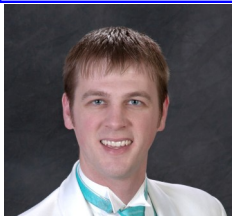


***To become a master at any skill, it takes the total effort of your: heart, mind, and soul working together in tandem.***

*Maurice Young*

***Deadline for the April issue of the  
Chordsmen Chronicle is  
April 8***

## Directly Speaking



By: Trevor Garrabrant ~ Director

We have the opportunity to put on a wonderful show. The music has been selected and rehearsed. The script is written. The stage is soon to be set. Our only job left is to entertain the audience. We have the tools we need to do so! Let's review them.

First, the music needs to be known forwards, backwards, and sideways. We have done a decent job here. Some of us may not be able to sing it sideways yet. So why settle for just forwards and backwards? Why not know it sideways too? What I mean by sideways is, the fact that we know every breath, dynamic, stylistic choice, interpretive decision.

Secondly, we have to perform our music. We have to get the audience to believe that we believe what we are singing. Right notes, rhythms, and style markings are nice, but when our faces and body movements are stagnant, that's all it is, just nice.

When we add believable faces and body movements, it adds a "wow factor." The best way to achieve the "wow factor," is to have a believable story in your head for each song. That story has to play like a movie in your head each time we sing the song. With everyone having that story, our performance level has nowhere to go but up. We have been working on providing stories for a lot of our music.

With these tools we can reach the next level of performance. Number one has to come before two to make it all work. These are the things we have been pushing in rehearsals. Let's make them the new default. It will take focus, but our audience will love the music. They will feel entertained. The thought of making an audience feel all of the emotions that are in our music truly excites me. Let's show Mansfield what FCC can do!



## Great opportunity to increase membership ~ May 8

By: Ed Farrar ~ VP Membership

The viability of any organization is dependent to a large extent on the recruiting of new members. The membership of the FCC has declined over the past few years. This is a problem not only within our chorus but within the barbershop society as a whole. People these days seem to prefer the isolation offered by their television, computer, and smart phone and away from organizations that involve face to face interaction with other people. This is just the way it is and we must work to change that for those men who like to sing.

Part of the job of VP of Membership involves recruiting and retaining new members. In order to fulfill that responsibility I have attended classes offered by the Barbershop Harmony Society and have read many of their website articles on the issue. Most of the society's information and suggestions involve retention of membership.

Recruiting new members falls primarily on the efforts of each individual member. That means if we want to have a viable, strong chorus in the next few years, each of us must invite guests who hopefully will become new members. Why do you think we emphasize "men of note" during our business meetings?

So I will be asking the board to designate May 8th as a guest/new member meeting night. Everything about the meeting will be focused on the guest from the time they walk in until they leave. Everything that we do during the practice will be explained to them as to why we do the things we do. Everything we do that evening will be membership focused. For this to work, we need guests.

I am challenging each member to bring in at least one guest. Just one! Can you imagine us having 12-15 guests? Invite potential members to our show on the 19th. Then follow up with them and invite them to one of our practices so they will realize how much fun it is to sing in the barbershop style.

This first step in earning a Man of Note is to invite a guest to visit. Let's pack the house on May 8!!! 🎵



## Why and why not to compete

### “A question to be answered”



By: Jim Frye ~ President



On the second weekend in April the Johnny Appleseed District (JAD) will host its annual Spring Convention in Columbus, Ohio. A portion of this convention is dedicated to the chorus competition.

Some of you may wonder why the Chordsmen are not going to participate this year. The following are my thoughts and may not represent the Music Team as a whole.

About a year ago the Chordsmen traveled to Pittsburgh, PA to participate in the JAD chorus contest, and scored our highest in chapter history. As I reflect back to that event and remember the effort we put forth to prepare for it, I sense there is less of a drive this year from the members to want to match and or exceed those results.

To break the 70 point tier demands that those members who want to qualify spend time outside the regular chapter meeting practicing at home, and dedicating more of their time than ever before.

Everyone who traveled to Pittsburgh, was excited with our contest package and eager to show the judges and audience what was happening in the Mansfield chapter. We know the results, JAD AA Plateau Champions (scoring even higher than some in the AAA plateau above us).

This year there doesn't seem to be a passion to succeed in competition. After sectionals, audits, and general singing it appeared that we were only going to be able to field at most, a contingent of 16-18 qualified members. In addition the desired balance of voice parts was not going to be achievable.

To return to JAD Chorus Competition I believe we need to be 100% sure that the product we present is our best. Surely those members who could have qualified would have given the JAD audience a stellar performance.

However, taking this year off is, in my opinion, the best decision for the chapter.

Knowing what it takes to become contest ready should give us resolve to work harder as individuals. Even though we have different levels of talent, and, different levels of interest in competing.

Some members are content with making the annual show the highlight of the year, while others feel the same, but want to go to the next level. This is the challenge the directors, Music Team, and Board must always be aware of, so that we meet the needs of all chapter members.

While I would have loved to have seen the competition stage, I'm also realistic in knowing this year was just not a year for us, and that's okay.

Our focus remains strong to make our annual show awesome, and we look forward to a unique show format by joining with our Mansfield South membership. We must deliver a high quality show for those in attendance, as the audience will contain members of our families, friends, and area lovers of our special genre.

Chorus competition will happen again in our future, so keep your heads high and your dedication strong as we prepare for March 19<sup>th</sup> and beyond! Brothers, Sing On!!



*I'll talk to anyone about anything,  
but sooner or later I'll tell him I sing.  
I'll invite him to visit on Monday night  
and if he likes what he hears, he just might,  
become a member and maybe he'll bring,  
another good man who likes to sing.*

Poem by R.F. Miller



# Two new Chordsmen



Mitch Gale ~ Lead

Mitch is from Mt. Gilead where he was born and went to school through high school graduation.

He comes from a very musical family, and throughout his childhood Mitch participated in a few different musicals with parts in high school or community levels. When he got

to high school he was either the lead male or a supporting lead male in the musicals. He is active in community theatre when his work schedule allows.

In high school he played trumpet in the marching, concert, and jazz bands, and also sang bass in the Show Choir. In his senior year he sang in General Choir directed by Randy Mann, where he was the only tenor in the group. Mitch developed his confidence while singing in the All Ohio Youth Choir and the Cardinal Choral.

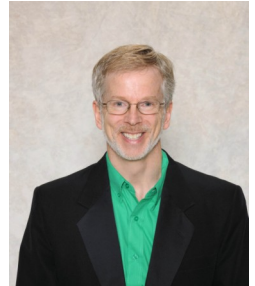
Mitch went to college at Capital University at the Conservatory where he majored in Choral Music Education and studied voice. In his sophomore year he transferred to Muskingum University with a major in Music Education. Mitch works full time at Kroger in Mt. Gilead .

Because of his love of a cappella music, three years ago when MTV Arts in Mt. Vernon decided to do *The Music Man* he was cast as the lead in the quartet.

When Morrow Little Theatre did *The Music Man* Bravada had the roles of the School Board quartet, but Mitch was a valuable member of the cast .

During one of the singing rehearsals for the Music Man, R.F. Miller recognized a really good voice and approached Mitch about coming to a Chordsmen practice.

Even though it took Mitch a few weeks to get that first Monday off, he visited, joined, and the rest is history. Welcome Mitch Gale. 🎵



Jim Foley ~ Bari

Jim grew up in New Jersey where he did a lot of singing in high school; in a barbershop octet, in a madrigal group, in musicals, and all-state chorus. Singing even brought him and his wife together, when they met as their respective church choirs performed together.

At Williams College in Massachusetts, he sang with a "town-gown" traveling chorus with members from the college and local community. Jim also branched out into singing, playing flute and harmonica with some local bands.

Jim joined his wife in Syracuse New York, where he went to graduate school in Social Work and sang in a community group. His wife accepted a job as a professor of mathematics at the College of Wooster, which brought them to Ohio. Family and work caused Jim to put music on the back burner for a while.

He decided to restart his barbershop career after seeing a performance of a similar group that meets about half an hour travel time in the other direction from where he lives in Wooster. After that performance, he was able to sing a tag with a Cleveland quartet, using his old barbershop singing memories.

Jim did some research online and found that the Fun Center Chordsmen included some quartet singing and seemed to have the level of musicality and challenge that he was looking for, as he resurrected his, enjoyment of singing a cappella, close harmony music.

His current work, directing mental health prevention, education, and consultation services keeps him very busy from early morning and late into the evenings. Jim's passion for barbershop has enabled him to carve out the time to sing with the Chordsmen on Monday nights. Jim recently passed his audition and submitted an application for membership.

Welcome Jim Foley. 🎵

## “If You Want To Keep On Gettin What You’re Gettin, Keep On Doin What You’re Doin.”

By: Tom Webb ~ Tenor Section Leader

Ask my children what their dad’s favorite saying is and they’ll tell you either the one above from Les Brown or “choices have consequences”, author unknown. Both are a part of dad’s lecture series they’ve all heard more than once. As they grow older the lectures seem to make more sense, even to the point where, begrudgingly, I’ve been told I was right. It’s what a dad lives for.



We humans all too often think that we don’t need to make behavioral changes in order for outcomes to change in our lives. We delude ourselves into thinking that what we’re doing is fine and if we’re just patient enough “things will get better.” Call it folly, or extreme optimism, but we hold fast to the idea that we don’t need to make changes in our behavior in order to change our lot in life.

Years ago, when I first started in business I listened to Les Brown’s motivational tapes in my car as I traveled. I was particularly drawn to his one quote, “If you want to keep on getting’ what you’re getting’ keep on doin what you’re doin.” It seemed pretty radical at the time, that I should start doing something differently if I wanted the outcome to be different. Who da thunk? Change the input, thus changing the outcome. At the time I was starting out I used this quote as a tool to motivate me to be more aggressive, more dogged in my pursuit of building the business and being successful.



Les Brown

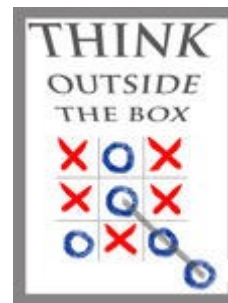
You can’t separate the two in my book. If you want to change the outcome in whatever you’re pursuing you have to change the choices you’re making. Want to lose weight? Change your eating habits and exercise more.



Want to make more money? Change your job or change your approach to the way you work at the job you have. Or, if you’re happy with what you’re getting, keep on doing what you’re doing.

The approach is the same when it comes to singing. If you’re constantly singing flat and the way you’re singing now doesn’t change that, then change the way you sing. The directors are giving us the tools to sing better, so why not use them?

If you have trouble memorizing a song then change the way you go about memorizing. It’s part of the KISS principle, I think. We tend to complicate things so change doesn’t come easy. But if we are to get better, more successful in all facets of our singing we need to make the changes necessary to do so. Call it “thinking outside the box” if you want to.



The same principle can apply to the way the chorus conducts its’ business. If we’re happy with the way the chorus functions, earns money, increases membership, and fulfills its’ place in the community, then by all means we should keep on doing what we’re doing. But if what we’re doing is not working the way we want it to, then perhaps we need to change what we’re doing.

The caveat to all of this change is the willingness to do so. Therein lies the rub. Without the desire to change our behavior in order to change the outcome, we will keep on getting what we’re getting, which is fine if what we’re getting is what we want. The question becomes, is it? ♪



## *Harmony Brigade*

### Extreme Quartetting

By: Dave Kracker ~ Assistant Director



I had read about this subsidiary group of our Society some time back. However, I was in for a first hand look at a "Brigade Rally" when we visited **Mark Stock** in

Pinehurst, NC in mid January. He was asked to help judge the event and I had to be given special permission to be there. Currently, there are nine Brigades in the US and two in Europe.

Brigaders are Society members dedicated to Extreme Quartetting of high quality arrangements made famous by medalist-level quartets. Nationally, the groups select eight common songs and then an additional four selected by the groups respectively. Once a year, each group holds a "Brigade Rally", having selected their songs six months in advance. Members can attend any of these weekend events throughout the year. Sheet music and a professionally recorded LCD are sent out after registration is received.

Here's where it gets interesting. On Friday night,

a random draw is done to determine which quartet you're in and what song you're singing. You may only have a few hours to get ready for the one-song contest appearance. Judging was quite informal, and the quartets are lined up five in a row to get on and off the stage.

Then on Saturday night, the random-draw finals are held among the Friday night winners (yet another song is selected) and the entire group performs about six or eight of the songs from their repertoire. At the North Carolina Harmony Brigade I attended, there were 30 quartets. When these 120 men gathered as a chorus, I mean it was one big, high quality musical performance. The crazy thing was that they don't advertise this show much, so the audience was limited.

Clearly, these members are gung-ho quartet, a capella singers. You could tell that many of them had been members for many years, and had traveled to other parts of the country to sing in other Brigades (others include Indiana, Atlantic, Great Lakes, High Sierra, New England, Northern Pines, and Lone Star).

Membership in a Brigade is by invitation only, with nominations being based on ones quartetting ability and your individual preparation ability (working at home). These boys LOVE a challenge! I was very impressed as was Mark Stock. I have a list of the North Carolina repertoire if interested. 🎵



## Show ad sales report

By: Ron Rosser ~ Show ad Chair

I am glad that the ad season is over. It's always a hectic time because I am also the ad chairman for the Buckeyes. The ad sales also fall right in the middle of Girl Scout cookie time. I am the Mount Vernon Cookie Cupboard for their cookies. Thanks to all the Chordsmen who sold show ads. But I was a little concerned on Monday the 29th of

February. We still needed many more ads to reach our goal. The deadline was extended one more day in hopes of increasing the total ads. A special thank you to **Dave Nicholson** and **Chris Rumas** for obtaining more ads on Tuesday.

Because of their efforts we reached \$8300 in ad sales. The top sellers were **Walt Jewett** at \$1530, **RF Miller** at \$1280, **Dave Nicholson** at \$965, **Chris Rumas** at \$780, **Mike Craze** at \$760, and **Dave Kracker** at \$630. Dave was even in Florida for six weeks. These six Chordsmen accounted for 62% of all ad sales.

Thanks again for all of your efforts. I am looking forward to having a great show with the Buckeyes. 🎵

## *Man of Note pin recognizes individual achievement*

The issue of increasing membership has been around for a number of years. The Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) thinks it is a major function of each member of the Society, District and Chapter.

So, years ago, BHS devised a plan to recognize those current members who, on their own initiative, recruit a new member. That recognition takes the form of the presentation of a Man of Note Pin. Each additional recruit increases the number that appears on the pin.

Here is a list of the current active Chordsmen, not counting Singing Buckeyes dual members, that have received at least one Man of Note pin. This list represents only 50 percent of the 33 active members.

Don't you agree that this list should include every active member of the chorus? One can not set out to earn the BOTY or the Hall of Fame induction. But each of us can set a goal of earning a MON pin each year. At one point in our history, the Mansfield chapter was the fastest growing chapter in the district. Let's do it again!!

Member name	# MON
Dave Kracker	15
RF Miller	12
Trevor Garrabrant	6
Frank DeWitt	4
Chris Rumas	3
Terry Loughman	3
Bill Herdman	2
Dan Noe	2
Harold Eckert	2
Ron Rosser	2
Stan Popp	2
Dan Strader	1
Dick Gahm	1
Gayle Ray	1
Lorin Weaver	1
Mike Craze	1
Walt Jewett	1
<b>Total:</b>	<b>59</b>

## *Point to Ponder*

*An Editorial*

### *Do we have what it takes to talk the talk ~ AND walk the walk?*



#### **A challenge issued!!**

We talk a lot about how much fun we have singing barbershop. And most of us say something like..."I wish I had found barbershop years ago." And of course we're always talking about increasing membership with such phrases as "Membership begins with me." That's called talking the talk. And we're really good at that part.

But let's talk about walking the walk. It has been said that "to keep on doing what we're doing and expecting different results" is pure folly. If our membership is to grow, we can't wait for national campaigns from BHS. It will only happen by personally inviting men of all ages to visit our chapter and chorus rehearsal.

Oh, you say you've already asked everyone you know? Well then, ask someone you don't know. A stranger is just someone you haven't met yet. I'll bet you can't remember the last time you asked a guest to visit. If you can, congratulations. If you can't, shame on you.

So the point to ponder is just this. Do you have what it takes to not only talk the talk but walk the walk? Do you have what it takes to commit to earning a Man of Note pin by recruiting at least one new member in 2016? If each of us will recruit just one new member we can substantially increase the size of the chorus this year. As of March 2016 we have 54 members on role. We have only 33 active and involved members participating. If each of us sponsors one new excited member, we'd have 66 active and involved members.

Who will add their name to the 2016 Man of Note honor roll? Who will be among the elite few who earns a MON Pin? Inviting men to visit a rehearsal is everyone's responsibility.

If you enjoy the hobby, just think, if you don't invite someone, you may be cheating them out of a life time of fun and friendships.

***You have been challenged! What is your response?***



# The Craft Corner

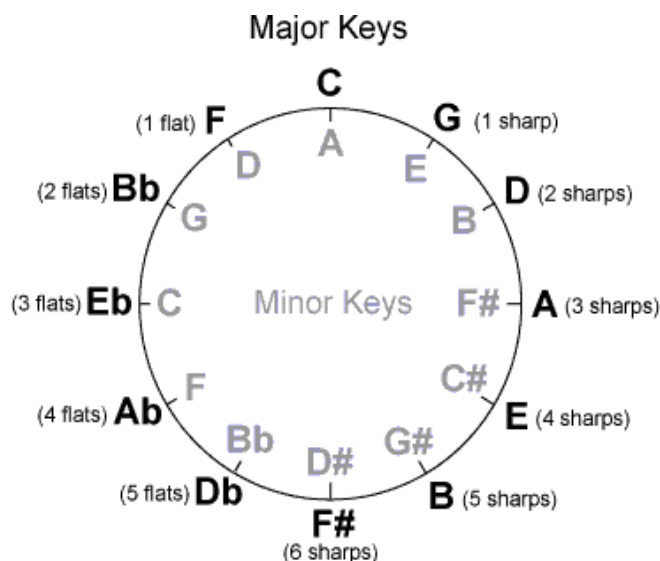
## The Circle of Fifths is a good learning tool

The Circle of Fifths is an easy way to find out the key signature of a song. Or what key the song is written in. The Circle of Fifths tells you how many sharps or flats are in a given key.

The key of C has no sharps or flats. It is called the Circle of Fifths because as you go clockwise you go up a fifth. For example, the fifth note of the C major scale is G. The fifth note of the G major scale is D, and so on.

In other words, as you go clockwise each successive note is a fifth above the previous note. As you go counter-clockwise, each note is a fifth below the previous note.

It is also true that as you go clockwise each note is a fourth down from the previous note, and as you go counter-clockwise each note is a fourth above the previous note.



The internal relationship that makes this possible is the fact that going up a fifth and down a fourth brings you to the same letter note (though in a different octave). For instance going up a fifth from C brings you to a G and going down a fourth from the same C brings you also to G, but an octave down.

Notice how there are 12 notes corresponding to 12 numbers on a clock.

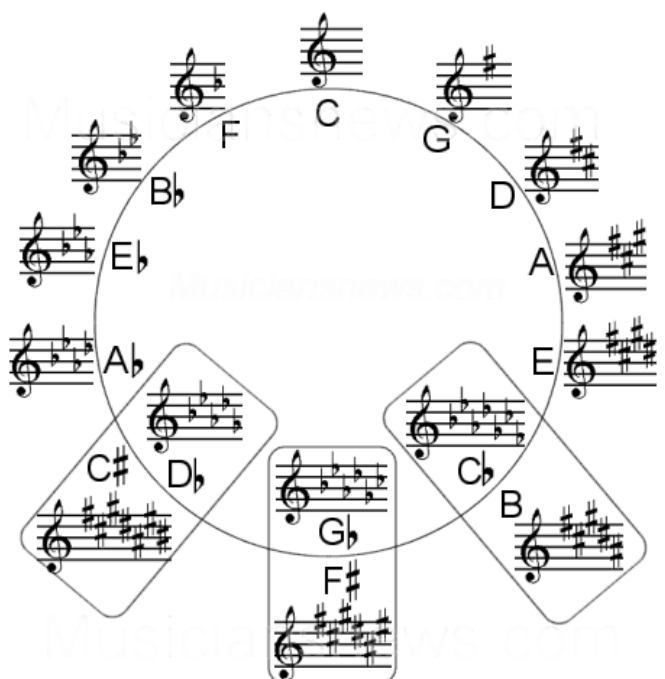
C is in the 12 noon position. G is in the 1 o'clock position and has 1 sharp. F is in the 11 o'clock position with 1 flat. D is in the two o'clock position and likewise has 2 sharps; (F and C. )

A is in the 3 o'clock position with 3 sharps; (F, C, G.) E is in the four o'clock position and has 4 sharps (F, C, G, D). B is in the 5 o'clock position and has 5 sharps (F,C,G,D,A). F# is in the 6 o'clock position and has 6 sharps (F,C,G,D,A,E)

As you can see the key of A has 3 sharps, and the key of Db has 5 flats. But how do you remember which notes are the flats and sharps?

If you always start at Bb and move counterclockwise you will get the flats in order. For instance in the key of Ab (4 flats) the flats in the key signature are Bb, Eb, Ab, and Db. Count Bb as 1 (the first flat) and continue counting counter clockwise to 4 (The fourth flat)

If you start at F (which is right next to Bb, the starting point for the flats) and move clockwise you will get the sharps in order. For instance the sharps in the key of A are F#, C#, and G#. ♪



## 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)

Mitch Gale (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)

**BARBERSHOPPING  
CAN BE FUN!**