



**"HARMONY
IN MOTION"**

The Chordsmen Chronicle



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Advice from the past applies today

By: Steve Kovach ~ Former Director

Ed. The following article was the Directly Speaking column in the March 2001 Chordsmen Chronicle written by Steve Kovach.. Trevor has been asking us to do just what Steve was asking us to do way back when. For this reason it's appropriate to reprint it.

Let's Talk About Performing! What does Webster have to say?

Perform – 1) to carry out an action or accomplish a task. 2) to do what is stated or required. 3) to present or enact an artistic work such as a piece of music or a play to an audience.

Boy, do I like definition number three. That seems to apply directly to us. We are performers. Does this definition of performing fall short of where we want to be? I think so.

When we are in front of an audience or when we are in "performance mode" during one of our rehearsals, we need to set a higher level than just, accomplishing a task", "doing what is required", or presenting a song .

We've all seen groups do only what is required in a performance. We saw them once and never went back, most likely. What we have to offer is more than the bare minimum.

Let's start with the mindset. When we perform, it has to be more than just singing the song all the way through. You will notice that we will begin to do just that in our rehearsals. We are going to sing our repertoire from top to bottom so we can begin to get a feel for the songs.

This is not performing. Performing is becoming the character within the song.

We have talked about *Irish Lullaby* and the character involved with that song. It's about someone who misses being at home in Ireland and is telling his grandchild about when his mother used to sing him to sleep. Even now, he can hear that beautiful music. We must get into that mindset every time we sing this song – audience or not!



Let's start a new task for each member. Take a look at each song and just read the words. Don't sing, just read as if it were a poem. Who is the character? Why are they saying these words? When is this story happening?

There are many questions to be answered just so we can perform the song to its full potential. From now on, when we perform a song, let's not just accomplish a task or do what is required.

Let's go above and beyond the call of duty. Let's become the character in the song, and share with the audience, the story within. I want to see it in your faces, hear it in your music and feel it from your hearts.

That is what will bring people back again and again to see the Fun Center Chordsmen! 🎵



Picnic and silent auction a huge success

By: R. F. Miller

"Don't throw it away, put it in the silent auction."

Those words echo through the chapter weeks ahead of the Fun Center Chordsmen annual picnic and silent auction that raises money for the chapter's Youth in Harmony program.



Members are encouraged to assemble any items, in good condition, to be put on the auction tables. This year, items ranged from a chain saw to candy bars with some electronic stuff in between.



Oh, and did I mention that one of the items was an airplane ride for two to anywhere in Ohio with a breakfast, lunch or dinner included.



Fun and fellowship were part of the before dinner activity. As guests looked over the items on the long bid tables, others sat and talked or told stories. The items on the bid table seemed so interesting that it was difficult to get everyone



seated for the invocation given by member Pastor **Dan Noe**.

There is no auctioneer in this process but the Emcee encouraged everyone, "if you see something you don't need or don't want, buy it anyway and bring it back to the auction table next year. This year, the auction raised over \$700.

But now to the fun stuff. The picnic is a "carry in" affair with each vocal section being assigned a food group, e.g. Leads main dish, Baris salad, etc.

Wow, what a layout. In all honesty, the wives of the



men probably did all the work in preparing the delicious food. You certainly couldn't go away hungry from that table.

After everyone had their opportunity to go back to the table for seconds, thirds, and then dessert, the entertainment began.

Some weeks back, president **Jim Frye** contacted **Doug Smelts**, who is the Executive VP of the Johnny Appleseed District, for the name of an up and coming quartet. Without hesitation, Doug said "The Regulars.



L-R Chris Boron (T) Peer Scalabrino (B)
Chris Buirley (L) Jon Geyer (Br)

And what a show they put on. Each song in their set brought resounding applause. Their final song drew a standing "O" with shouts of "one more." Their encore song was maybe one of their best.

Keep an eye on this group, they have the potential of going far in the JAD world of barbershop quartets.

After the show, the quartet had their time at the food table. As most quarts do, they didn't want to eat before they sang. There was a table for them to sit and enjoy the meal and the remaining agenda.



Doug Smeltz, representing the JAD, brought the group up to speed about what's happening in the rest of the JAD world.

He shocked us all when he told us how the total JAD chapter count as well as the member count had declined.


It was announced that the bidding would end in 15 minutes, at 8:20 and everyone was encouraged to check the bid sheets to see if they had been out bid. At 8:20 bidding was closed and everyone was asked to pick up their winning bid item, the bid sheet and bring both to the treasure for settlement. Treasure **Lorin Weaver** was the one to happily announce the total.

The night of fun was not over yet. It turns out that Doug recommended that The Regulars and Home Edition get together and let Home Edition sing a song



from their repertoire that would fit The Regulars. Here's a picture of the two quartets. Look at the two guys second and third from the left. That would be Chris Buirley and Jerry Starrett. If I were to tell you the song in question was "Blue (blew) Bayou (by you) would you agree with Doug's suggestion?

Then **Trevor Garrabrant** lead the Chordsmen and the Regulars in "Follow the Flag." As most barbershop events end, we didn't deviate from tradition. We ended the night with everyone, ladies and guests included, forming a very large circle for "Keep the Whole World Singing."



It was a great night of fun, fellowship and finance for the Youth in Harmony fund. 

Craft Corner

By: Steve Kovach ~ October 2005

The first issue that a new barbershop singer must face is to determine the voice part for which he's best suited. This chart shows the ideal vocal range for each of the four parts of barbershop a cappella singing.

Scale	Bass	Bari	Lead	Tenor
Bb				
A				
Ab				
G				
Gb				
F				
E				
Eb				
D				
Db				
C				
B				
Bb				
A				
Ab				
G				
Gb				
F				
E				
Eb				
D				
Db				
(Middle) C				
B				
Bb				
A				
Ab				
G				
Gb				
F				

 Advanced Repertoire
 Normal Ranges

Burned out on Barbershop?

By: Tom Webb

These are the times that try men's voices. In the course of our barbershop history there has been but one searing question for all those who profess a passion for our hobby: can you really burn out on barbershop?



Seriously, is that even possible for anyone who loves singing tags and ringing chords? The answer, in a nutshell, is a resounding or not so resounding, emphatic, or slightly emphatic....I suppose it's possible. No, really. I suppose it could happen to someone somewhere, but I just can't fathom that it really is a distinct possibility for anyone who loves this hobby.

I have met a number of certified crazy for this hobby people, some of whom I sing with regularly. Now these guys belong to two or three choruses, AND, two or three quartets, AND are in leadership positions in their respective choruses, AND some are even in leadership positions with the district or the national organization.

To say that these guys eat, sleep, dream, think and breathe barbershop is a vast understatement. And none of them is even remotely close to being burned out on barbershop. To the contrary, it appears they can't get ENOUGH of barbershop. Seriously, they seem to want more and more and more tag singing, chord ringing and harmonizing each and every day of the week.

Now you may ask "are these guys for real?" and that's a valid question, except that this is barbershop we're talking about here. This is the hobby where people will sing tags at all hours of the day or night, in any venue, whether it's a bar or bathroom or on top of the Empire State Building. And they will sing a tag with anyone, regardless of age, race, gender, creed or occupation. If they need a tenor it doesn't



matter if you're 16 or 60, have one eye, one leg or are in the hospital waiting for a heart transplant. "You sing tenor?" "Yep" "Good we've got a fourth, let's sing."

You have to be a little bit crazy just to be in this hobby. So getting burned out on barbershop just doesn't seem humanly possible does it?

Still, you may argue, it is possible to get tired of it all and want to say to heck with it. Really, this hobby requires a lot of work, and time, and energy and a little bit of money now and then. So, you can lose some of your enthusiasm for the hobby.

To which my answer is this: Until....Until you hear another chord ringing, or until you sing another tag, or, until you watch another quartet or chorus.

How do I know this? Because it's happened to me. Just this past weekend I was feeling kinda low, not really wanting to practice or listen to any barbershop songs. I'm currently singing in three choruses and a quartet, learning music for all three and getting ready for contest in less than a month.

I have listened to countless learning tracks in my car and sung along with them any number of times. So, this weekend I was ready to go outside and chuck it all.

NO MORE BARBER SHOP! Until quartet practice Sunday night. Until the first four part rendition of Heart Of My Heart. Until we rang some chords on Little Boy and Blue Velvet and Cabaret. Then I was hooked again.

Man I love this hobby!

Harmony
Magic

“Funny as a Crutch”

By: Dan Noe

Growing up in a family of four kids as I did, one can imagine the competition around the supper table to be the one to spark a laugh. We went to some goofy extremes to see who could make others smile or giggle or, better yet, bust out in gut-wrenching laughter. Occasionally, though, Dad would interrupt and say, “That’s about as funny as a crutch,” even though he was the “King of Corny.” Reviewing this later in life I imagined he was trying to inspire us to do a little more thinking before blabbing. Isn’t that great advice?!

Now to apply this little parable to Chorus Life, I’m drawn to the many ways we try to present, perform and appeal to the public and attract others to our craft. One of the top priorities is to have great fun. It seems nobody would deny this. I concur that we as a chorus do have great times together and wouldn’t want to sound like a complainer but would like to give effort to think about this.... blending fun with riser etiquette.

The first idea to consider is that we don’t normally create an agenda for a chapter meeting with a time-out for wit and humor, i.e., “at 8:10 we will stop singing for the purpose of the best-joke competition.” That may be because we all understand that real wit, humor and mutual fun is triggered spontaneously, usually as a coincidence with the normal flow of things.

The next idea tends to lead us out into the weeds a bit. We might ask, “who is the appropriate person to generate the fun?” Then, “when is the appropriate time to welcome the fun (oops, it might tend to interrupt the flow of rehearsing!)?” Then, “what is the limit for the content of the humor?” A common response might be that all these considerations have common sense answers. Hhhmmm, are the weeds starting to tangle around your ankles yet? Let’s tread onward. I’ve had the pleasure of singing in our chorus under five terrific directors. In every case I have appreciated the occasional efforts of each man to sprinkle wit and humor into our experience because he knows that having fun is a priority and humor is delivered like a flash of lightening with well chosen words to catch the irony or tongue-in-cheek sarcasm of the occasion. Can you imagine the result of some cutesy comment by our director being met with en masse

dead-pan, expressionless looks with no reaction (you know, like we do sometimes while singing)? (Yeh, that was supposed to be funny!) Well, that could easily traumatize a fella.

So then, you know, boys will be boys. They can’t resist joining in the fun-making. Actually, a good number of our members are pretty witty sots. Here is where we might start tripping in the tangled weeds. Cutesy comments and attempts at humor are at risk of being interpreted as interruptive or breaching the limits of etiquette, or disrespecting the director, or just being plain rude. So how do we handle the piling-on occasions before they require the chastisement rod around the head and shoulders, usually rendered by a self-appointed sergeant-at-arms who is well meaning but could be often identified as one of the pile-onners. Oops – I just fell into the weeds. I borrow a phrase from our song, “Sit Down You’re Rockin’ The Boat,” ---- “SAVE ME!”

Maybe if we link arms and help each other we can escape the weeds. First is by developing a cut-above level of patience. You know what they say, “Some can tell a joke and some can’t.” Be gracious to those who trip when they try. Then, be aware that there are more appropriate times than others to pull the pin on a humor grenade. As well, avoid the private huddle during rehearsing sessions which may appear to be rude and save it for free time. Then, let’s recognize that in our terrific brotherhood some have more sensitive ears in regard to the earthiness of some humor. The philosophy that “we are all adults here,” is not a truism. We are trying desperately to reach our youth and frankly, some attempts at humor are not appropriate for my grandson’s ears, or yours either (double entendre). I think keeping it family oriented is a good mantra.

Finally, in the best of all worlds, there will be times when the tom cats are hard to herd into the cage. In the place of the need for a Vesuvius eruption, I advocate for a signal/gesture that all could be trained to quickly respond to in order to draw us back to military “attention,” any suggestions? It seems this could save the sanity of our directors as well as avoid the tarnishing of our precious fellowship.

Our goal is obviously “Joy in the Journey” so we can be confident and effective in bringing others on our journey.

Now, wasn’t this little chat FUN, FUN, FUN, or “as funny as a crutch?” Don’t answer that!

No-way Noe



From The Boardwalk

By: Lee Cook ~ Secretary



Secretaries Report (Lee) August board minutes were accepted.

VP Music & Performance

Dave Kracker will look at riser positions and get them set before starting choreo for 2017 show.

VP Marketing & PR

Board Action Plan retreat is Saturday, November 5 at Southside Christian Church from 8:30am to ??? however long it takes.

Recommended type of mic for the Ren Theatre is the Crown PCC 160. Communicated with Chelsie Thompson, Director of Operations of the Ren. If we buy two of the mics, they will also buy two.

VP Membership: Ed Farrar:

Send note to members we have not seen in a while letting them know we miss them.

Chorus Manager: Dan Noe

November 11, 2016 @ 2pm Lucas Local Schools Veteran's appreciation program. Paid Gig

November 20, 2016 45 minute program for Thanksgiving Banquet at New Life Church Of Christ in Bellville.

Board Members At Large:

Terry Loughman told board many members have told him they appreciate the new longer sectional time we have been having.

New Business:

Stan Popp made a motion the chorus purchase two floor mics from Sweet Water out of Chorus Contest/Show Expenses 421 category in the 2016 budget. Seconded by Mike Craze. 11 Y 0 N

R.F. Miller made a motion to have "The Regulars" quartet at a cost of \$200 dollars sing at the Fun Center Chordsmen Picnic. Seconded by Ed Farrar. 11Y 0 N



Failing to plan means we plan to fail

By: Stan Popp ~ Exec VP

As we are aware, a date has been set for early November for the Board to work on a strategic plan to guide the future of the Fun Center Chordsmen. In order for this process to be successful, every member of the chorus needs to have input. That means between now and then, every member should be giving serious thought to where you want the chorus to be over the next few years.

This doesn't require every member to come up with a way to remodel the chorus in its entirety or to solve every potential issue, but to suggest areas for improvement or change that will be positive for the future of the chorus.



Let us all take some ownership for the future of the Fun Center Chordsmen – whether that means staying as we are or changing a few things or changing many things or growing or

shrinking.

Since R.F. Miller has already started us on the path and spent much time in preparation for this process, let's make sure his time hasn't been wasted, by doing absolutely nothing.

We have so many positives already, such as awesome directors, great section leaders, dedicated members, etc., that a strategic plan for the future should be very doable. So, let's do it.

Or as **Steve Kovach** said in April of 2005, now's the time to earn your GDRU degree from the Get R Done University. 🎵



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) (419)-989-9895 (contact)

Jerry Starrett (L)

Bill Herdman (B)

Dave Kracker (Br)

**BARBERSHOPPING
CAN BE FUN!**