



TOOSDAY TOONS



Monthly publication of the NASSAU MID-ISLAND CHAPTER of the Mid-Atlantic District
The Long Island Harmonizers meet every Tuesday at Winthrop Hall, Church of the Advent
555 Advent Street, Westbury, Long Island, Nassau County, New York at 8:00 P.M.

www.longislandharmonizers.org

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TOOSDAY TOONS

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Harold Verity

Barbershopper of the Year

Steven Brausa

NASSAU MID-ISLAND RESORTS TO A MORE INFORMAL INSTALLATION NIGHT



"RIGHTS" OF PASSAGE: Officers and trustees of the Nassau Mid-Island Chapter for 2010 raise their right hands, pledging "We do," following their official installation. Bill Ennis, (*far left*) former Northern Division Vice President, officiated.

Steve Brausa acclaimed 2009 Barbershopper Of The Year

Awards Chairman Vinnie Colonna (right) is all smiles as he presents the most coveted award in barbershopping, the BOTY Award, to Steve Brausa.



(For more Installation Night news and photos please turn to page 3)

SINGING VALENTINES: Sing your heart out February 12 - 13 - 14

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CHAPTER CENSUS

Jan. 30, 2010

Regular Members	34
Senior Members	28
Student	1
Life Member	1
TOTAL	64

PRESIDENT GEORGE'S SPACE***An incurable romantic***

I remember when I was in college, long, long ago, being told that I was an incurable romantic. At the time, I considered it a compliment, and I guess I still do. It seems strange, then, that as I grew older, much to my wife's dismay, that I had absolutely no use for Valentine's Day.

I regarded it as a contrivance of Hallmark in order to enhance revenues between Christmas and Mother's Day.

During my first year in the chorus, I signed up for the Singing Valentines program, but hoped I wouldn't be picked. When SV Chairman Bob Heim assigned me to one of the traveling quartets, I honored my commitment somewhat reluctantly, both because I was inexperienced and rather nervous and because I thought the whole idea silly. I couldn't believe people would actually pay money to have us do this.

Since that first experience, I've delivered scores of Singing Valentines and have observed all kinds of reactions from those who received them--impatience (*let's get it over with*), embarrassment and even sheer joy. I remember one lady tearfully remarking that it was the nicest thing that ever happened to her! I've even had some people say that the price was a bargain and voluntarily pay more than the stipulated fee.

We even had one customer buy one for his wife a second time, despite her warning him that she'd be angered if he did it again. I don't know what happened after we left, but while we were there, she appeared to be anything but angry at him!

This will be my fifth year of participation, and I'm raring to go. I can't wait to see who I'll meet this year and how they'll react.

Of course, we all love to sing or we wouldn't be here in the first place. It's great to share our love of music with each other every week and to socialize, as we do, with so many who share a common interest. For me, however, it just wouldn't be as valuable an experience without our public performances, large and small, where, for a little while at least, we can enrich the lives of our audiences.

I have to admit that I'm still not a great fan of Valentine's Day as a holiday, but I just LOVE to see how, when we connect, we spread so much joy. I guess I'm still somewhat of a romantic.

Singing Valentines

The Singing Valentines Locator on the internet provides the names of five singing groups from the Barbershop Harmony Society and Sweet Adelines International that are offering their vocal talents to convey the message of Valentine's Day in the New York metropolitan area. Topping the list are quartets from the *Long Island Harmonizers (BHS)*. Other groups include the *Island Hills Chorus (SAI)*, the *Westchester Chordsmen, (BHS)*, the *Greater Nassau Chorus (SAI)* and the *Blue Chip Chorus of Bergen County (BHS) in New Jersey*.

Joel Fairman, Chairman and Coordinator of the program for the Nassau Mid-Island Chapter, had this to say:

"I'm only a rookie with the Valentines program (*this is my third year at the helm*), but I find it one of the most satisfying activities in barbershopping. Hopefully, you'll all experience the emotional impact on the target as you sing the two signature songs, with a red rose and card also in the delivery package. Moreover, the revenue from the program is an important source of income for our own charitable activities.

"This year, **Steve Brausa**, my co-director and quartet CEO, and **Maurice Debar** have instituted a creative program for setting up and expanding the number of participating quartets, rehearsing the songs, and working on our stage presence.

"When the deliveries are scheduled for February 12, 13 and 14, you will get a detailed package with your routings and the rose and card for each visit. You'll be dressed in tuxedos with red cummerbunds and bow ties. (See **Dave D'Antonio** if you don't have a complete outfit.)

"Meanwhile, each week at rehearsal you'll find flyers to be posted in offices, supermarkets, etc. My cell phone number is on the flyer as the contact person, and I arrange each call with the purchaser."



A UNIQUE SINGING VALENTINES PROGRAM IN RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

(Scanned from *The Assembly Line*, a publication of the Triangle Park Chapter in Raleigh, North Carolina, Paul Martin, Editor



A Mardi Gras Valentine

Valentines 2010 will have a Mardi Gras theme.

by Paul Martin

Yes cupid's arrow will be guided by Bacchus as Valentines Day and Mardi Gras collide. Valentines, February 14th, falls on a Sunday this year. Mardi Gras, or 'Fat Tuesday' is Tuesday the 16th. Bridging the two will be the King of Hearts Carnivale at Springmoor Retirement Community on Monday, February 15th.

These guys (below) from the Harbor City Harmonizers (I know not where) were caught modeling Nassau Mid-Island's Singing Valentines uniform when I googled the internet for Singing Valentines clipart. (Editor)



DIRECTOR'S DIVERSIONS

Does the director really sing out of tune?



If you think there are people who sing every note in tune, let me tell you about this bridge in Brooklyn that's for sale. There are championship quartets who give poor performances. Case in point: at the international competition our friends, *Reveille*, now known as *Big Time*, had a bad hit in the first round. The tenor got very sick the night before from food poisoning. You can bet he missed more than his share of notes. My quartet sang at my dance recital. I had little to no voice. The performance was mostly three-part harmony. Were my few notes in tune? Most of them, I hope. You need to be physically in shape to sing. Singing is a physical sport. Unfortunately, in high school, you don't get a letter for singing.

All performances are based on habit. If you consistently sing in tune in practice, you have an excellent chance that your public performance will be good. **You don't suddenly get better!** Perfection is a habit. It's good enough for government work. We've all heard that one. Sometimes I think it's true. Certainly China feels this way--it's good enough for America. They buy anything if it's cheap. We accept poor quality coffee. We accept poor quality television. What really proves it? We accept McDonalds!

During this past Christmas season, I heard many versions of the traditional carols. Some were beautiful, some were out of tune! The average listener accepts mediocre singing because they can't do it themselves. Especially, they can't sing in harmony. It's a mystery to them. You have a curse. You have a director who wants to improve; that is, improve himself. My ears are getting better. It's a curse for me and a curse for you. But it has its benefits--beautiful music making.

Do I make mistakes? You bet. At one quartet rehearsal, I kept telling the bass to get brighter, brighter. It didn't solve the problem. On a whim, I tried going the opposite direction. Guess what? It solved the problem. Sometimes I think the problem is people singing out of tune when it really is a vowel match problem. But if you notice, I keep coming back with new approaches to the same problems. I'll solve the problem. **It's not good enough!** Sometimes this involves change. Yes, I change the notes and change the arrangement. I spend weeks before introducing a song experimenting with interpretation. I try to anticipate the problems that may occur in mastering the song. It may go too high. It may be too fast. We have to agree on vowel match and pronunciation. This is the preparation a conductor goes through. Sometimes, after all the planning, it doesn't work and you have to try a different approach. Thus, there is change.

We all fear growing older. Some people don't. They change, they learn and adapt. If you have not learned how to use a computer and the internet, I hate to tell you--you are getting old. Our oldest member in years, but certainly not in spirit, got us onto the internet. No old fashioned newsletter--it's now online. That's change for the good. Where will you be at 92? Will you be at barbershop rehearsal dancing away or in some craft class in a nursing home? Stay young! We have lots more songs to learn together. 🎵



Maurice and Ted join forces

Our director, **Maurice Debar**, (*far left*) and **Ted Norton**, a retired music professor, whose "Singing Better" articles have appeared in the last five editions of *Toosday Toons*, have come up with the one key element in our singing that will make us a better singing chorus. That key element is **SINGING IN TUNE**.

In preparing the chorus to perform to its utmost in this April's annual show, "*Fantasy Express*," Maurice has been stressing intonation in many ways--either by "onion skinning," or pointing his thumb skyward in an effort to raise our pitch, or even jumping up and down repeatedly in an effort to raise the pitch. In a similar vein, Ted Norton, addresses the five factors in "tuning" that will lead to better singing. (*See pages 6 and 7*). 🎵

THE SONGS WE SING

South Rampart Street Parade

--Contributed by Vinnie Colonna from Wikipedia



Rampart Street is a historic avenue located in New Orleans.

The upper (*up river*) end of the street is in the New Orleans Central Business District. After crossing Canal Street, it forms the inland, or northern border of the French Quarter (*Vieux Carre*).

The street gets its name from the wall, or “Rampart” (*Rempart in French*), that was built on the north side of the street in the city’s early years to fortify the early French colonial city. Today, the portion of Rampart Street from Canal to St. Claude Avenue has four lanes, separated by a tree-lined median. Like Canal Street, Carondelet Street, and other streets in New Orleans, Rampart Street features classic light posts reminiscent of the past.

Across Elysian Fields Avenue, the street continues into the Faubourg Marigny neighborhood, then splits off from St. Claude Avenue to become a single lane one-way street through residential neighborhoods. It continues into the Bywater neighborhood. With a break from the Industrial Canal, Rampart Street resumes in the Lower 9th Ward.

The famous “Eagle” building at Rampart & Perdido Streets is a jazz history landmark.

The section of Rampart Street, downriver from Canal, is designated as North Rampart Street; that upriver as South Rampart Street. Above Canal Street, South Rampart Street continues to Felicity Street. In the 19th century, the “South Rampart Street” designation continued into Uptown New Orleans. This section is now named Danneel Street. In the early and mid-20th century, Rampart Street on either side of Canal, was the center of an important African-American commercial and entertainment

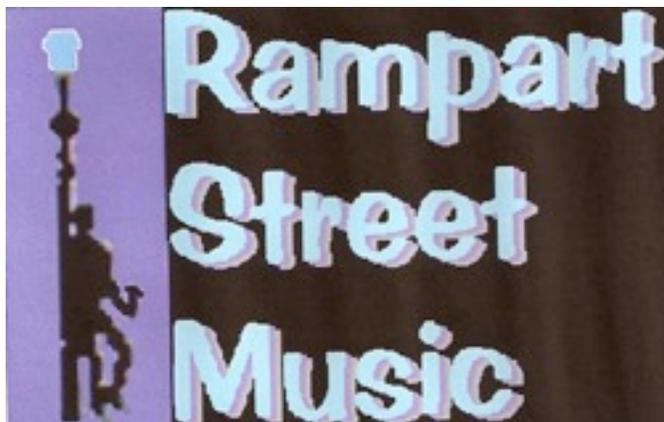
district. It was mentioned by Anne Rice in *The Mayfair Witch Chronicles* as being unsafe to venture north of the Ramparts, as the area beyond that can be risky.

Famous landmarks on Rampart Street include:

- Lois Armstrong Park--the site of Congo Square and home of the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park.
- Our Lady of Guadeloupe Chapel (The Old Mortuary Chapel)--Built in 1826, the oldest surviving church building in New Orleans.
- The Center of Jesus the Lord (Old Carmelite Convent)--Built in 1895.
- St. Mark’s United Methodist Church--Built in 1924.
- Eagle Saloon & Odd Fellows Hall--19th century lodge building is perhaps the most important surviving building from the early days of jazz, having been the base for the famous “Eagle Band” and where Buddy Bolden, Freddie Keppard, Buddie Petit, Louis Armstrong and many other early jazz greats played.
- Iriquois Theater--an African-American cinema and vaudeville house, managed by Clarence Williams in the early 20th century.
- The State Palace Theater (formerly Loew’s State).
- WWL-TV, Channel 4’s television studios (former 7-UP bottler).

- The Saenger Theater.
- The J & M Music Store and recording studio at the corner of Rampart Street and Dumaine, where Cosimo Matassa recorded such musical luminaries as Professor Longhair, Champion Jack Dupree, Big Joe Turner, Fats Domino and many others. Longhair’s anthem, “Mardi Gras in New Orleans,” and Dupree’s version of “Frankie and Johnny” both mention the intersection explicitly.

Rampart Street has also been commemorated in such tunes and songs as “South Rampart Street Parade,” “I’ve Got The Blues For Rampart Street,” and “Saturday Night Fish Fry.” 🎵



BETTER SINGING--A FIVE-PART SERIES

1. Tuning 2. Alert Singing 3. Tone Production 4. Acoustics 5. Pitfalls

1. Tuning

Singing in tune needs almost constant attention, particularly in barbershop singing, because of its emphasis on “ringing chords.” It’s true that some (people) seem to almost always sing in tune, but that’s probably not the norm. **Almost always** when singing is out of tune, it is **flat**. Singing sharp is a rarity, usually caused by over energetic compensation for trying to not sing flat.

Here are some factors that make tuning a challenge:

1. INTERNAL & EXTERNAL

First, let’s explore how people who sing in tune do it. Probably because of extensive musical experience they hear music very strongly in their heads. Everyone needs to **hear the pitches internally** before the sounds can be produced by the voice. If a person needs to rely on an external source, such as other singers or an accompaniment, before knowing what to sing, they will be late and probably be out of tune--at least at the beginning of the note. That balance between internal hearing and external hearing is an interesting one. We can’t rely entirely on the internal if we are going to sing with others. But the percentage of each that controls what we produce in our singing is different for different people and thus may account for the accuracy of some and the inaccuracy of others. A major problem is that some hear their own voice as a reference and when it is not in tune, they use that out-of-tune note for adjusting subsequent notes. The solution is to listen more to the sounds around us and/or our internal sense rather than what we are producing.

2. THINKING WRONG NOTES

When the singer does not know his notes very well, he may aim the jump at the wrong note and then adjust into the correct note as he hears others. But that usually makes the note out of tune. A

particular problem is aiming a half step off--a common bass error--and then sliding in. Obviously the solution to this problem is to learn the notes thoroughly.

2. Alert Singing

3. ALERT & KNOWLEDGEABLE SINGING

Probably the most common reason for flat singing is **lack of effort**. But lack of effort is **hardly ever intentional** and should not be chided. People may come to a singing activity tired and weary after a day of exertion--whether physical, mental, emotional or any combination of the three. Our vitality may be low because of excessive heat and/or humidity, and on some days we’re just not feeling well. **Regardless, we have to sing in tune**, and so we must approach singing with vitality and alertness. We need to be knowledgeable of where our problems are, and then be alert when they come up. Even soft, peaceful sections require intense attention to sing well. Part of our warm-up routine should be to **wake up our minds** as well as our bodies to get us ready for the task of singing. It’s more than a physical problem. and the solution is mental determination to compensate for our current weakness. Rather than chiding others for not singing in tune, we should motivate them to energetically come to the task.

4. HIGH NOTES

Particularly notes in the **upper extremes** of our modal voice take more energy. A large jump to this area requires solid attention. Easy, relaxed singing will not do it.

5. LONG TONES

Long notes are also particularly problematic. We can sometimes get away with fast in-between notes not being right on, but when we land on a longer note, they need to be correct.

3. Tone Production

6. TONE QUALITY

Another cause of intonation problems is **tone quality**. A tight, heavy tone quality can cause flattening. Particularly register control can be the culprit. See my website on [“Singing Better Thru Register Understanding.”](#) Even a slightly off register adjustment can cause flattening. High breathing can contribute to a heavy quality since it tends to cause tension in the voice box area.

7. OUT OF RANGE SINGING

Many barbershop singers are required by their part to sing out of their range. Especially some leads have not developed the ability to properly use their **“register control muscles”** as they ascend toward the falsetto register. They need to work on *sotto voce* singing and the *passagio*. (See the above cited website.) Leads are often leads because they want or need to sing the melody, not because that is the best part, range-wise for their current stage of development. If they find it difficult to control the *sotto voce* area and use a head voice, they might be better off singing either the bass or baritone part and working on singing a harmony part. Though the baritone range is about the same as the lead, it doesn't require strong singing on the upper notes, which is where the problem occurs. Another solution used by an adept director may be to suggest alternate notes at certain points for the lead singers with this problem.

4. Acoustics

8. JUST INTONATION AND EQUAL TEMPERAMENT

There are certain notes in chords that tend to be sung out of tune. The 3rd of a chord is especially problematic and not taken seriously enough. The discrepancy between the **Equal Temperament Major 3rd** (use in tuning pianos) and **Just Intonation** (that we attempt to sing in barbershop) is significant, as there is almost a quarter of a half step discrepancy (called the **Syntonic Comma in acoustical terms.**) Because of this and also because the 3rd is so critical in our harmonies, as it controls the difference between a major and a minor chord, I believe **the 3rd is very confusing to many ears.** To sing it in tune,

we need to get a clear understanding of the true pitch of a Just Intonation Major 3rd and also a Just Intonation of a Minor 3rd. Jim Richards has an excellent (though technical) explanation of the Just Intonation problem in an article called “Here Is Why Some Guys Sing Flat.” He explains that as we go around the “Circle of 5ths,” we will lose about a quartet of a half step in pitch if we keep the exact pitch for common tones in successive chords. For further information see my topic, **“Acoustics,”** or look up **“Just Intonation”** in Wikipedia.

Ideally the melody should be sung in Equal Temperament to keep a constant pitch level, but the other parts should harmonize in Just Intonation. Since the Equal Temperament 3rd is higher than the Just Intonation 3rd, it means this is the way we need to deal with the 3rd. **If you're singing the melody, be sure the 3rd is high enough. If your singing harmony at the moment, then tune the 3rd to the root and the 5th.** Obviously that means the root needs to be in tune with the melody note and the 5th in tune with the root.

Regardless, the important point is that we make sure our 3rds and also the barbershop 7ths (minor 7th) **are in tune.**

5. Pitfalls

So, if singing in tune is a problem, what do we conclude?

That we must be knowledgeable and alert as to what is happening both to us and to the music. We need to be sensitive to the condition of our voice at the moment, regardless of why, and control it as best we can with alert singing.

THE PITFALLS &/OR SOLUTIONS:

1. The **internal hearing** balanced with external hearing?
2. Notes accurately learned?
3. Knowledgeable and **actively involved** in singing?
4. High modal register notes?
5. Good **tone quality**, especially register control?
6. **Long notes** in tune?
7. Adjust **3rd** of the chord?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

There is also an excellent presentation of the **Tuning Problem on the Barbershop Harmony website, called “[Learn the secret of in-tune singing.](#)”**

Happy Singing! 🎵

FANTASY EXPRESS

NASSAU MID-ISLAND'S 60TH ANNUAL SHOW

SATURDAY, APRIL 10 (8:07 PM)

SUNDAY, APRIL 11 (3:07 PM)

CARLE PLACE HIGH SCHOOL

168 CHERRY LANE

CARLE PLACE, NY

featuring

THE LONG ISLAND HARMONIZERS CHORUS

CHAPTER QUARTETS

GUEST QUARTET "CHORDHOUSE STEPS"



Chordhouse Steps (left to right) George Schwerdt, Tenor; Joe DiPaola, Lead; Rusty Williams, Baritone; and Don Reckenbeil, Bass

Notwithstanding the fact that the Nassau Mid-Island Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society has been staging its annual show for 60 years, there are still new features to this year's show, entitled "FANTASY EXPRESS." First, there's the new venue--Carle Place High School; second, there's a matinee performance (*Sunday*) for the first time in memory; third, shows on Saturday and Sunday (*designated tickets only*) represents a new format; and fourth, tickets bought at the door will all be for the same price, \$15.

"Fantasy Express" will take our audience on an imaginary trip through the U.S.A., during which they will be treated to glimpses of states such as California, Texas, Tennessee (Chattanooga), Oklahoma, New York, Massachusetts, and New

Jersey. Chorus Director Maurice Debar has been concentrating on several vocal techniques to bring the chorus up to the next level. At the same time, he is grooming the singers in the event they decide to enter the Northern Division contest in May.

The March and April editions of *Toosday Toons* will contain a more detailed description of our guest quartet from the Hunterdon County Chapter in New Jersey. Judging from their photo, however, it would appear we will be in for a degree of hilarity along with their vocal renditions. 🎵

February is sign up month for 5th Annual Harmony Brigade

Neal Siegal, a native Long Islander and dynamic member of Manhattan's *Big Apple Chorus*, has informed M-AD Quartetmen of the 2010 Harmony Brigade, which has rapidly become one of the district's premier annual events.

In his communication, Neal went on to explain that only 124 qualified participants (31 men per voice part) is the limit. They expect this year's Brigade to be another exciting, sold-out "eXtreme Quartetting" rally. The rally date (again) is August 20-22 in Wilmington, Delaware.

To quote Eddie Holt, of *Lunch Break* fame,

"It's the most pure, unadulterated, in your face quartet [censored] fest available--complete with a contest, concert and back-slapping fraternity. What other events offer all this in as concentrated a form?" 🎵

Nassau Mid-Island's Installation Night

(cont'd. from page 1)



Bill Ennis, (at left), who recently had completed a five-year stint as Northern Division Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic District, presided over the installation of officers and trustees at a regular weekly meeting of the chapter at Winthrop Hall on Tuesday evening, January 5. In so doing, he provided a wealth of administrative information, describing the structure and day-to-day functions of the Barbershop Harmony Society, both at the district and international levels. This information proved to be particularly appropriate for the recent newcomers to our chapter.

This year the chapter opted to waive the traditional formal dinner-dance, in which to perform the installation ceremonies. In no way, however, did it diminish the importance of the two awards handed out that evening--the Barbershopper of the Year award (BOTY) (see page 1) and the Meritorious Service Award to **Harold Verity**. (below).



MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD FOR 2009

Hal Verity (left) shown receiving plaque from Past President Vinnie Colonna, acknowledging his "loyalty, service and dedication" to the *Long Island Harmonizers*. 🎵 (Photo by Heim)

MEET ROBERT C. SHOTTER

--by none other than BILL RUTH



We are indeed fortunate to get some great musical talent from the recently disbanded Marian Male Chorus. **Ray Shotter**, our latest arrival, is joining our illustrious (poetic license) baritone section.

Ray and his wife, Barbara, have been married for 42 years and have four married children--Janet, Jennifer, John and Jim. (They could have a mixed quartet called

"The Four J's.")

Ray was born in Brooklyn and grew up in Stewart Manor (A town made famous by hosting one of our recent chapter parties). Ray went to Bishop Loughlin High School and then on to Iona College in New Rochelle, majoring in Philosophy. (Who once said that philosophy is a study, which enables men to be unhappy more intelligently?)

In the late '60s Ray attended graduate school at Adelphi University under the G.I. bill, having served in the U.S. Marine Corps. (I'll bet Adelphi didn't teach some of those Parris Island lessons.) Later he worked for LILCO for 18 years as an Information System Auditor (He claims he had nothing to do with their escalating rates.) Subsequently he officially retired from St. John's University where he had been a project manager for computer hardware security. (He had to check and make sure all the machines were turned off for the night.)

Ray loves to play golf and go to the beach. (I hear he's in the sand bunkers so often he thinks he's at the beach.) He was introduced to the *Long Island Harmonizers* through **Neill O'Neill**, as they were both former members of the Marian Male Chorus. (Another Man of Note award for Neill.)

We're glad to have you with us, Ray. Keep America Singing.

Bill Ruth 🎵

CHAPTER CHATTER

SPLINTERS FROM THE JANUARY BOARD MEETING



Tuesday, January 12, 2010

- **Chapter Development Vice President John Brolly** announced that the principals at Old Westbury Garden would like to re-schedule the snowed-out Christmas Concert some time in the Spring.
- Brolly is developing a database to consolidate and track down chorus sing-out information.
- **Music and Presentation Vice President Gene Kammerer** informed the board that the title for the 2010 annual show is "*Fantasy Express*." He also announced that there would be a meeting of the Music and Script Committee on January 19.
- **Marketing and Public Relations Vice President Bob Heim** updated the board on website changes and plans for promoting the Singing Valentines program and the Annual Show in April.
- Arrangements for a new Chapter Photo are in the works.
- **Scott Brannon** has been engaged to coach the chorus at the Saturday rehearsal, March 13.
- **President Seelinger** has distributed a member survey to determine the interest of the chorus members to participate in the Northern Division Contest on April 30 and May 1.
- A motion by **Treasurer Steve Stojowski**, proposing to create a donation fund, the use of which would be restricted to paying for our participation in competition, was narrowly defeated by a 6 to 5 vote. 🎵

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

- Feb. 4 Elaine Glicksman
- Feb. 6 Sally O'Connor
- Feb. 9 Bob Croshere
- Feb. 10 Joan Rampolla
- Feb. 13 Harry Ruvolo
- Feb. 14 Chiz Bell
- Feb. 16 Glenn Howard
- Feb. 18 Agatha Ruvolo
- Feb. 25 Nancy Massaro



WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

- Feb. 11, 1951 Bart & Joy Peluso
- Feb. 15, ? Joe & May Rinaldi

DISTRICT NEWS

M-AD Digest Number 842:

Reminder: Rahway, NJ--Novice Quartet Contest - Feb. 2010 Dear Fellow Barbershoppers:

The Rahway Valley *Jerseyaires* will sponsor the 49th Annual Novice Quartet Contest on Saturday evening, February 27, 2010.

Where: The Roosevelt Elementary School, 811 St. Georges Ave. (Rte. 27) & Stanton St., Rahway, NJ

When: Starting at 7:30 PM

To qualify as a 'Novice Quartet' for this contest, "No more than two members of a Novice Quartet may have competed in ANY quartet that qualified to sing at a District-level (fall) contest and only one of those two men may have advanced to or sung at the International level, whether by the route of Pre-Lims or District-level contests." Any of your Chapter quartets, which fall within the definition of a 'novice quartet' are invited to attend and ring a chord for our panel of Judges and for the enjoyment of our audience. We also welcome your fellow Chapter members and their families to this contest.

Admission is free to the public, and we'd like to see a large audience to cheer on these novice quartets. 🎵

M-AD Digest Number 849:**MAD Membership Committee**

Are you a MAD barbershopper who is tired of hearing all the talk about membership declines and ineffective methods employed to stop the bleeding? Do you have ideas from the most obvious to the most insane to help grow our chapters or keep members? Would you be willing to spend a little bit of time helping MAD, and even the BHS, on membership matters? If you said "yes" to any of the above, I need to hear from you! I have just recently started my post as the MAD VP for Membership, and I am reaching out to my fellow MAD men for some ideas and manpower. If you have the time and care about membership, shoot me a note at njbslead@yahoo.com! It would be great to hear from you and let's make a difference together!

Christian Hunter
MAD DVP Membership
Lead-Hunterdon Harmonizers
Lead-Plead the 5th Quartet 🎵

DIDJA EVER WONDER -
...ABOUT THE UGLY
STEP-SISTER VOWEL?

by Tom Wheatley
from *Charivari*

From time to time, Director Rick mentions that we should avoid singing this particular vowel sound. He calls it the ugly step-sister of the entire vowel family and with good reason, it seems.

Other vowel sounds have the characteristic that they are predominantly comprised of harmonically related frequencies. Harmonic relationships produce the ring we love. However, there is one vowel sound that is notably different. That's the "a" sound found in such words as mack, back and all those words with the "ack" sound embedded.

To investigate this vowel farther, we have to go back to a word I first learned in elementary school grammar class, "onomatopoeia," which comes from the Greek words, onoma and poiein. If you don't believe me, just ask Jim Kimos. The term refers to words that are formed by imitating the sound that something makes. Two fine examples of this are "whippoorwill" and "moo." However, the one word

I want to use for illustration is the sound of a duck, "quack."

Several months ago, I saw a Mythbusters television show that investigated why it appears that a duck's quack does not produce an echo. From a purely acoustic point of view, all sounds are capable of producing an echo, which is merely a reflection of the original sound. It turns out that the quacking of a duck consists of noise without any discernible harmonic content. One characteristic of noise is that when you add noise to noise, all you get is noise. When a duck quacks, whatever echo is produced from nearby objects blends in with the original sound.

This brings us back to the "a" sound of discussion. Since it is all noise, it is impossible to harmonize the sound. Ergo, we should do our best to shade the vowel sounds of such words to a vowel sound having more harmonic content. Ask Rick how to do this, since I haven't yet found a way to make the words I put on paper actually sing at all, much less with harmonic content. 🎵

MASSARO-ISMS

(*Nassau Mid-Island's synonym for "puns"*)

- A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm and says, "A beer, please, and one for the road."
- Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other, "Does this taste funny to you?"
- An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.
- I went to buy some camouflage trousers the other day, but I couldn't find any.
- A group of chess enthusiasts checked into a hotel and were standing in the lobby discussing their recent tournament victories. After about an hour, the manager came out of the office and asked them to disperse. "But why?" they asked, as they moved off. "Because," he said, "I can't stand chess-nuts boasting in an open foyer."
- Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly, it sank, proving that you can't have your kayak and heat it, too.
- And finally, there was the person who sent twenty different puns to his friends, with the hope that at least ten of the puns would make them laugh. No pun in ten did. 🎵

(*Speak to Joe if any explanations are needed.*)

CHECK THESE DATES WITH YOUR POCKET CALENDARS

FEBRUARY

- 2 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 9 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 12 - 13 - 14 **SINGING VALENTINES** (See page 3)
- 15 Board of Directors, Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 16 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 20 Saturday Chorus Rehearsal, Winthrop Hall, 9:30 AM
- 23 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 27 M-AD Novice Quartet Contest (See page 11)
- 28 Final day to register for American Harmony Brigade (See page 8)

MARCH

- 2 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 7:30 PM
- 9 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 7:30 PM
- 12-13 M-AD Spring Convention, Harrisburg, PA
- 13 Saturday Chorus Rehearsal at Winthrop Hall, Scott Brannon, Coaching, 9:30 AM
- 15 Board of Directors, Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 16 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 7:30 PM
- 23 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 7:30 PM
- 27 Saturday Chorus Rehearsal at Winthrop Hall 9:30 AM
- 30 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 7:30 PM

APRIL

- 6 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 7:30 PM
- 8 Dress Rehearsal, Carle Place High School, 6:30 PM
- 10 ANNUAL SHOW, Curtain Time: 8:07 PM
- 11 ANNUAL SHOW, Curtain Time: 3:07 PM
- 12 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 13 Board of Directors, Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 20 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM
- 27 Chapter Meeting at Winthrop Hall, 8:00 PM

APRIL 30 - MAY 1 Northern Division Convention
Hilton Hotel, Scranton, PA

JUNE 18 - 20 HARMONY COLLEGE EAST
Salisbury, MD

JUNE 27 - JULY 4 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
2010

AUGUST 1 - 8 HARMONY UNIVERSITY
Missouri Western State University
St. Joseph, MO

Nassau Mid-Island Chapter Barbershop Harmony Society

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