



the north shore harmony rag



August 2003

27 Members



Joseph Schlesinger, Third Assistant
Temporary Editor and Royal Keeper
of the Minor Typos

North Shore Chapter,
Society for the
Preservation and
Encouragement of
Barber Shop Quartet
Singing in America, Inc.

Meetings:
7:45 p.m. Wednesdays,
Presbyterian Home,
3131 Simpson St.
(Golf Rd.), Evanston, IL
(*Guests are welcome!*)

Volume 31, Issue 8

*Evanston
Harmony
Days*

Our Society staff is planning on moving out of Harmony Hall by Oct. 30, now that the building has been sold. They will relocate all operations to the Sheridan Building at Sheridan Rd. and 80th St. in Kenosha.

You can still visit Harmony Hall if you wish, but you'd better hurry. Group visits are no longer being offered, and individual visits will be discontinued after Oct. 15.

Illinois District Celebrates Early Fall Convention

Alchemy Turns Bronze into Gold

Fall came early to Illinois District this year, or rather Fall Convention did, as our annual autumnal gathering occurred almost a month ahead of its customary time.

As a result of the rescheduling, attendance was lighter than usual. Nevertheless, 19 quartets provided a highly entertaining competition, rivaling last spring's contest for overall quality.

For the first time since 1968, a current member of North Shore Chapter won the district championship. **George Sotos** and his quartet, **Alchemy**, provided a thrilling pair of performances that won first place honors. The other quartets in the top five were **Fired Up, Wound 4 Sound, Four O'Clock Sharp**, and **tsunami**.

As if winning district weren't enough, George attained a double honor by being the bass of another quartet that has qualified to represent Illinois District in the senior

quartet contest at SPEBSQSA Midwinter Convention in Biloxi, Miss. That quartet is **Savoir Four**, which also includes former North Shore member **Lynn Hauldren**.

Past champion quartets **Chordiac Arrest, Sharper Image**, and **Cheers!** joined current champs **Aces High** in performing at the President's Reception.

New Tradition Wins Chorus Contest—Bada Bing Bada Boom

It was no big surprise that Northbrook Chapter's **New Tradition Chorus** emerged on top of the 13 choruses in this fall's contest. They turned in an impressive final performance of their soldier set to win their 14th district gold.

Second- through fifth-place choruses were **Sound of Illinois Chorus** (Bloomington #1), **West Towns Chorus** (Chicagoland West Suburban), **Great Plains-men Chorus** (West Peoria Metro), and **Second City Chorus** (Rockford Metro).

Be sure to check the calendar on page 2 for **Shoreliner Chorus** commitments during Evanston Harmony Days.

We now have a venue for the Oct. 19 Vocal Showcase: Unitarian Church of Evanston, 1330 Ridge Ave. The hall seats 200-300 and has its own sound system.

A number of vocal groups and choirs have expressed an interest in participating in Evanston Harmony Days. Once we complete the schedules for the two concerts, we will announce who the other performing acts are.

We have contacted the music staff at SPEBSQSA's Harmony Hall to find an instructor for the Tuesday night vocal workshop. As yet, no one has committed to lead the session, so we are still looking. Any suggestions? If so, talk to **Joseph Schlesinger**.

Inside This Issue . . .

Fall District Convention • Evanston Harmony Days

Calendar • Reminder About Sept. 13 • Entertainment Books Ready to Be Sold

Barbershop Craft: Singing in Tune—Part Three

"From the Top"

Former Member Hospitalized • New Member • Chapter Roster Update

Barbershop Pioneers Convention • Quartet News

1

2

3

4

5

6

CHAPTER OFFICERS

President:

Joseph Schlesinger — 847/328-0921

V.P. Membership & Chapter Development:
Noble LeHew — 847/966-5412

V.P. Music & Performance:

Bill Remien — 847/864-8753

Secretary: Phil Schwimmer — 847/298-4283

Treasurer: Edward Price — 773/334-1419

Immediate Past President:

Bill Remien — 847/864-8753

Bulletin Editor:

Joseph Schlesinger
1570 Oak Avenue, #416

Evanston, IL 60201

phone: 847/328-0921

e-mail: zinger99@juno.com

(backup: schlesmail@yahoo.com)

Rag Deadline: Second Wednesday of Every Month

Board Meetings: First Sunday of each month. The September Board meeting will be held at 7:45 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 14, at **Lois Karlin's** home, 8353 Springfield Ave., Skokie. All chapter members are welcome.

Chapter Web site:
<http://evkhome/northstarnet.org/bflat>
(Current Rag issue is also on the Web site!)

Reminder About Sept. 13

Saturday, Sept. 13, is Not-for-Profit Day at Evanston Farmers Market (University Pl. at Oak Ave., Evanston). As we did last year, North Shore Chapter will have a table where our bulletin board will be on display, literature about our chapter will be available, and members will obtain the names, addresses, and phone numbers of prospects that we hope to recruit as future members.

Our chorus will perform intermittently from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. We will need members to arrive by 8:30 to set up the table, chairs, and exhibits. We will also need at least two non-singers (e.g., wives, family members, friends) to work the crowd and get information on the signup sheets, so please line up people to help out—more is better than fewer.

Attire for the chapter members is the chorus casual outfit: blue pullovers, dark slacks, and black shoes and socks.

No organized plans for activities following our appearance—such as a chapter lunch or party—have been made. We'll leave that up to the discretion of the participants . . . provided anyone has any energy left after we wrap up.

COMING EVENTS

North Shore Chapter:

Every Wednesday night—**Informal Guest Night**—BRINGASINGA!

Sat., 9/13—**Evanston Not-for-Profit Day at Farmer's Market**—9 a.m.-12 noon at University Pl. and Oak Ave., Evanston. We'll gather around 8:30 to set up. Wear chorus casual outfit (blue pullover, dark slacks).

Sat., 10/11-Sun., 10/19—**Evanston Harmony Days and Arts Week Evanston.**

Sun., 10/12—**Music Showcase**—2 p.m. at Music Institute of Chicago, 610 Grove St. (at Chicago Ave.), Evanston. **Shoreliner Chorus** will be one of the performing acts. FREE!! Open to the public.

Tues., 10/14—**Vocal Workshop**—7 p.m. at Elliott Hall, Presbyterian Home, 3131 Simpson St., Evanston. All North Shore Chapter members are encouraged to attend. FREE!! Open to the public.

Wed., 10/15—**Guest Night/Open House**—7:30 pm. at our regular meeting place: Elliott Hall, Presbyterian Home, 3131 Simpson St., Evanston.

Sun., 10/19—**Vocal Showcase**—3 p.m. at Unitarian Church of Evanston, 1330 Ridge Ave., Evanston. **Shoreliner Chorus** will be one of the performing acts. FREE!! Open to the public.

North Shore Chapter Web Site:
www.nsn.org/evkhome/bflat

Elsewhere:

Thurs., 9/4-Sat., 9/6—**21st Annual Barbershop Pioneers Convention**—See page 6.

Fri., 9/19—**Interstate Woodshed**—8 p.m. (dinner at 6:30) at American Legion Hall, Hwy. B, Silver Lake, Wis. For information, call the hall at 262/889-8255 or **Gerry Carroll** at 847/678-0092.

Barbershop Harmony Chicagoland Web site:
www.bbs.singer.as

Entertainment Books Are Ready to Be Sold

Pete Brandt has received an inventory of 2004 *Entertainment* discount coupon books and has kicked off this year's sales campaign. As was the case last year, books cost \$20 each, and the chapter keeps \$4 for each book sold.

Gentlemen, our chapter is in a financial crisis this year, and we need as much help as you can muster. Please begin your most aggressive selling campaign ever: talk to everyone you know. These books can save their users a lot of money!

OUR
MISSION
STATEMENT:

North Shore
Chapter of
SPEBSQSA is
a group of men
of all ages who
enjoy gathering
in fellowship to
sing in the
four-part, a
cappella, close
harmony style
known as
barbershop. As
we participate
in our varied
social and
musical activi-
ties, including
both choral and
quartet singing,
our members
can develop
their vocal skills
and their
appreciation of
the rich heritage
of American
song, which we
share with our
community
through
performances
in a variety of
settings.

This craft article began in our June issue and concludes with Chapters 6 through 9.

If references to different degrees of the major scale seem confusing, perhaps the following key to solmization might help.

In any major scale . . .

1st degree=DO (tonic)

major 2nd=RE (supertonic)

major 3rd=MI (mediant)

perfect 4th=FA (subdominant)

perfect 5th=SOL (dominant)

major 6th=LA (submediant)

major 7th=TI (leading tone)

octave (8th)=DO (tonic)

We'll discuss minor scales some other time.

Barbershop Craft: Singing In Tune—Part Three

—Fred King (Dundalk, Md. Chapter)

Chapter 6

In prior chapters we mostly addressed internal causes of flatting. There are also a number of external ones that contribute.

Humidity has a depressive effect and will cause the singer to flat because he is emotionally depressed and lacking in vitality.

Poor ventilation, stale air and extreme heat all cause chorus flatting. To counteract, the singer must use extra vitality. He should select quick moving, cheerful songs in major keys, breathe deeply and maintain an excellent posture. An extra measure of director enthusiasm will help under such conditions.

"Dead" auditoriums cause flatting. This can be overcome by speeding the tempo slightly. In a "live" place, slow it down a little.

Programming two or more numbers in the same or related keys immediately together can cause some degree of tonal deafness, resulting in flatting.

Sometimes a slight speeding up of tempo on the slower numbers will eliminate a tendency to go flat.

Chapter 7—Song Effects Considerations

If you are coaching or involved with a chorus that tends to go flat, here are some things you can look for in the composition of the song.

- Most choruses sing more in tune when they are singing major keys, rather than in minor ones. This infers that accustomed

hearing affects pitch, since we are used to hearing and singing in major keys. Therefore, it is a good idea to have a chorus vocalize in minor keys as well as in the major ones.

- If the chorus has pitch difficulties, avoid pieces filled with chromatic progressions. Stick to the diatonic scale.
- If the vowels in the text are predominantly EH, IH, or EE, this may contribute to flatting since many choruses and quartets control these vowels poorly.
- If the tessitura (average range of the melodic line or voice part) of one or more parts lies consistently in its high register, this could cause flatting.
- The tessitura of one or more of the voice parts that fall consistently in the "break" area will cause flatting. Singers sometimes have only one area of two or three tones that are sung off-pitch habitually. This is most frequent on the several notes just below the break.
- Melodies that descend and suddenly turn upward are harder to keep in tune.
- Intervals that are repeated in sequence tend to lose their proper interval relationship in a short time.
- Many diphthong combinations can cause flatting.
- Because we sing unaccompanied, we don't sing on the equal-tempered scale that the piano uses.

Therefore, it is necessary to adjust the pitch to tune the chords accurately. If one part is out of tune, check to see if the proper adjustments are being made of the degree of the scale.

- The major 2nd must be sung higher than the piano.
- The major 3rd is raised even more.
- The perfect 4th is sung flatter than the piano sounds. As a result, the actual interval between the raised 3rd and the flatted 4th winds up being very small.
- The perfect 5th is sung only slightly higher than the piano.
- The major 6th is raised much above the piano.
- The major 7th is raised above the piano and is very close to the 8th.
- Flats are lower than enharmonic sharps. Any accidental in a song calls for more treatment than the same sign in the signature would.

Whole steps are usually spaced too close together when singing the ascending scale and too wide when descending. The same is true for half steps to an even greater degree. Vocalizing on whole tone scales and chromatic scales is very good practice. Vocalizing from half steps up to octaves slowly on "lah" will also improve the problem. Wide intervals and chromatics passages are easy targets for flatting.

Continued on page 4—
see CRAFT

Craft (continued from page 3)

Chapter 9—Final Discussions

A few more intervals and melodic progressions that are harder to sing in pitch are:

- 4th and 5th degree of a minor scale.
- 3rd, 6th and 7th steps of chords.
- Augmented step (6th to 7th) of the minor scale.
- Leading tones, particularly for the lead and baritone.
- 7th scale step, particularly in modulation.

Singing a sustained note against a melody line that is descending. The sustained

note will usually try to follow the descending part. The mental concept of moving upward against the descending scale will correct this.

Violent or abrupt changes from pp [pianissimo, or very soft] to ff [fortissimo, or very-loud] or vice versa may affect the pitch.

Maintaining an accurate pitch is an ideal to hold before the singers you are coaching. Express proper gratification when it is achieved, providing the singing is satisfactory in other aspects. An occasional and moderate departure from true pitch is not a catastrophe. It is inherent in the amateur barbershop singer. It will

happen, hopefully as the exception rather than the rule, so always try to remind your quartets and choruses that it's very rare that an audience or judging panel will react positively to a performance that is flat or out of tune.

Since poor intonation can be heard by most listeners and since there are so many reasons for a singer to either flat, sharp or otherwise deviate from the tonal center, a good and responsible coach will keep this subject in focus as a priority. He will become intimate with concepts and techniques of in-tune singing.

—from Dundalk, Md. Chapter *Charivari*,
Tom Wheatley, editor

“From the Top”

We have a busy couple of months ahead of us as we embark on one of the most ambitious programs we have ever undertaken: Evanston Harmony Days. This week-long celebration ties in with a very necessary member recruitment drive that will intensify with our appearance at Evanston Not-for-Profit Days on Sept. 13 and our Open House on Oct. 15.

These events will command a greater time commitment than usual from our members, and we ask you to make every effort to participate. Our chapter's survival relies very much on how successful we will be in attracting new members and generating new public performances for our chorus and quartets in the immediate future, as a result of these events.

Some very important developments of which you should be aware:

- In the second half of October and early November we will participate in Jewel/Osco's Shop and Share program and Dominick's Benefit Days. These are programs that benefit nonprofit organizations like ours at no expense to our members or to our treasury. All we will need to do is get copies of the preprinted slips into as many people's hands as possible, so that those individuals can present the slips to store cashiers when they make their purchases on the designated days. Our chapter will receive a contribution based on a portion of the total purchases for which slips are submitted. More details will be presented in the September *Rag*.

- The suppliers of our chorus formal uniform, Buy-A-Tux, have closed their retail store, and we need to locate another supplier of the red vests or replace

the vests entirely. Either way, there will be some changes in our wardrobe operation, and possibly some minor expense to members if the vests are replaced. We're just letting you know in advance.

• Likewise, our ID badge supplier has overhauled their price structure, so that our chapter will incur a sizable setup fee each time new badge stock is ordered. This will, however, be absorbed as new members join the chapter and pay the initiation fee, which most likely will need to be increased slightly.

These factors underscore the importance of our bringing new members into the chapter as quickly as possible and establishing more paid chorus performances. Please cooperate and help out as much as you can.

—**Joseph Schlesinger**
President

GET READY FOR IDAH 2004!

The Illinois District Academy of Harmony (IDAH) will take place Friday evening, Feb. 6, and all day Saturday, Feb. 7, in Peoria.

This miniature version of Harmony College will include coaching for a very limited number of choruses. Wouldn't it be great if we could all share the benefits of this program? The financial burden wouldn't be too great if we all began saving now.

Let's all plan to reserve that weekend for IDAH.

It's that time of year when our nominating committee convenes to select the next year's slate of chapter officers. Please consider making your talents, expertise, time, and energy available should a committee member tap you on the shoulder. Also, whether you are nominated or not, please consider attending COTS (Chapter Officer Training School) Nov. 15 and 16 in Decatur. It's invaluable administrative training that will go a long way to developing our future leaders.

Former Member Hospitalized

Dick Robbins, a former member and past president of North Shore Chapter, recently suffered a major stroke at his home.

Paralyzed on his left side and unable to talk, he is currently hospitalized at West Suburban Hospital, 3 Erie St., Oak Park, until family members can find an extended care facility for him. Doctors have not expressed much optimism on his prospects for significant recovery.

We will inform you of new developments as we learn of them.

Meet North Shore Chapter's Newest Member

Welcome **Larry Kohn** to our lead section. Larry is a retired pharmaceutical sales representative and an active member of the Evanston Bicycle Club.

He discovered our chorus just after we finished our set at the Custer's Last Stand Festival of the Arts in June and decided to visit us. He and his wife Dale live in Rogers Park.

**We still have plenty of room for growth . . .
Have YOU Brought a Guest Lately???**

Tidbits from Harmony Hall

Jack Baird Old Barber-Shop Era Music Library Audio files available in MP3 format

Jack Baird, renowned Society arranger, has made available his very extensive library of old recorded music. Jack has recorded all of the vinyl disks that the Society owns. Originally they were on reel-to-reel tape, but they are now available on the Society web site in MP3 format.

"I did it so we would have library copies of the sounds of barbershop from the beginning of recorded history to today," Baird said. "I don't think it should just be forgotten."

The files go back to the very first days of recorded music—1894—and run up through 1972. While they make for very interesting listening, the files are extremely valuable as archival material.

The files are available on the Society web site (www.spebsqsa.org) in Members Only under "Society Info

& Services" or at <http://www3.spebsqsa.org/Jack-Baird/>.

Walk of Fame Honorary life members get their "star"

The **Osmond Brothers**, SPEBSQSA honorary life members, have been awarded their star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Thanks to **Ken Custer** (via the Harmonet) for the information below.

"I think one of the first breakthroughs for SPEBSQSA public relations happened several decades ago when our own **Val Hicks** made a wonderful discovery and helped the four Osmond lads to (eventually) become famous as a young barbershop quartet on the **Andy Williams Show**.

Chapter Directory Update

Drop:
Scott Beatty

Add:
Larry Kohn (Dale)
lead
2528 W. Jerome St., #D
Chicago, IL 60645
(773) 761-5784
larkowin@yahoo.com
exp. 9/30/04 (2003)

Change e-mail address:
Tom McCracken
moonmcc@cox-internet.com

Change address:
Paul Smalley
2700 Lawndale Ave.
Evanston, IL 60201

"Even though it was Andy Williams who has taken most of the credit for this 'discovery,' I'm sure Val would be one of the first to admit that it really doesn't matter who gets the credit so long as the results end in a positive experience.

"On August 7, 2003, the Osmonds received their star on the famous Hollywood Walk of Fame at 7080 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, Calif. And for those who want to know precisely where their star is located, check it out at <http://www.hollywoodcoc.org/walkoffame/directoryframe-set.htm>."

—from SPEBSQSA
LiveWire
Reed Sampson, editor



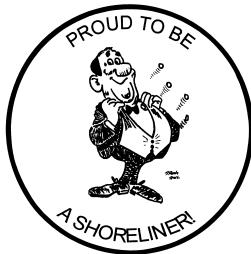
2004
International
Convention
June 27-July 4

Y'all come
to Louisville!

P. O. Box 741
Evanston, IL 60204

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 265
Evanston, Illinois



The North Shore Harmony Rag • August 2003

"Anything that
is too stupid to
be spoken is
sung."

—Voltaire

Join the Fun at Pioneers

The 21st Annual Barbershop Pioneers Convention is coming to Chicagoland Thursday, Sept. 4, through Saturday, Sept. 6—and it promises to be loads of fun.

This gathering attracts Barbershoppers from all over the country who want to recapture the informality of old-time barbershop get-togethers. The customary pick-up quartet contest will occur Friday night, and the parade of quartets will take place Saturday night.

Location is the Midway Motor Lodge (Best Western), 1600 Oakton St. (at Busse Hwy./Rt. 83), Elk Grove Village. Admission is free. See **Joseph Schlesinger** for more information.

Quartet News

Congratulations once again to **Alchemy** on winning the Illinois District championship! Kudos also to **Savoir Four** for achieving the highest score in the seniors category, thus qualifying to compete in the SPEBSQSA senior quartet contest at Midwinter Convention.

North Shore Four (Mimura-Remien-Jones-Schlesinger) performed at a 75th birthday party at a home in Evanston Sunday morning, Sept. 7.

There's a new quartet in town: **Lake Shore Four**.

Dick Yanow has joined forces with three colleagues from Northbrook Chapter (**Bill Byrd**, **George Moloney**, and **Eric McCann**) to form the foursome. They have no performances scheduled yet.

Joseph Schlesinger has been invited to act as backup bass for **Gadzooks**, now that their regular bass has moved to Edmonton, Alberta. His first public performance with the quartet will be at the Barbershop Pioneers Convention Saturday night, Sept. 6.



entertainment.
The Premier Source for Discounts and Promotions

Get your books from
Pete Brandt!

SELL them! SELL them! SELL them!
And please turn in the money you collect PROMPTLY!