



# the north shore harmony rag



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!)

December 2003

27 Members

Volume 31, Issue 12

Life is not  
measured by  
the number of  
breaths we  
take, but by  
the moments  
that take our  
breath away.

## Chapter Adopts Vision Statement

Members of North Shore Chapter voted unanimously on Nov. 19 to adopt the following chapter vision statement, in addition to our existing Mission Statement.

North Shore Chapter of SPEBSQSA will:

1. Provide, to whatever extent possible, organized chorus activities and organized quartet activities at every regular chapter meeting.
2. Actively seek public performance opportunities for the chapter chorus.
3. Continuously strive to increase its active membership.
4. Continuously strive to improve the musical

quality of its chorus as a collective unit and the musical ability of its chapter members as individuals.

5. Contribute to the cultural panorama of the communities from which our organization draws its membership, thereby:
  - a. Increasing its visibility in the local community and fostering a positive perception of our organization,
  - b. Enhancing public awareness of, and appreciation for, barber-shop harmony, and
  - c. Creating opportunities to recruit new members.

## Singing Valentines Program Ready to Go



**Kevin Jones** will serve as our 2004 Singing Valentines chairman, and **Larry Kohn** will assist him. We are anticipating a very active program in the coming year, more successful than last year's, since Valentine's Day falls on a Saturday. Please make yourselves available to sing in quartets and cooperate fully with Kevin and Larry.

## Slate of Officers Elected

North Shore Chapter members have unanimously elected the following slate of officers for 2004:

President:

**Martin Steigman**

V.P. Membership & Chapter Development:

**Joseph Schlesinger**

V.P. Music & Performance:

**Paul Mimura**

Secretary:

**Pete Brandt**

Treasurer:

**Edward Price**

**Bill Remien** will serve as immediate past president.

**REMINDER: Starting tonight, and until further notice, we will meet in the Milligan Room, down the corridor from Elliott Hall. Please make an extra effort to keep our meeting area neat. We thank you for your patience and cooperation during the renovation of Elliott Hall.**

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### 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

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**Rag Deadline: Second Wednesday of Every Month**

Board Meetings: First Sunday of each month.  
The January Board meeting is scheduled for 7:45 p.m. Sunday, **December 28**, at **Marty Steigman's** home, 4322 Greenwood St., Skokie. All chapter members are welcome. (Date is likely to change.)

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

## Ways and Means Update

The Jewel/Osco Shop and Share Days fundraiser we ran in October and November has brought us a total contribution of \$128.18. This figure is based on 5% of total purchases credited to us in the amount of \$2,563.61, representing 42 slips submitted and Jewel and Osco stores. Give yourselves a hand, gentlemen.

Our next project of similar scope and operation, Dominick's Benefit Days, is scheduled to occur the first three Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays in January (Jan. 5-7, 12-14, and 19-21). However, we have not yet received any form of written confirmation from Dominick's nor printed ID slips.

*Entertainment* Book Chairman **Pete Brandt** has announced that Dec. 19 is his deadline to turn in all unsold books and monies received for books sold. That means that tonight (Dec. 17) is the last chapter meeting at which members can settle up with Pete. If you miss doing so tonight, you must make arrangements individually with Pete to get squared away as soon as possible.

## COMING EVENTS

**North Shore Chapter:**  
Every Wednesday night—**Informal Guest Night**—BRINGASINGA!  
Sat., 12/20—**Sing Around the Kettle for Salvation Army**—11 a.m.-3 p.m. at Jewel Foods, 2485 Howard St. (just east of the North Shore Sanitary Canal), Evanston.  
Sat., 12/20—**Shoreliner Holiday Chorus Performance**—3:30-4 p.m. at Mather Pavilion at Wagner, 820 Foster St. (south side of Foster just east of the CTA tracks), Evanston. Let's car pool between Jewel and Mather Pavilion; parking up there is extremely tight.  
Wed., 12/24 and Wed., 13/31—**No Chapter Meeting**. Happy Holidays!  
Sat., 1/17—**Annual Chapter Dinner and Installation of Officers**—5:30 (cocktails) and 6:30 p.m. (dinner served) at Hackney's on Lake, 1514 E. Lake Ave. (just east of Waukegan Rd.), Glenview. Place your reservations with **Bill Remien**. See page 6.  
Sun., 1/25-Sat., 2/1—**64th Annual Midwinter Convention**—Biloxi, Miss.  
Fri., 2/6-Sat., 2/7—**Illinois District Academy of Harmony (IDAH)**—Peoria.  
Fri., 3/26-Sun., 3/28—**Illinois District Spring Convention**—Peoria.

**North Shore Chapter Web Site:**  
[www.nsn.org/evkhome/bflat](http://www.nsn.org/evkhome/bflat)

### Elsewhere:

Fri., 12/19—**Interstate Woodshed**—8 p.m. (dinner at 6:30) at American Legion Hall, Hwy. B, Silver Lake, Wis. All Barbershoppers invited; \$5 donation requested to defray expenses. 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](http://www.bbs.singer.as)

### Attention, Incoming Board Members!

The *Harmony Rag* welcomes articles contributed by Board members and committee chairs. Feel free to say as much as you would like; we reserve the right to edit copy as necessary. Our deadline for submissions is the second Wednesday of the month.

## November/December Guests

Gary Goodfriend (former member)  
David Pietz (former member)  
Fred Smart (former member)—with  
Frederick IV, Thomas, and Andrew  
("My Three Sons")  
Robert Teng (Schlesinger)  
Lodewijk Van Holsbeeck (Schlesinger)  
Steven Whitney (Schlesinger)

## 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 activities, 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.

Since this is my valedictory column as president, it's quite a bit longer than usual. I don't mean to bore you, but I hope you'll find it instructional.

When I was elected to my second term in October 2001 (my first was in 1989), I prepared the comprehensive plan at right and presented it at the first Board meeting of 2002.

In case you'd like to keep score, my evaluation of my track record over the past two years is made in the comments in italics following each objective.

## "From the Top"

"A whole lot of ideas isn't a plan . . . Ideas without a plan is usually just enough boulders to get you into the deep part of the stream, and no way to get back."

—Donald Westlake, *What's the Worst That Could Happen?*

The three components of a successful chapter (as exemplified by Northbrook) = Members + Music + Money

**Goal:** Offer **members** incentive for active participation.

**Objective:** Create opportunities for public performance.

**Strategy:** Produce at least one annual show (any format).

**Strategy:** Present an average of (1) chorus, VLQ, or North Shore Four performance per month.

*Status:* Evanston Harmony Days was a kind of show, but it fell far short of expectations. We failed to attain the optimal average number of performances; total chorus performances throughout the year increased in 2003, but total **North Shore Four** performances dropped.

**Objective:** Recognize and reward special efforts.

**Strategy:** Revive Tom Buckley (BOTY) Award.

- Present at annual officers installation (or annual banquet if there is one).
- Designee chosen by members at chapter meeting (not by board only or past presidents only).

*Status:* Accomplished.

**Objective:** Better communicate what chapter expects of members.

- Strategy:** Publish regularly-issued chapter bulletin.
- Appoint bulletin editor, if JS unable to do the job.

**Strategy:** Publish chapter 2002 calendar early and as frequently as updates require.

**Strategy:** Reexamine and update chapter Code of Regulations.

**Status:** Harmony Rag has been revived and is issued monthly. Each issue contains a calendar of events, although no annual calendar has been prepared in January. As a side note, having the president and bulletin editor be the same person is not good for the health of the chapter or the sanity of the president/bulletin editor. Code of Regulations has not yet been addressed—maybe we'll tackle it next year.

**Objective:** Assure ample pool of manpower to fill singing engagements and perform administrative duties.

**Strategy:** Build membership to minimum (20) active members by December 2002.

**Strategy:** Schedule (1) membership recruitment drive per quarter.

**Strategy:** Schedule (1) "Old-Timers' Night" (reunion of former members).

*Status:* We failed to meet our target number of active members, though we netted an increase of one from January 2002 through December 2003. We came close to the desired schedule of recruitment drives, never held an old-timers' night.

**Objective:** Provide opportunities for "fun" events in addition to "work" events.

**Strategy:** Appoint and install fully functioning program chairman.

**Strategy:** Schedule (1) social event per quarter.

**Strategy:** Schedule (2) interchapter events.

- With Chicago Metro and Arlington Heights in May.
- With Northbrook in fall (and/or Lake County if their schedule permits)?

*Status:* We had at least one interchapter meeting each year, though none of these involved Northbrook—I don't understand our reluctance to approach them. Greatness attracts greatness, and I had hoped that perhaps we could learn something from them. I've been assured all my

*New Tradition colleagues have had their rabies shots and will not bite off any Shoreliners' heads.*

**Goal:** Make North Shore Chapter **musical** experience more personally rewarding.

**Objective:** Provide encouragement to musical team.

**Strategy:** Pay musical director for all applicable chapter meetings and chorus performances.

- All payments up to date by last chapter meeting in 2002.
- Implement additional fundraising projects, if necessary to achieve this.

**Strategy:** Develop standby program for evenings when Dick Y. and Bill R. are absent.

- Require that Dick and Bill notify JS in advance of meetings they must miss.

**Strategy:** Encourage development and training of (1) additional assistant music director.

**Strategy:** Create and implement special "Fifth Wednesday" programs for January, May, July, and October [2002] (e.g.: quarteting only, woodshedding, tag singing, guest quartets, Int'l Convention videos, etc.).

**Strategy:** Appoint fully functioning section leaders for all chorus sections.

*Status:* We're not even close to bringing director payments up to date; in fact, we're now in worse shape than we were at the start of 2002, though steps are being taken to remedy the situation. No additional assistant directors have been named, but we do have four functioning section leaders . . . sort of. While Dick has been absent more evenings than he has been present during the last two months, Bill has been present to serve as a backup. No "Fifth Wednesday" programs have been implemented.

Continued on page 4—see "FROM THE TOP"

**“From the Top”** (continued from page 3)

**Objective:** Achieve top-five ranking in district spring chorus contest.

**Strategy:** Plan early to commit to competition.

**Strategy:** Prepare learning tapes in a timely manner, if necessary.

**Strategy:** Obtain affordable outside coaching.

**Status:** *We worked the plan and placed sixth in 2002 and won Most Improved Chorus. Unfortunately, in 2003, we didn't work the plan and slipped to ninth place.*

**Objective:** Form (1) new registered quartet containing at least (1) North Shore member.

**Strategy:** Appoint and install fully functioning quartet activities chairman.

**Status:** *Both accomplished.*

**Goal:** Develop ways to obtain ample **money** for chapter treasury.

**Objective:** Implement and promote Singing Valentines program for 2002 (Note: Feb. 14 is a Thursday).

**Strategy:** Begin review of “I Love You Truly,” “Story of the Rose,” and “Let Me Call You Sweetheart” with first chorus rehearsal in January.

**Strategy:** Appoint Singing Valentines chairman before December 31, 2001.

**Strategy:** Develop product package, pricing, and promotional plan immediately in conjunction with Arlington Heights Chapter.

**Strategy:** Determine manpower availability by January 23, 2002.

**Status:** *We had successful Singing Valentines programs in 2002 and 2003, and the chairman for the 2004 program has been appointed.*

**Objective:** Investigate new means to raise funds.

**Strategy:** Appoint a ways and means committee.

**Status:** *Accomplished. The Board is serving in this capacity.*

**Objective:** Complete budgeting process early in the year (by February board meeting?).

**Status:** *Budgets were completed and approved in late spring of both years.*

**Objective:** Seek new opportunities for paid chorus, VLQ, and North Shore Four performances.

**Status:** *We tried to do this, but lack of availability of some key singers for dates of potential paid performances severely hampered our ability to raise funds through this medium.*

**Goal:** The fourth M: **miscellaneous** — establish other philanthropic and educational projects to benefit our community.

**Objective:** Investigate local charities for chapter to support (financially as well as by other means) in addition to Harmony Foundation.

**Status:** *Accomplished. We have adopted EISMA as our local charity, in addition to Harmony Foundation.*

**Objective:** Establish and promote active Young Men in Harmony program.

**Status:** *Not undertaken.*

\* \* \* \* \*

It's certainly been bizarre heading an organization when I haven't been able to attend more than the last third of its meetings, much like running everything by remote control. I'd like to acknowledge my trusty Board members and committee chairmen for 2002 and 2003, without whom none of our accomplishments would have been possible. Thanks to you all for helping to build a stronger North Shore Chapter!

—**Joseph Schlesinger**  
President

**Mistakes**

If a barber makes a mistake, It's a new style . . .

If a driver makes a mistake, It is an accident . . .

If an engineer makes a mistake, It is a new venture . . .

If parents make a mistake, It is a new generation . . .

If a politician makes a mistake, It is a new law . . .

If a scientist makes a mistake, It is a new invention . . .

If a tailor makes a mistake, It is a new fashion . . .

If a teacher makes a mistake, It is a new theory . . .

If our chorus director makes a mistake, It is our mistake . . .

If a baritone makes a mistake, . . . who notices???

—posted to the Harmonet by **Bob Caldwell**

**Quartet News**

**Alchemy** gave a Young Men in Harmony presentation for the York H.S. Music Department in Elmhurst, Tuesday, Dec. 9.

**Chordmasters'** recent gigs include: Shriners Lodge, Minooka; Sing for the Sailors Thanksgiving, Arlington Heights; City of Chicago Department of Aviation, O'Hare Airport; Chicago Metro Chapter Installation Dinner, Chicago. They also participated in Operation North Pole, an annual Arlington Heights Chapter holiday tradition.

**North Shore Four** (Mimura-Remien-Jones-Schlesinger) caroled for residents at Oakwood Terrace in Evanston Sunday afternoon, Nov. 30. They (Mimura-Remien-Schwimmer-Schlesinger) will entertain arriving and departing passengers amid the holiday bustle at O'Hare Airport's International Terminal 5 Tuesday afternoon, Dec. 23, from 3 to 5 p.m.

**ATTENTION, MEMBERS!**

**Please remember to “feed the kitty” at each chapter meeting. We need your voluntary contribution in order to fulfill our financial obligations.**

**Many thanks for all your generous support.**

December is a time to reflect on Santa Claus. North Shore Chapter's Santa Clauses were the four men who constituted the Elastic Four, our Society's 1942 International Champion Quartet. These four men sponsored our chapter when it was chartered in 1945. While many of us remember Roy Frisby (lead), the last surviving member of the quartet, it was Frank Thorne (bass) whose contributions to barbershopping had the greatest impact on our Society.

## Who Was Frank Thorne?

*Any SPEBSQSA member who's not a member of another chapter is a member of the Frank Thorne Chapter. This is the largest chapter there is. So who is Frank Thorne? Here is an excerpt from Melodies for Millions, by Will Cook, published in 1965 for the 25th anniversary of the Society.*

... **Frank Thorne**, International President in 1946 and 1947. He was medium tall, slender, balding, very distinguished, with a mustache; he presented a commanding appearance but at the same time seemed to have a twinkle in his eye. He was an excellent business man, being vice president of one corporation and president of several others as well as a member of the board in additional companies. Frank was a good instrumental musician and a fine singer; he sang bass with the 1942 International Champion **Elastic Four**.

## Frank Thorne Helped to Make Us Great

—Fred Hinesley (editor, Macon, Ga. Chapter *Sharptalk*)

As regular readers know, I have a special interest in those people who, years ago, made extraordinary contributions to barbershopping, but about whom most people today are largely ignorant. Most modern day barbershoppers, for example, probably know very little about **Frank Thorne**, except that the Frank H. Thorne Chapter was named for him.

The *Society Rules and Regulations Handbook* states, "The chapter shall be called the Frank H. Thorne Chapter (in honor of one of our late past Society Presidents)." Thorne stands out even among those men who have served as our presidents.

He was a Society president who made monumental contributions. According to the book, *Melodies for Millions*, by **Will Cook**, Frank Thorne was appropriately named because he was remarkably frank. "He had a way of making comments and offering constructive criticism which was startling in its bluntness and brevity."

Nobody, however, seems to have taken offense at his comments and criticisms. Because of his sincerity, these were remarkably

Frank's trademark in the Society was his writing longhand notes in the margins of letters sent to him to mail back as replies. One of his most famous replies was one he addressed to then International Secretary **Carroll Adams**; at one point on a margin of a letter several pages long, Frank wrote: "Nuts!"

Frank Thorne was one of the most aptly named men; Frank was really "frank!" He had a way of making comments and offering constructive criticism which was startling in its bluntness and brevity, but you remembered what he had to say and you knew he said it for the good of the Society or your own personal good. He was outspoken but never mean or vindictive.

He had a sense of humor too. He was asked by the Executive Committee several years prior to his death to talk to a recalcitrant

District President, one who called a lot of us Communists and was really stirring things up. Frank was asked to tone him down.

When reporting on his success, he opened the conversation by saying, "I talked to God last night."

He was an excellent correspondent and took great pains to say the right thing and to be as helpful as possible in letters to arrangers and quartet men.



**Elastic Four**—left to right: Herman Struble (tenor), Roy Frisby (lead), Jimmy Doyle (baritone), Frank Thorne (bass) (1942 International Champs)

effective, and, besides, Cook wrote "He was never mean or vindictive."

Cook also noted, "He was an excellent business man, being vice president of one corporation and president of several others.

When he became Society president in 1946, he put his executive talents to good use. **Deac Martin**, in his book, *Keep America Singing*, noted that in administering Society affairs, Thorne worked through 20 committees and through International Headquarters "into which led the lines from a healthy group of chapters which might be expected to reproduce prolifically. And they did." During his administration, the Society added 120 chapters in a single year.

He was not only an able administrator, but also an excellent musician. Cook noted that when he joined the Society Thorne said "(I)t sounds silly, but I haven't heard any real harmony since I graduated from Illinois in 1913."

According to Martin during Thorne's years as an Illinois college student, he and another future Society great, **Maury Reagan**, performed an act in which Thorne "fingered a mandolin and picked a guitar held by Reagan who manipulated the mandolin plectrum while fingering the proper frets on the guitar."

Thorne, who had a fine voice, sang bass with the 1942 International Champions, **The Elastic Four**. From the time they became champions until 1946, when Thorne became international president, this quartet, Martin wrote, "criss crossed the country like a fire works pattern."

Even though most modern day barbershoppers may know very little about this man who used his talents to contribute to much to our Society, he is one of those to whom we are indebted. Because of him and others like him, we enjoy the benefits of belonging to a great Society today.

—from the PROBE Web site  
([www.harmonize.com/probe](http://www.harmonize.com/probe))

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"Since singing  
is so good a  
thing,  
I wish all men  
would learn  
to sing . . ."

—William  
Byrd, 1588

## Contest, Anyone?

Amid our year-end activities, we are giving serious consideration to sending our **Shoreliner Chorus** to competition in Peoria during the weekend of March 26-28.

We still have loads of preparation, but the music committee has recommended that we dust off two old favorites, "Hello Mary Lou" and "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Baby," to polish up as a contest set, with "Pretty Baby" in reserve as a possible replacement for one of the songs.

**Dick Yanow** has assured the music team that his work schedule ought to allow him more time to work with the chorus during the time leading up to, and through, contest.

## Reserve Your Seat for Annual Dinner

Saturday, Jan. 17, is the big day when we hold our annual dinner and install our 2004 officers. The event will start at 5:30 p.m. at Hackney's on Lake, 1514 E. Lake Ave. (just east of Waukegan Rd.), Glenview.

Twenty-four members and their guests have signed up with **Bill Remien**. The \$28 dinner charge includes tax and tip, and attendees may choose from the following main courses: butt steak, fish, chicken breast, and Hackneyburger. There will be a cash bar.

Our guest quartet will be **Alchemy**, current district champs, and **John Cain** will perform the installation ceremony. Plan to share this fun evening with us. Bill needs your dinner payment no later than Wednesday night, Jan. 7.

## Some Musical Christmas Shopping Advice

Make out your Chopin Liszt early before Debussy season, when you have time to check out where Verdi good bargains are, can still get gifts Fauré good price, not have to Handel large crowds and have time to bring Bach things you decide you don't want.

As always, season's greetings, and I wish you what you wish me.—J.S.