



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!)

September 2003

27 Members

Volume 31, Issue 9

We have resolved the problems mentioned in the last *Rag* regarding the suppliers of our chorus formal uniform.

Buy-A-Tux will continue to sell the same uniform parts to us, but members will order directly from Buy-A-Tux and pay them for their uniforms.

Prices will be similar to what the chapter has been paying, with a nominal charge for service and shipping added for each order.

Uniform Chairman **Pete Brandt** can tell you more.

The time of our big harmony festival is drawing nearer.



October 11-19, 2003

- On Sunday afternoon, Oct. 12, arrival time for Music Showcase warmup is 1:55 (different from what was announced at meeting). The concert begins at 2:00; our set is scheduled to start at 2:35. Location is Music Institute of Chicago, 1490 Chicago Ave. (southwest corner of Chicago Ave. and Grove St.), Evanston, but please use the Grove St. entrance. You will probably need to park on-street or at the Best Western (formerly Holiday Inn) parking garage around the corner on Sherman Ave., so it's wise to arrive early. Attire is chorus formal.

- On Sunday afternoon, Oct. 19, arrival time for Vocal Showcase warmup is 2:30 at Unitarian Church of Evanston, 1330 Ridge Ave. (southwest corner of Ridge Ave. and Greenwood St.), Evanston. Enter the parking lot from the south side of Greenwood. The show is scheduled to start promptly

at 3:00, but we have not yet determined the order of appearance for the performers, so we are unable to tell you at this time when the **Shoreliner Chorus** set begins. Attire is chorus formal.

- The Vocal Workshop will occur Tuesday evening, Oct. 14, starting at 7:00, at our regular meeting place, Elliott Hall. **Dan Smith, Jr.** has volunteered to be an instructor, and there may be others. Because this is a North Shore Chapter event, we need and expect chapter members to be in attendance.
- Our Guest Night/Open House will be Wednesday, Oct. 15. Please plan to be there—we need maximum turnout. Let's all wear our North Shore pullovers.
- Admission to all events is free, and the public is invited, so please help us get the word out to everyone you know. There is an Evanston Harmony Days Web page:

<http://evkhome.northstarnet.org/bflat/ehd.html>

Not-for-Profit Day Was . . .

. . . not what we expected.

Dreary, rainy weather seems to have discouraged many Evanstonians from visiting the Farmers Market on Sept. 13, but our exhibit and chorus performance did attract a few individuals, so it certainly cannot be considered a wasted effort.

Thanks to all members who turned out. Thanks also to **Ted Briggs** for lending us his umbrella—this year, it came in very handy.

Dick Robbins 1933-2003

Anyone who belonged to North Shore Chapter from 1958 to 1988 knew **Dick Robbins**. Dick was one of those rare North Shore members who truly earned the sobriquet, "Mr. Barbershop" and influenced the direction our chapter took for many years.

Dick passed away Sept. 10, following a series of strokes.

Continued on page 4—
see ROBBINS

Inside This Issue . . .

Evanston Harmony Days • Evanston Not-for-Profit Day • Dick Robbins	1
Calendar • Three Fundraisers Need Your Support	2
How to Turn a Stranger into a Friend	3
Tips for Successful Recruiting • Eat Your Hearts Out, Basses!	4
Additional Information About IDAH • "From the Top"	5
'Liner Notes • Quartet News	6

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Rag Deadline: Second Wednesday of Every Month

Board Meetings: First Sunday of each month. The October Board meeting is canceled; the Board may meet briefly during October to transact urgent business. The November Board meeting will be held at 7:45 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 2, at **Phil Schwimmer's** home, 3432 Salem Walk E., #AG, Northbrook. All chapter members are welcome, and all newly-elected Board members are encouraged to attend.

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

Three Fundraisers Need Your Support

#1: *Entertainment Books*: We've been selling these popular discount books for years; each year's campaign has netted us between \$200 and \$300. Let's see if we can set a new record this time around. **Pete Brandt** is chairing our program; get your books from him and turn your money in to him.

#2: Jewel-Osco Shop & Share Days: Our supply of identification slips will arrive during the first week of October. Jewel-Osco will donate 5% of total sales for which they receive these slips at checkout on the following days: Oct. 27-29, Nov. 3-5, and Nov. 10-12. When the slips arrive, please take as many as you want, feel free to make copies (there's no limit to the number that can be used), and distribute them to as many people as possible. A detailed instruction sheet will accompany the slips that are given to each member.

#3. Dominick's Benefit Days: Similar to the Jewel-Osco program; dates of operation have yet to be determined.

COMING EVENTS

North Shore Chapter:
Every Wednesday night—**Informal Guest Night—BRINGASINGA!**
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, 1490 Chicago Ave. (at Grove St.), Evanston. **Shoreliner Chorus** will be one of the performing acts. FREE!! Open to the public. (See page 1.)
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 and 10/22—**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. (See page 1)
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

Elsewhere:

Fri., 9/19—**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.
Sat., 10/4—**Arlington Heights Chapter Show**—7:45 p.m. (cocktails at 5:30, dinner at 6:30) at St. Viator H.S., Oakton and Dryden Sts., Arlington Heights. Featuring: **Alchemy** (2003 Illinois District Champs), **Trebled Spirits, Arlingtones Chorus**. Tickets: \$25 (includes dinner and show). For more information, call **Herb Nicolai** at 847/827-6417.
Fri., 10/17—**Interstate Woodshed**—See entry for 9/19.
Sat., 10/25—**Chicago Metro Chapter Show**—7:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:30) at Irish-American Heritage Center, 4626 N. Knox Ave., Chicago. Featuring: **Chicago Metro Chorus**. Tickets: \$12 (food available for additional charge). For more information, call **Bill Gallagher** at 847/869-2707.

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

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.

The articles on this page and in the first two columns of the following page first appeared as a handout your editor composed during his term as Vice President of Membership and Chapter Development in 2001. With our last big opportunity for a member recruitment drive coming up in October, and with nothing to show for our recruitment efforts so far this year, we urge every chapter member to read this information thoroughly and make every attempt to put it into action.

How to Turn a Stranger into a Friend

—Joseph Schlesinger

OK, so you've approached all your neighbors, coworkers, male relatives, and everyone else you know to tell them about this wonderful hobby of yours and to invite them to a chapter meeting. You've run out of people you know. Now what do you do???



Start introducing yourself to strangers. There are thousands of men in our neighborhood, and you probably run into dozens of them each day. The guy over in the next seat in the bus or the train you take to work, the fellow having lunch at the next table, the man you pass on the sidewalk while running your errands, the gentleman in front of you in the line at the dry cleaners or supermarket checkout . . . all are potential singers whom you've probably never met before. But don't let that deter you from striking up a conversation.

If you hear a stranger singing or humming, or if you inadvertently overhear someone talking about any singing he's done, you've got your entry. Just be polite, tactful, and nonthreatening. Compliment him on his voice; then ask him if he's ever sung barbershop harmony . . . OR, depending on how receptive he is to talking with you, invite him to visit the chorus you sing with. (Hint: Invitations are fine, but you'll have a better chance of getting your guest to a meeting if you offer him a lift. Don't be afraid to set up a date and time to pick him up; the worst he can do is say no.) And remember, you'll make a better impression with your prospect if you smile and maintain eye contact with him during the conversation.

If, on the other hand, you're approaching a stranger cold, the best opening line is simply to ask him if he likes to sing. Some guys will say, "I like to sing, but people don't like to listen to me sing," or give some other self-deprecating answer. Just smile and say, "That's OK. Do you enjoy singing simple tunes like 'Happy Birthday'?" or "Do you ever just find yourself singing along with the radio?" If he answers yes, then you can tell him about your chorus and suggest that he be your guest some Wednesday night.

- If he says something like, "I don't have time to join a singing group," tell him you're not asking him to join or make any kind of commitment, just to visit one evening to see if it's something he might enjoy.
- If he asks whether he can bring his wife or girlfriend, tell him ladies are always welcome, though we are a men's organization (as you know, **Mindy Lazor** and other women are frequent guests at our meetings).
- If he's unwilling to make a commitment to attend a meeting, give him your name and phone number (we have a supply of chapter calling cards at each meeting just for that

purpose—get some from **Noble LeHew** and stock up!). And don't forget to get his name and phone number (and address, too, if appropriate); if you want to pass that info along to me, I will add each prospect to our chapter mailing list.

- If at any point he says he's not interested, thank him and politely drop or change the subject. He's made it clear he's not a prospect.
- If he attends a meeting, be cordial to him and act as his "buddy" during the meeting. The next day, follow up with him either on the phone or in person; offer to answer any questions he may have, & invite him to the next meeting (possibly even offering him another lift).

That's all there is to it. Like so many aspects of our hobby, it gets easier the more you do it. Now's the time to start.

If you would like a "Wanna Sing?" badge like the one I always wear, ask me and I'll make one for you and bring it to the next meeting. I've found them to be great ice-breakers; more often than not, someone who asks what the badge means really does have an interest in singing.

***Be a REAL Buddy
~ and ~
Introduce Someone
~ to ~
Barbershop!***

Tips for Successful Recruiting

Our next Guest Night/Open Houses are Oct. 15 and 22. In our flyers, press releases, and other promotional literature, we have announced that the meetings will begin at 7:30 each night.

- By arriving ahead of time, you will tell guests, "I don't want to miss a minute of my Wednesday night meeting. I hope you enjoy it as much as I do."
- By arriving late, you will tell guests, "I really don't expect to have any fun here tonight."
- By having your music prepared, you will tell guests, "I take pride in my chorus' artistry as a group and my artistry as an individual."
- By not knowing your music, you will tell guests, "I really don't care too much for singing this song."
- By greeting guests enthusiastically, you will tell guests, "I'm *really* glad to meet you. You are important to me."
- By not greeting guests and showing some enthusiasm, you will tell guests, "It's not important to me that you showed up tonight."
- By being attentive to our director or whoever has the floor, you will tell guests, "I respect these gentlemen who are my comrades in harmony."
- By not being attentive to our director or whoever has the floor, you will tell guests, "What our musical leader and administrative leaders have to say isn't very important to me."

BE VERY AWARE OF WHAT YOUR ACTIONS TELL OUR GUESTS!

Since I'm unable to make the first half of our weekly meetings, I hope our Vice President of Membership and Chapter Development, **Noble LeHew**, will ask you all to serve as members-at-large of the Greeting Committee. **Bill Remien**, **Dick Yanow**, or **Phil Martin** will have to voice-place any guests who show up, as I won't be able to do that at least until break. So we'll need more than just **Tom Leaveck** and **Ed Price** in the hall at the beginning, when guests are likely to start arriving.

Thanks for helping to make this membership drive a success. If you have any questions (or suggestions for next time), please see Noble before or after the meeting, or during break, or contact him at any other time.

Eat Your Hearts Out, Basses!

From CNN.com:

"WASHINGTON, Sept 9 (Reuters)—Big black holes sing bass. One particularly monstrous black hole has probably been humming B flat for billions of years, but at a pitch no human could hear, let alone sing, astronomers said this week.

"The intensity of the sound is comparable to human speech," said **Andrew Fabian** of the Institute of Astronomy at Cambridge, England. But the pitch of the sound is about 57 octaves below middle C . . ."

Find out more about the Black Hole B flat on the Web at:

http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/blackhole_note_030909.html

Robbins

(continued from page 1)

Dick was a member of Chicago #1 Chapter and a former member of North Shore Chapter, and was a retired patent attorney, instructor at Illinois Institute of Technology, and well-known wit and punster.

Starting with the **Treble Shooters**, his high school quartet, Dick sang with several notable quartets during his barbershop career, including the **Imperial Four** (who competed three times at international), **Windy City Four**, **Good Old Days**, **Harmony First**, **Return to Harmony**, **Just the Guys** (half of the mixed octet **Guys and Dolls**), **Quartet Four**, and **Four Ragtimers**. In addition, Dick held virtually all offices within his chapters, including the presidency of North Shore Chapter; he also served as president of the Chicagoland Association of Barbershop Chapters (CABC) and chairman of the Illinois District Awards Committee. His expertise at chairing successful barbershop shows was invaluable to North Shore Chapter and the CABC. Another distinction that was a source of pride was winning the Illinois District ABE (Award for Barbershopping Excellence).

What many Barbershoppers did not know was that Dick was an accomplished flute and piccolo player.

A Celebration of Life will be held Sunday, Sept. 28, starting at 1:30 p.m., at Drake & Sons Funeral Home, 5303 N. Western Ave., Chicago. All Barbershoppers who knew Dick are welcome to attend, and refreshments will be available. Memorial donations to Heartspring may be made c/o SPEBSQSA, Inc., 6315 Third Ave. (Harmony Lane), Kenosha, WI 53143-5199.

2004 COTS (Chapter Operations Training Seminar)

Nov. 15-16, 2003

Special District Classes:

- Membership Summit (Friday, Nov. 14, 2003)
- Grant Writing Class
- The Computer and Your Chapter

Remember, it's not just for officers anymore. All are welcome!

Information will be posted on the district Web page (www.harmonize.ws/ILL), and forms will be sent to all chapter presidents and secretaries.

Registration: \$90 if post-marked by Nov. 1 (\$95 after Nov. 1)

“When we accept tough jobs as a challenge and wade into them with joy and enthusiasm, miracles can happen.”

—Arland Gilbert

Additional Information About IDAH

IDAH (Illinois District Academy of Harmony) 2004 will be held Friday evening, Feb. 6, and all day Saturday, Feb. 7, at the Holiday Inn Center, Peoria.

This year’s school will offer Quartet Coaching, with **Four Voices** (2002 International Champs) as guest coaches; TOP GUN Coaching (by invitation only); Chorus Coaching (two openings were originally planned; one has been filled); and Barbershop Potpourri, in which individuals may choose any one of the following classes:

- Barbershop History
- Vocal Production/Tune It Or Die
- Theory of Barbershop Harmony/Sight Reading for Beginners
- Show production

- Judging Categories
- Weekend of Woodshedding

We would like to encourage the whole **Shoreliner Chorus** to go to IDAH for a weekend of chorus coaching. Your music team feels this experience would enhance our enjoyment of our hobby and lead to our performing with greater artistry. But in order for this to be effective, the entire chorus needs to attend. In the next few weeks, Music and Performance Vice President **Bill Remien** will be asking you whether you can commit to attend IDAH with the chorus.

We do not know yet what the registration fee for 2004 is, but in recent years, it has been in the neighborhood of

\$120 per person, so you ought to begin saving your shekels now.

We should know within a month whether our chorus has the manpower to make an IDAH coaching session worthwhile. If not, we hope you will consider attending individually and learning more about our hobby. **Rick Prieto, Phil Martin, and Paul Mimura** have been to IDAH in the past couple of years and can tell you of their experiences there. Bill can provide you with additional information, and, of course, details about classes and registration can be found on the district’s Web site: www.harmonize.ws/ILL.

**IDAH 2004: Feb. 6-7, 2004
Holiday Inn Center, Peoria**

“From the Top”

For those of you who were not at tonight’s meeting (Sept. 17), you may hear some scuttlebut about North Shore Chapter from other members. I’d like to set the record straight.

Our little chapter is in a serious financial bind. Because of dwindling membership, decreased sources of revenue, and a decline in paid performances for our chorus and the **North Shore Four** (due to conflicts with members’ personal schedules and a general reduction in the number of performance opportunities), North Shore Chapter is currently unable to meet certain critical fiscal obligations.

This newsletter is not the place to go into detail, but members who want to know more are encouraged to talk to any chapter Board member. All I will say here is that the situation is the result of factors that have developed gradually over several years. It is not a sudden develop-

ment, but it has reached crisis proportions, with ramifications that could lead to our chapter’s demise if left unchecked.

Your Board has already begun to take action. As stated on page 2 of this newsletter, we have augmented our annual *Entertainment* book selling campaign with two new fundraisers: Jewel-Osco Shop and Share Days and Dominick’s Benefit Days. I am calling on all my fellow chapter members to give your utmost efforts to make all three programs as profitable as possible for us so that we can bring our chapter’s accounts current.

Another source of income your Board has discussed is institution of chapter dues. We are one of a handful of SPEBSQSA chapters that do not charge dues. For much of our existence we were able to subsist entirely on annual show revenue, a

CABC Show rebate, and paid public performances, but times have changed. Of course, with our small numbers, chapter dues alone will not erase our current deficit.

Although the situation is very grim, it does not necessarily spell the end for our organization—not if we can all pull together. In my 26 years with North Shore Chapter, I’ve seen us do some pretty remarkable things when the chips were down. We need that kind of determination and dedication now.

Gentlemen, we have some big events on the horizon. Let’s focus on giving our Evanston neighbors a harmony festival they’ll never forget. And let’s get ready for our annual holiday singing. Keep a positive attitude and enjoy the time we spend together.

—Joseph Schlesinger
President

P. O. Box 741
Evanston, IL 60204

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"I can not sing
the old songs
now!

It is not that I
deem them low;

'T is that I can't
remember how

They go."

—Charles Stuart
Calverley

'Liner Notes

Have you heard the new CD of **Phil Martin** playing piano pieces by **Chopin, Brahms, Rachmaninoff, and Liszt**? Phil is making a limited number of free copies available to North Shore Chapter members. See him if you would like a copy.

Another former member has resurfaced: **John Storms-Rohm** was briefly active in our chapter in the mid-1990s when he was a student at Evanston Township High School. He moved to Minnesota, went to college, and is now back in the area pursuing a part-time career as a musician. His material is particularly suited to young children, and he has already cut a CD. We will let you know when and where he will perform next.

Quartet News

Alchemy performed on the Chicagoland West Suburban Chapter Cabaret Sept. 13 and will headline the Arlington Heights Chapter Show Oct. 4. They will sing at the Sterling-Rock Falls Chapter officers' installation banquet Oct. 11.

Chordmasters' schedule lists the following gigs, but no dates: American Academy of Pediatrics summer barbecue, Elk Grove Village; Lutheran Home Employee Day, Arlington Heights; Barrington Park District senior citizens luncheon, Barrington; Nite Club at Noon, Bridgeview; 80th birthday party, Des Plaines; Widows and Widower's Club dinner, Villa Park; St. Paul's Women's Guild luncheon,

Palatine; VFW Post 9284, Elk Grove Village; Young Men in Harmony program at Barrington High School, Barrington.

North Shore Four (Mimura-Remien-Jones-Schlesinger) will tape a program promoting Evanston Harmony Days at the North Shore Cable TV studio in Skokie Thursday evening, Sept. 25.

We are looking for quartets and other vocal ensembles to visit and perform at Evanston schools, nursing homes, senior residences, and hospitals during the week of Oct. 13-17 in connection with Evanston Harmony Days. See **Joseph Schlesinger** if interested, or call him at 847/328-0921.