

The Pitch Piper

64 YEARS OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY

OVER 714,089 SQUARE MILES

Volume 64, Number 2

A Bulletin for Barbershoppers in the LO'L District

March - April 2012

**DON'T DAWDLE...
GET TO THE "POINT"!**

Land  Lakes

Spring Convention and International Preliminaries

&

Packerland Quartet and Chorus Competition

May 4 - 5, 2012

Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Go to www.loldistrict.org for ticket housing information



**Congratulations on your
Mid-Winter Competition!**

St. Croix Crossing

Steven Hardy, Dan Heike, Jared Hoke, Randy Lieble

You made the LO'L proud!



Pitch Piper

The *Pitch Piper* is published bi-monthly by the Land O' Lakes District Association of Chapters of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartets Singing in America, Inc.

Land O' Lakes Chapters are situated in the states of Minnesota, North Dakota and Wisconsin, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and the Provinces of Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Ontario.

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Manitowoc, WI 54220
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Send address changes to Pitch Piper c/o SPEBSQSA, Inc., 1107th Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37203-3704

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FUN-FILLED BARBERSHOPPING YEAR AHEAD

Submitted by Larry Lewis
LO'L District President



Although the Mid Winter Convention in Tucson is now two months in the past, I am still feeling the excitement from the event. The Youth

Chorus Festival is an experience like no other in barbershopping and the senior's quartet contest gets better every year. The two LO'L senior quartets made all of us proud. St Croix Crossing finished third overall with an average score of 72.2. Highpoint averages 70.0 and finished sixth, only two points out of the medals.

Because of our LO'L \$10,000 contribution to the Youth Chorus Festival, I had the privilege of representing the district in the awards presentation for the winning youth choruses. We were recognized as the first district in the society to give a \$10,000 sponsorship. The success of our senior quartets and sponsorship of the Youth Chorus Festival put LO'L in a prominent place at Mid Winter. Next year Mid Winter will be in Orlando. It will be even bigger and better in that it is located next door to the Magic Kingdom. I encourage all of you to consider attending. You will not regret it and you probably will never miss another one.

LO'L is one of only a few districts to attain a 100 percent mark in the Chapter Visitation Program. We are still reviewing and studying what we learned from the visits. The comments I have received from

chapter officers are that they appreciated the visits from district officers. The success of this program leads me to believe that we should repeat the program again in another year. I also hope that we can build upon the program by chapter officers feeling comfortable in contacting district officers and management team members for help, advice or input on district matters.

Allow me to close my column this time by encouraging you to attend and support the spring chapter shows in your area. It is a wonderful opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the hard work of barbershoppers in other chapters. It also allows us to hear and see the many outstanding quartets that come close to us. And lets not forget the International Quartet Prelims and Packerland Division contest and spring convention in Stevens Point. I hope to see many of you there.



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION

Submitted by **Chuck Schubbe**
LO'L District Executive VP



It is just over one year that I have been LO'L district EVP. One of the jobs assigned to me is working with the Operations Team to help each member of the team set and implement their goals for LO'L each year. I would like to make some comments how this has been accomplished this past year. Many of you noticed when you looked at the directory that there were some policy changes implemented. These changes have consolidated the district education functions into one Education Committee. This committee is headed by two new district vice presidents. Take a look in your District Directory to see all the members of this committee. Most of you also know that as a 501c3 corporation we keep our nonprofit status by the percentage of dollars we spend on education. The LO'L District spends a very high percent of the income on education, such as the Leadership Academy, Contests, Quartet Schools, Chapter Coaching, Festivals and Work Shops for YIH. As I observe these functions along with evaluations from these functions, we certainly can be proud of the member education that the education team is providing.

The other policy change you will see in your directory is the change to the events committee, which now has Carl Grahn as Director of Events and Lowell Bennes as the Contest Operations Manager. We are in the midst of our contest season and judging by the communications I have received from Carl Grahn and Jack Ryback, our contest and judging director, we will be having another great contest year. We currently are in need of a contest stage manager. We invite anyone who is interested in this position to contact Lowell Bennes, Carl Grahn, or Jack Ryback. They will forward your name to Larry Lewis or me for consideration.

I would like to thank all the members of the operations team for the fine communications this past year - it has been outstanding! I also would like to thank Del Ryberg, who works as LO'L district consultant, for his advice and constant support of our teams.

My e-mail address has changed, and is now chuckschubbe@gmail.com.

NEWS FROM THE HAPPINESS EMPORIUM/ GOOD NEWS! QUARTET

Technology is now allowing another way to provide music to the quartet's customers. You can now download all of the Happiness Emporium recorded songs one at a time. Downloads can be done by shopping at the website; www.HappinessEmporium.com and following the instructions for downloading.

In addition, the Good News! gospel songs are being added to that offering. It is the intention of the quartet to continue expanding the Good News! learning tracks and printed arrangements one at a time. Requests for single song availability are welcomed! The first Good News! learning tracks offered in this way are now ready for downloading. This downloading process can be found on the quartet's website. Future new songs may be offered this way exclusively.

Please contact the quartet at rodlead@hotmail.com to request single songs from the Good News! Recordings, Volumes I through XI.

MID WINTER SENIOR COMPETITION

Submitted by **Steve Hardy**

St. Croix Crossing had a great time at the Mid Winter convention in Tucson this past January. We were proud to be able to represent LO'L and finish with a third place medal. We would like to offer a very sincere thank you to everyone in the district for the support and encouragement that we received this past year, especially our coaches Pete Benson, Brent Graham and Scott Kvigne. The Top Gun staff was super as well.

As with any endeavor, the journey is always a little easier when you have the support of friends and family. As another season begins, we look forward to seeing all of you at the upcoming contests and chapter shows so be sure to stop and say Hi!

IT'S GREAT TO BE A BARBERSHOPPER!

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Lead - Don Hettinga
Bass - Matt Hall
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Jay Fahl *Lead*
Bryan Ziegler *Baritone*
Jake Umhoefer *Bass*

Contact Jake at 262.719.0163
bbrshopper@yahoo.com

Benson Family Singers

Contact Pete
612-210-5537
bensonpd@yahoo.com



www.bensonfamilymusic.com



“LEARN TO SING” - AN OPERATION HAROLD HILL TOOL

Submitted by Dave Sylte
LO'L Director Music and Performance



Operation Harold Hill is an effort by the Society to utilize a wide range of tools and initiatives to promote chapter membership growth.

Hopefully your chapter has registered to be part of Operation Harold Hill by going to the Society website at www.barbershop.org. If you haven't done so, do it now. One of the most detailed tools in the program, but one with great potential is the **Learn to Sing** program. It requires a fair amount of planning and commitment to make it work.

So what is involved with **Learn to Sing**? There are three basic elements to the program.

1. **4-6 weeks of free voice lessons are offered to potential members**
2. **The voice lessons are conducted by an experienced vocal instructor**
3. **The lessons can be tacked on to chapter meetings and last no more than 1 ½ hours**

Variations of this program have been successfully used by the British Association of Barbershop Singers (BABS), the Sweet Adelines and individual chapters around the Society for a number of years.

To learn the details of **Learn to Sing**, go to the Society website and click on the Operation Harold Hill tab. Then **Learn to Sing** will appear as one of the membership tools. First, there is a brief introductory video by Paul Wietlisbach, Society Director of Education. Then there is a link to a 14-page guide which explains the program in detail, “**Learn to Sing – Program Guide for Chapters.**” Paul's video stresses that first you must make certain that your chapter is in a position to take on this program.

Learn to Sing Program Objectives

If your chapter is ready to implement **Learn to Sing**, the primary objective is membership growth. But there are other potential benefits for your chapter as follows:

- **Improve participants' physical health and mental stamina**
- **Expose non-members to the hobby in a non-threatening environment**
- **Vary your chapter meeting**
- **Provide a therapeutic outlet for men of common interest in singing**
- **Community outreach**
- **Community awareness**
- **Increasing membership fulfillment, satisfaction**

So download the **Learn to Sing** guide and see if your chapter is ready to take on this ambitious program to make your chapter grow.

Larry Ajer Scholarship – A Free Ride to Harmony University for Quartets

Here is an education opportunity for quartets to get a free ride to **Harmony University on July 29 to August 5, 2012 at Missouri Western State College in St. Joseph, Missouri.** This opportunity is the **Larry Ajer Scholarship.** This scholarship will be awarded to two quartets from every District in the Society. Here are the general criteria for the scholarship:

1. Has your quartet been registered for two years?
2. Has your quartet achieved success at the district and/or International contest levels?
3. Does your quartet aspire to even greater success in your show and contest performances?
4. Do you want intense coaching from the best Barbershop coaches around?

The scholarship covers tuition, room and board for four quartet members at Harmony University. Travel and other expenses are not covered. **The deadline for scholarship applications is May 18, 2012.**

For full details on the Larry Ajer Scholarship process, go to the Society website at www.barbershop.org. Click on the “Education” link at the top of the home page. Then on the next page, click on “Harmony University.” Then on the next page, click on “Scholarships” and you will see the Larry Ajer Scholarship listed. The application process is somewhat involved, so if your quartet is interested in applying, don't wait until the last minute.



2012



SINGOUT

Sunday, August 12

Call time will be around 11:00am

Game is at 12:10pm

We have set the date for next year's trip to Target Field. We will again be singing the National Anthem, God Bless America and Take Me Out To The Ballgame.

Get out your calendar and plan to join us in delivering another vocal treat to 40,000 of your closest friends!

For more information, email Ken Slinde at gubass@comcast.net



PUBLIC RELATIONS IS ABOUT GOOD WRITING SKILLS

Submitted by Ken Mettler
LO'L Director Marketing and Public Relations



Welcome to another chapter in Marketing the Magic of Barbershop Harmony! I hope the next few months are full of great activities and events for your chapter. However, everything that you *do well* also needs to be *promoted well*. I'm here to help and encourage in this department!

The life of a public relations guy is full of writing - media releases, memos to chorus members and leaders, crucial communications with customers, advertising copy, brochures, reports, social networking, emails, phone messages, ad infinitum. Remember, all barbershoppers are on the Marketing/Public Relations team.

So much of our chorus, quartet and BHS success is simply determined by how well and how clearly we communicate! We owe it to ourselves and our readers to brush up on our skills, hopefully with less pain and more gain!

I want to show you six ways to spark-up your PR message and keep your reader engaged. However, I'm not talking about going back to school and learning to spell and use proper grammar. (My tool bar and my wife usually help me correct these things!)

#1) Use real-life characters rather than nouns. If I was writing a memo about ticket sales, my characters would be *attendees* and *customers*, rather than *projections* and *results*.

#2) Use action words that *move* your readers along. We love to see verbs that *propel* us visually from one place to another, rather than just sit there.

#3) Perform the eight-word test. Keep your *characters* and *actions* within eight words of each other, so your reader can easily follow *who* is doing *what*. The fewer words between the nouns and verbs the better.

#4) Use good transitions. Link complex phrases with connecting words to help your reader better understand your meaning. Good connecting words are, for example, *however*, *because of this*, *therefore*, *thus*, *in conclusion*, and so on.

#5) Lead your readers from the known to the unknown. Build on common ideas and then let that introduce complex ideas. Gently nudge your audience from comfortable, familiar territory into the strange and new.

#6) Go from Problem to Solution to

Action. If you are normal, you don't know where to begin. If you start with a problem statement, followed by a solution proposal, and then wrapped it up with an action plan, an article can almost write itself!

That's it for now - give the tips a try the next time you write an email or a newspaper article, and see if your ideas don't come through with more clarity and connectedness. Sit down at your desk and start communicating your message of how important your next barbershopping event is to you. Others will sit up and take notice that there is a new excitement in your words because you really do believe in the Magic of Making (and Marketing) Barbershop Harmony.



2011 Chapter B.O.T.Y. Winners

Lake Geneva, WI
- Frank McClellan
Fergus Falls, MN
- Richard Treptow
Polk County, WI
- Ken Mettler



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2012 International
Senior's Medalist

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HAROLD HILL RETURNS!

Submitted by Steve Zorn
LO'L Director Membership



“Operation Harold Hill” is in full swing. This Society-sponsored membership effort is the highlight for 2012. As of this writing, 23 of the 50 LO'L Chapters have signed up for the program. I encourage all members to go to the www.operationharoldhill.com website and review the suggestions for recruitment.

As we all know, the most effective recruitment tool is you! When you talk with someone about how much enjoyment and satisfaction you experience in this passion, he will either think you are crazy or lucky. Crazy to be so interested in “singing” and lucky to have something you feel is important in your life. If each of you reach out, you will make a difference.

The Operation Harold Hill website lists the following: Away Game, Church Letter, Speak at a Community Event, Fair and Convention Booths, Learn to Sing, Letter to Former Members, A Guide for Interviewers, The “I Sing” Button, Membership begins with ME, Open House, Personal Recruiting, Turn Your Radio On, Social Media, Monthly Options, The “Job One” Membership Program, Supercharging Your Chapter!, Membership Retention, Barbershop Recruiting on Craigslist. Quite a list, eh? How many of these ideas have you considered in your chapter? Work with your chapter leadership but take the initiative yourself to reach out to new members.

REMEMBER: It is not too late to sign up for a Harold Hill! This experienced barbershopper can help you put together recruitment programs.

District Membership News

As of 12/31/2011, the Barbershop Harmony Society has 17 Districts with a total membership of 24,470. LO'L has 1685 members, the fifth largest district. In 2011, 89 new members joined LO'L and

51 were reinstated. The average age is 40.5 years. Thirty of our 50 chapters had at least one new or reinstated member and one chapter had eight!

New members keep signing up!

Chapter	New Members
Hilltop St Cloud	3
Appleton	6
Winnipeg Fergus Falls Minneapolis Fargo-Moorhead Oshkosh Racine Mankato Great St Paul Area Duluth St. Cloud	1

Keep spreading the word about the great music, entertainment, and fellowship in the Land O' Lakes District of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

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2709 Canyon Drive
Plainfield, Illinois 60586
815-347-0985
bobsinglead@aol.com

The award winning Chicago Times senior quartet is still ringing chords and entertaining audiences throughout the Midwest. Contact Bob and check our availability for your next chapter show.

DIRECTOR WANTED

The Milwaukee Chapter, a well-established chapter in the Land O Lakes District, is seeking a new director to lead a 20-man chorus and work with the Chapter leadership to increase membership. Experience in the barbershop style is preferred. Interested individuals should contact Lee Zellmer at ljz10r@gmail.com or (414) 254-5915 for a complete job description and more information.

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614.325.9528 Dave
917.853.9468 Jordan
917.692.3574 Keith



LOOK WHAT'S NEW ON THE SOCIETY'S CHORUS DIRECTOR PAGE!

Submitted by John Plazek
LO'L Chorus Director Development

Hello Chorus Directors,

I have 2 quick items to share with you...

First of all, NOW is the time to sign-up for the Directors College Scholarship sponsored by the Society. Applications are to be postmarked no later than April 1, 2012. After that date they will NOT be accepted. Don't miss out!

The LO'L Directors College Scholarship Application in hands date is no later than May 12, 2012. This application is sent to me. The information is on the LO'L website: www.loldistrict.org.

The second item I want to share with you is that the Chorus Director Development Committee has updated and improved the Society's website that was confusing and hard to navigate. Now, if you go to the LO'L website, then click on the Chorus Director Development banner, scroll down to Chorus Director Certification and click on it (the link is on www.loldistrict.org) you will be able to see an overview of each program the Society has to offer. (CDWI, CDWI-2, NEXT LEVEL, CHORUS DIRECTOR CERTIFICATION, DIRECTORS COLLEGE/HARMONY UNIVERSITY, and a lot more.)

Take a look at the site to see what's new... you might be surprised. It is a good resource for directors, music teams, section leaders, and anyone else interested in improving the musical aspects of the chapter!

If I can do anything to help you, please let me know.

And as always, Remember... It's What's Up Front That Counts!

That's for listening.



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Jim Les
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SINGING VALENTINE STORIES



Submitted by Dick Riemenschneider

On Valentine's Day, Easy Listenin' Quartet from the Minneapolis Chapter had a gig at a Christian school called Marantha Academy. We dutifully reported in at the receptionist at the appointed time and were told to wait for our contact, who showed up several minutes later. The contact turned out to be the grandfather of the young lady, a student at the school, who we would be singing to. The young lady's father has done something special for her every Valentine's Day. However, this year he was assigned as an army Chaplain for a unit in Afghanistan. To continue the tradition of doing something special every Valentine's Day, he hired a Singing Valentine for her.

We waited out of sight while the young lady was summoned from her lunch to be presented her valentine. So in front of an audience of about 175 students and staff, we sang for the young lady. To add something special to the event, the grandfather had arranged a life size cut-out of the young lady's father so he could have a presence at the event. Many young lady's would have been abashed at being singled out in this manner, but this lady was thrilled that her father had remembered her and even more thrilled that he had chosen this venue to deliver the gift.



Submitted by Jack Thorpe
Heart of Harmony Chorus
West Allis, WI



Each year I send a singing Valentine to someone who I know isn't getting one, needs one, and deserves one. This year I sent one to a friend who's husband was dealing with skin cancer that had spread to other places in his body. They had become prisoners of their own home for several months. He was presently in a rehab facility to strengthen his body before more chemotherapy. We all knew there would be no more chemo.

I was in the quartet that sang to her (and him).....what a surprise! Her smile and tears were contagious, and the expression on his face was 'thank-you'. I had signed the card from your friends, but she knew. He passed away the Sunday after Valentine's Day. I was thanked with a card, everyone in the receiving line at the funeral knew about it, more thanks at the post-funeral get together, another time with the family thank you card, and one more time with a phone call when she received the Valentine photo.

Bottom line....you never know what a song could mean to someone else and what memory it may hold. That was the most important Valentine I delivered this year, and I'm smiling warmly!



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DATED MATERIAL ENCLOSED

Calendar

NOTE: Dates shown on this page are for those activities that have proper clearance through the District Secretary. Please DO NOT send show registrations to the editor, DO notify:

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Land O' Lakes District
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 N Mankato, MN 56003
 arvjane@hickorytech.net

2012

April

- 13 **St. Croix Valley, MN**
- 13 **Fergus Falls, MN**
Vocality, Rebecca Davis
- 14 **Appleton, WI**
The Real McCoy
- 14 **Detroit Lakes, MN**
Vocality, Rebecca Davis
- 14 **Dunn County, WI**
GQ
- 14 **Greendale, WI**
Division One Contest
- 14 **Mankato, MN**
- 14 **Minot, ND**
- 14 **Wausau, WI**
- 14 **Windom, MN**
- 21 **Plymouth, WI**
- 21 **St. Cloud, MN**
Old School

- 21 **Willmar, MN**
Great Northern Union
- 21 **Winnipeg, MAN**
- 22 **LeRoy, MN**
- 27 **Regina, Sask**
- 28 **Dauphin, MAN**
- 28 **Green Bay, WI**
- 28 **Madison, WI**
- 28 **Regina, Sask**
- 28 **West Allis, WI**
The Benson Family Singers

May

- 4 **Stevens Point, WI**
Spring Convention & International Prelims
- 5 **Stevens Point, WI**
Packerland Contest
- 19 **Fergus Falls, MN**
Red Carpet & Northwest Contest
- 19 **Greendale, WI**
- 25-26 **Saskatoon, Sask**

June

30 **Hilltop, MN**

July

1-8 **Portland, OR**
International Convention

October

- 6 **Delta County, MI**
- 6 **Stevens Point, WI**
Skyline

- 13 **Bloomington, MN**
- 13 **Milwaukee, WI**
- 13 **Polk County, WI**
- 13 **Rochester, MN**
- 26-28 **Rochester, MN**
Fall Convention

November

- 10 **Rock Valley, WI**
- 10-11 **Hilltop, MN**

December

- 8 **Greendale, WI**

2013

April

- 6 **Greendale, WI**
Division One Contest
- 27 **Minot, ND**
Red Carpet/Northwest Division Contest
- 27 **Regina, Sask**
- 28 **Regina, Sask**
- 28 **Dauphin, MAN**
The Bottom Line

May

- 3-5 **Hilltop, MN**
International Prelims & Spring Convention
- 3-5 **Hilltop, MN**
Southwest/10,000 Lakes Division Contest
- 18 **Appleton, WI**
Packerland Division Contest