



*The Danbury Mad Hatter Barbershop Chorus*

# Hatter Chatter

Newsletter of the Danbury Chapter, Yankee Division, Northeastern District of the Barbershop Harmony Society  
Meeting every Tuesday, 7:30 p.m. at Church of Christ, 90 Clapboard Ridge Road, Danbury, Connecticut

Volume 17 Number 4

[www.madhatterchorus.org](http://www.madhatterchorus.org)

April 2010

## Hospitable Hatters Host Division Contests

*By Dick Zang and John Bradley*

The weekend of March 19 and 20 was an exciting one for the Danbury Mad Hatter Barbershop Chorus, as it played host for the first time since 1999, not only its own Yankee Division choruses and quartets, but also to those in the Mountain Division and the District's Western Regional International Preliminary Quartet Contest.

In short, it was a big deal, and in spite of all the work that went into it, we all enjoyed it. And best of all, the Mad Hatters qualified to go on and compete at the District level on October 23 in Portland, Maine.

According to the chapter's contest coordinator, Bob Bradley, as he crumpled into an easy chair in the lobby of the headquarters hotel, the Danbury Plaza, "It was a great weekend, people were in good spirits, there was a lot of good singing and things went more smoothly than I anticipated. But, I'm glad it's over, and I'm tired."

The Mad Hatters, with 24 men on stage, chose to sing last in the competition against six other Yankee Division choruses. Bridgeport's Coastal Chordsmen was the only chorus that decided to sit this one out, but they volunteered as mic-testers and did yeomen's work as they shuttled the competing choruses from dressing rooms to warm-up rooms and the stage.

There were only four choruses competing on the Mountain Division side, but they were strong groups from Schenectady, Saratoga Springs, Pittsfield, and Quebec.

The Silk City Chorus from Manchester, CT, with 43 singers, took the top prize for the Division and the Most Improved award with an average score of 73.1. The Racing City chorus from Saratoga Springs, NY, won the Mountain Division Contest with an average score of 71.1.

The Mad Hatters finished fourth with nearly identical scores for "Hey, Look Me Over" and "Over the Rainbow." They averaged 58.9.

The Mad Hatters did walk away with one victory for the weekend. Outburst!, the chapter VLQ, won Saturday's VLQ contest with an average score of 50.2 (they were the only VLQ competing). Outburst! performed "Story of the Rose" and a parody of "Sweet and Lovely" titled, "Sweet and Pungent (The Chinese Food Song)."

There were few complaints about the contest judging this year, but there were plenty of comments about how helpful the quartet and chorus evaluations were.



*The Danbury Mad Hatters performing "Hey, Look Me Over"*



*Outburst!, Danbury's VLQ, performing "Sweet and Pungent (The Chinese Food Song)." Pictures by Terry Dunkle.*

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## Contests

*Continued from the previous page*

According to bass and first time competitor, Dickson DeMarche, "As a "newbee," I learned a lot, especially about performing in front of the judges. And, the feedback from the judges after the contest was great."

"I may not have liked the message that we didn't do this and didn't do that," Dickson continued, "but their intent was clearly to make us a better performing unit. If we combine the coaching that they provided with that of Butch and the great workout we get from Joe each week, we will certainly improve, and, I think, have more fun."

After the Quartet finals on Saturday, the Mad Hatters hosted a hospitality suite at the Danbury Plaza. It was just like the old days when the Danbury suite was the hot ticket.

Things got off to a slow start because the hotel staff had misunderstood the start time, but by the time the pizza arrived and the competing quartets and judges had finished their evaluations, the joint began to rock.

On Air, the third-place finishers, from Nashua, NH, were first up with an entertaining set that certainly pleased the crowd.

Then, the Average Joes from the Boston area came in with their entourage and rang some great chords.

BlendTech, our current NED college champions and first-place winners of the competition, stepped up with their great sound. They are already being touted as the next Men In Black.

All in all, it was a great ending to a great weekend.

For complete contest results, go to the Northeast District website at:

[http://www.nedistrict.org/index.cfm?page\\_id=82&subpage\\_of=62](http://www.nedistrict.org/index.cfm?page_id=82&subpage_of=62)

### Special Thanks

The Mad Hatters owe a lot of our success to our director, Joe Hudson, and our Singing A's coach, Butch Ashdown. Does anyone remember Butch saying anything about smiling?

Butch sings with the Poughkeepsie chapter, and most recently sang with Swing Shift, who won the Yankee Division Quartet Contest last year.

They retired as a quartet recently because one of their members relocated, but they did us the honor of appearing as mic-testers for the quartet contest on Friday night.

And thanks to Bob and Vikki Bradley for all the work and time they devoted to making the contest run smoothly.



*Loco Fedora, one of the Mad Hatter chapter quartets, performing on Friday night. Picture by Terry Dunkle*

### Contest Results

- Blend Tech qualified to sing in the International Collegiate Quartet competition, and is also the Yankee Division Quartet Champions.
- Blend Tech was the highest scoring quartet in the International Preliminaries and is in the pool to be selected for open spots at the Men's International Quartet contest.
- The Silk City Chorus (Manchester, CT) is the Yankee Division Chorus Champion.
- Bullseye is the Mountain Division Quartet Champion
- The Racing City Chorus is the Mountain Division Quartet Champion.
- Men In Black will be competing out of District in Peoria, Illinois, on 4/16 to qualify to compete in the Men's International Quartet contest.
- Port City Sound won the senior quartet contest.



*The Danbury Chorus getting ready to perform. Picture by John Bradley*

## Do You Recognize This?

Below is a venue at which the Mad Hatters sang. Do you recognize it? If you are the first to respond by email with the correct answer, you win 100 points!



Congratulations to last month's winner, Terry Dunkle. "That's the Brewster Train Station," Terry wrote to us, "but I'm not an Old Timer."

## Mad Hatters Perform at Local Assisted Living Centers

On Tuesday evening, March 23rd, the Danbury Mad Hatters performed for 40 residents and staff at Ridgefield Crossing, a center for assisted living, respite/short-term living and Alzheimer's care.

According to music director, Joe Hudson, "The crowd was pretty lively. It really makes a difference in the quality of our performance."

Thanks to assistant raconteur, Robert Golenback, for letting the world know Joe Hudson wears Fruit of The Loom underwear.

On the evening of March 30, the chorus performed for a small group in the Library of Bethel Health Care. On that evening, Joe's underwear, according to assistant to the assistant raconteur, Jim Hopper, was Hanes.

Jim also filled in as director for the first half of the performance, as Joe, after the fighting the elements, arrived with a flourish.

It can't be said the Mad Hatters do not encourage audience participation. A 96 year-young resident, purple cane in hand, stood up and led the chorus in its final song, "God Bless America."

While a group of Mad Hatters was leaving the Library after the performance, another resident (a 93 year-old gentleman) told them the secret of staying young. "Dance three times a week," he said with a broad smile.



## Quartet Corner

*News from our chorus quartets*

### The HatterTones - by Dick Zang

By luck of the draw, the Mad Hatters and their two chapter quartets, Loco Fedora and the HatterTones, met the same three judges during their rounds of evaluations at the March divisional contests.

Don Challman, of the Land Of Lakes District judged presentation and demonstrated how important it is to project involvement with the song. He also talked about wandering eyes. Quartet members especially should fix their gaze on a single person or point during a phrase and then move slightly to the next target for the next phrase – no jumping around, which can be disconcerting to the audience.

Chris Arnold, of the Ontario District, judged the music category and discussed phrasing and flow and how they affect the mood of the song. He would like to see us spend more time considering the dominant element of any song – harmony, rhythm, or melody – and how it can be used to sell the message of the song. [The fourth element of music is timbre (or tone quality).]

Brian Barford, of the Johnny Appleseed District, judged the singing category and had us up and singing in control during the 25-minute chorus evaluation session. Now, if we can just carry that lesson through until October we'll be in great shape.

On Friday night, Brian was joined in the quartet evaluation sessions by guest judge Jennifer Wheaton of the Canadian Wheaton dynasty. Her father, Steve, is a member of the NED Events Committee; her brother, Andrew, sings with Blend Tech, winners of the quartet contest; and Jen sings with the Ring Tones, a guest of the Mad Hatters on our annual show two years ago. Jen demonstrated the technique of breathing for tying phrases together.

### Rare Occasion – By Fred Baran

On Monday evening, March 8, with Dick Zang filling in at bass, we sang at the Cascades in Bethel. The occasion was the 94th birthday of Pete Traisci's wife's Aunt Gail, a true music lover. Gail is very spry and has a good voice, joining us on all songs, and knowing all the words.

When we found out that she recently went to Yale to hear the Whiffenpoofs, we sang our version of the "Whiffenpoof Song." After the song she said, "This really makes my birthday." Speaking for the other members of the Quartet, singing for people who truly love our music is the ultimate reward that we get out of our performances.

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## Quartets

*Continued from the previous page*

Rare Occasion would also like to announce a change in personnel. Terry Dunkle has joined us as our new bass, replacing Steve Holtz, of the Silk City Chorus in Manchester, CT.

We extend our thanks to Steve for making the long journey from Wethersfield for weekly rehearsals and singouts and for the fun times we had together. He is currently working on forming a new quartet in Manchester, and we wish him the best.

Terry formerly sang baritone with the Danbury Mad Hatter chorus and has agreed to convert to bass.

We are working on developing our repertoire and introducing a new member of the quartet. We are hoping to get up to speed over the next several months and begin taking bookings from both old friends and new audiences.

Having a local bass and a chorus member will result in our greater availability to participate in both chorus events and new singing opportunities that suddenly crop up in our area.

We welcome Terry and the many skills and talents that he brings to Rare Occasion.



*Rare Occasion in February with Libby Kapelari, of Danbury, a singing valentine recipient. Left to right are Jimmy Hopper (baritone), Terry Dunkle (bass), Robert Golenbock (lead), and Fred Baran (tenor).*

FOR SALE: All wool knitted black gloves, worn just once in warm weather. Especially suitable for people with short, stubby fingers. Discount offered for orders of eleven or more pairs. Call Danbury Chapter at 203-555-1234.

## Emails to the Editors



*Please e-mail your questions and comments to either the Hatter editor, John Bradley, at [jbrad1313@earthlink.net](mailto:jbrad1313@earthlink.net), or the Chatter editor, Dick Zang, at [jezang@charter.net](mailto:jezang@charter.net). If your e-mail appears, you will receive an autographed picture of our 2008 Yankee Division Bulletin Editors Award*

I attended your contests last weekend. It was fun, but I'm wondering what and where are all these divisions in the NED?  
Bobbie from Bethel

*Bobbie, the Yankee Division consists mainly of Connecticut barbershop chapters along with Springfield, MA, and Poughkeepsie, NY. The Mountain Division primarily resides in Vermont, also including easternmost New York (Albany and north), Pittsfield, MA, and Montreal, QC. The Granite & Pine Division consists of New Hampshire and Maine. The Sunrise Division consists of the eastern Canadian Provinces. The Patriot Division primarily consists of Eastern Massachusetts, and Rhode Island.*

*The Northeastern District quite often combines the contests to two or more districts to save money.*

I might be late for this edition of the *Hatter Chatter*, but if there's time/space/interest, here are some very brief "impressions" from my first district convention.

The pre-stage camaraderie in the "dressing room" still resonates, as chorus members playfully passed around high-end make-up, i.e. a burnt cork. The Mad Hatters truly looked like a "bunch of bums."

How many district conventions can claim access to a full-blown, student-run, onsite cafeteria blessed with bargain prices (\$2.50 for a cheese omelet or full plate of pancakes!). Thank you, Danbury High School.

I think I lost several pounds just walking the halls -- sometimes with purpose, usually aimlessly. The worst challenge as a volunteer: just thinking about having anything to do with putting together, taking apart, somehow lifting those confounded RISERS.

My wife, Vivien, was impressed with the pace of the contest. "There was no twiddling of thumbs between acts," she told me.

In fact, during my periodic responsibilities as "door man" for the auditorium, I learned that the plea, "May we have the doors closed, please," means just that -- and I was reminded decisively by veterans Fred, Lyle, and Chuck on separate occasions when I did not move swiftly. Experience speaks.  
John Cheeseman, lead – Danbury Mad Hatters.



## Stories About Songwriters

By Fred Baran

The celebrated Varsity Show at Columbia University in the year 1918 was extraordinary in several aspects. To begin with, it was remarkably good. Moreover, it was the first time in Columbia's history that a freshman had composed the complete score for the Varsity Show.

But the most significant aspect of that year's smashingly successful production did not become apparent until a few years later. The ingenious young composer was an enthusiastic lad named Richard Rodger, whose collaborator was a Columbia alumnus named Lorenz Hart and the lively production they called *Fly With Me* was the first of many magnificent Rodgers and Hart collaborations.

*Fly With Me* was greeted so enthusiastically that Jay S. Kaufman of the *New York Globe* was moved to write in his column: "Several of the tunes were capital. We have not heard of Mr. Rodgers before. We have a suspicion we will hear of him again."

Sooner even than Mr. Kaufman imagined, for also in the audience on opening night was Broadway producer, Lew Fields, who was sufficiently impressed with this unknown talent to include two songs from *Fly With Me* in a production he was planning for the following year. And so began the career of Richard Rodgers -- indisputably, the dominant composer of musical theater in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

People never tire of speculating on the contributing causes of a talent as original and prolific as Rodgers'. Some of the reasons are obvious. He was born into a family of comfortable means who encouraged his musical career from childhood. He was born on June 28, 1902, in the family's summer home on Long Island. His father was a prominent physician and musical enthusiast; his mother, a pianist.

Rodgers' earliest memories are punctuated with the Sunday afternoon concerts in the family's New York City residence where friends would gather to play selections from the popular operettas and musical comedies of the day. When Rodgers wrote his first song -- while still in high school -- his father financed its publishing.

He first met Lorenz Hart through a mutual friend in 1917. Obviously, there was an immediate and dynamic rapport between the two.

As Rodgers was to write later: "I was enchanted by this little man and his ideas. Neither of us mentioned it, but we evidently knew we'd work together, and I left Hart's house having acquired in one afternoon a career, a partner, a best friend and a source of permanent irritation."

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## The President's Podium

By Danny Anderson



Our chapter continues to grow in number. A warm welcome to our newest members, Joe and Nate. We welcome Terry back to the chorus.

We have had several visitors lately, and as usual, each of them has been warmly welcomed by our members. The manner in which visitors are welcomed and encouraged is a strong attribute of this chorus. I would encourage our members to continue to invite their friends and acquaintances to come to a meeting.

Another strong attribute of this chorus is its ability to pull together and work as a team. This team pulled off a very good contest last weekend. All members are to be thanked for their help; some went beyond the call of duty.

I want to express my thanks to Bob Bradley for all the work he put into making the recent contest a success. He spent many hours with the District support team, setting up the hotel, school, food, etc.

Thanks to Joe for setting up the volunteer schedule and Lyle for his transportation coordination. To each member and members' wives, providing transportation, helping with door monitoring, moving people, providing direction, setting up and taking down of risers, helped make the contest a success. A great big thank you to you all!

All indications lead me to believe this was the best convention that I have attended.

Though our score was less than what we hoped for, we did improve the overall score. The critiques of the judges provided those in attendance with suggestions and demonstrations as to how we could improve for our next competition. I would suggest that all participants at the next competition remain to hear the judges' comments.

The recent sing out at Ridgefield Crossings was the best performance we have given in my memory. We sang with enthusiasm, we smiled and showed that we enjoyed what we were doing. We entertained the audience. This was evident as they sang with us, moved to the music, and extended applause.

Our music committee has selected some new songs for us to learn. As the teaching quartet is learning these songs to teach us, I would encourage each member to listen to the CD's provided while following along with the sheet music.

We need to spend time each week reviewing our current songs to remain fluent with them and to work out any rough spots we might have. I would encourage you to sing in front of the mirror to see your facial expressions and how you are forming the vowels.

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## Stories

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With Rodgers' music and Hart's lyrics, Broadway was treated to an illustrious series of productions. *Garrick Gaeties*, for which the memorable song "Mountain Greenery" was written. *On Your Toes*, included a handful of top flight tunes. *Babes in Arms*, introduced such standards as "Where Or When," "My Funny Valentine," and "Johnny One Note." And, of course, there was *Pal Joey*, which is still regularly revived for local theaters and summer stock. One of the many highlights of this production is the witty, languid "Bewitched."

Rodgers has always had an uncanny ability to work with a lyricist so closely that their two talents seem to fuse. It was almost as if words and lyrics were created simultaneously by the same person. And it was significant that he worked consistently and exclusively with Hart until the early 1940's.

Brilliant, but emotionally erratic, Hart was increasingly given to sudden disappearances and flash outbursts. In 1942, Rodgers suggested to Hart that they start work on a new venture based on the play "*Green Grow The Lilacs*." Hart resisted it, maintaining that it wasn't their kind of show and if Rodgers was so set on doing it, he could go find himself another lyricist. Only then did Rodgers approach his old friend, Oscar Hammerstein II. They went to work on adapting the play, which later materialized as *Oklahoma*.

Hart lived only a few months after the opening of the first show that Rodgers did without him. In November of 1943, on the opening night of the last Rodgers and Hart show, the revival of *A Connecticut Yankee*. Hart unexplainedly disappeared from backstage. Rodgers turned the city upside down looking for him, suspecting strongly that Hart's health was worse than admitted. Two days later, Hart was found in a hotel room, unconscious and suffering from pneumonia. He was rushed to Doctors Hospital and died three days later, during which time Rodgers never left his side.

*Oklahoma* had opened on March 31st of that year and was kind of a theatrical milestone that history permits to occur only every few decades. In fact, the critics have seldom been so profuse in their accolades for a musical. *Oklahoma* went on to run a full 2,212 performances

It would be difficult to compare Rodgers and Hammerstein's accomplishments with anything in the annals of Broadway. *South Pacific*, *Carousel*, *Allegro*, *The King and I*, *Pipe Dream*, *Flower Drum Song*, *The Sound of Music*: their shows read like a catalog of Broadway at its best.

In 1960, Oscar Hammerstein II died. Rodgers, defying all pessimistic predictions, survived the loss with his talent intact. He embarked on a new venture as lyricist and composer for the 1962 film version of *State Fair* and the Broadway production of *No Strings*."

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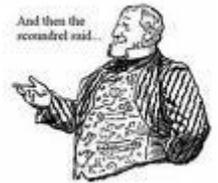
## Podium

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We have worked hard making improvements to our performances. However, we still have a lot of work ahead. So keep the whole world singing by continuing to work on your music, both old and new.

### Robert's Raconteuring

*By Robert Bradley*



The spring contest is over, and I wish to thank everyone in the organization and wives, families and friends for their help in making it a successful venture. I heard from the District that this was one of the best contests held in NED in memory; truly a credit to all of the Mad Hatters who pitched in.

By Saturday evening, I was a bit crank, and I apologize for snapping at anyone during the course of the contest preparation and execution. The hardest part of any operation is to be in charge of things that you are not in charge of.

I hope that most of you enjoyed the experience. I do think that being the host chapter affected our singing. I was speaking with some of the Manchester guys, and when they hosted District their score was a 66.6. At our contest, well rested and not as harried, their score was 73.1.

In 1998, we scored a 739 at District. This was not comparable with the 707 we got at this contest. The 739 score was horrible and reflected the judges killing us for singing "When Day is Done," which has many minor chords. We scored a third fewer points on this song than we did on our first song. Of course, as luck would have it, the chorus that won International that year did the same song. Such is the luck of the draw.

In 1999, we scored 867 and won most improved. After that, we could have sung tags and done better. In 2004, we scored a 948 with a 52.7 average, more in line with current scores. In 2008, we scored 1001 with a 55.6 average. This year we scored 58.9, a gain of 3.3 points over the 2008 showing.

The only point of this is to show that I feel we presented ourselves as hosts far above the average NED hosts, yet we were not singing as well as we should have. There were too many distractions and, as we needed 700 points to move on to Portland, we cut it much too close at 707.

I again wish to thank everyone for their hard work and cooperation during the course of the weekend. Our drivers did not get lost, our movers moved in the correct order, our door people closed and opened with the best of them.

I'm always proud to be a part of this organization. Onward to Portland and higher scores.



## Musical Musings From the Music Committee

Jim Hopper- Music VP

The Music Committee has been busy researching new songs for the chorus. We agreed that before choosing any new song, we wanted to hear the arrangement sung by some quartet, either a recording or our own teaching quartet. We found almost all the songs in which we were interested on a CD. We chose four songs from among about a dozen under consideration. Those chosen were: "On The Sunny Side Of The Street," "Loch Lomond," "Where Is Love," and "Goodnight Sweetheart."

We want to continue to provide a good mix of categories to include uptunes, ballads, doo-wop, inspirational, patriotic and an occasional non-barbershop tune to provide a little twist to our repertoire.

The most recent new songs learned by the chorus are "The Way You look Tonight," "Hey, Look Me Over," and "Give My Regards to Broadway." Soon up in the queue are "If I Loved You," "You'll Never Walk Alone," and "Lullaby In Ragtime." Our esteemed director will determine the order in which we tackle the new songs and the timetable.

We also recommended that we work on two new songs concurrently in rehearsal. Joe suggested that we do them simultaneously, but we felt he was the only one who would be capable of such a Charles Ives approach.

Part-specific teaching recordings will need to be purchased or prepared by the teaching quartet for each of these new songs. The teaching quartet has committed to one rehearsal each week to work on learning these new songs and doing a final evaluation on the suitability of the arrangement for our chorus. If the arrangement appears to be too difficult for the chorus, the quartet will return to the music committee with a recommendation on that song for final approval by the committee.

We look forward to a challenging and enjoyable feast of new music !

## Stories

*Continued from the previous page*

In 1965 he collaborated with Stephen Sondheim on *Do I Hear a Waltz?*

Some of his famous songs include "You'll Never Walk Alone," "It Might As Well Be Spring" and "It's A Grand Night For Singing." Among my personal favorites are "I Didn't Know What Time It Was," "No Other Love" and "It Might As Well Be Spring."

Today, Richard Rodgers' position as America's foremost theatrical composer is without dispute. His brand of music bears an indelible earmark of rich original melodies and ingenious harmonies, embellished with the most inventive rhythms.



## March Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Fred Baran,  
acting secretary

Meeting called to order by president Danny Anderson at 6:10 PM on 3/2/10, at the Church of Christ, 90 Clapboard Ridge Rd., Danbury CT.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: was received. Motion to accept by Jim Hopper, seconded by Dick Walter. Approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: was read by Dick Walter and copies distributed. Singing Valentines' deposits totaled \$1718.00 while payments were \$32.38. Awaiting additional bills for advertising and a final report will be issued next month. A motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Jim Hopper and seconded by Joe Hudson. Approved.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Membership applications were submitted and approved for Joe West and Nate Chester. The payment plan for these new members was discussed. VP of Membership, Andy Bayer, discussed his notes from the recent Leadership Academy. Motion to accept the new members by Andy Bayer and seconded by Jim Hopper. Approved.

VP PUBLIC RELATIONS: VP Dickson DeMarche was on vacation. Discussions included support of local music programs, modifying the website to show support of Harmony Foundation and contacting local Red Cross in conjunction with the Singing for Life Program. A press release for hosting the Contest will be developed for the *News-Times*. A more detailed report from the VP of public relations will be issued next month.

MUSIC COMMITTEE: The music committee met by phone and e-mail to nominate and vote on new songs for the chorus in five categories: ballad, uptune, modern, non-barbershop and Patriotic/Inspirational. The votes of committee members resulted in the selection of the following four songs over the coming year: "Where Is Love," "Sunny Side of the Street," "Good Night Sweetheart," and "Loch Lomond."

The next meeting of the committee will address the songs to be replaced in our repertoire, their replacements and the schedule for introduction.

OLD BUSINESS: Joe Hudson discussed the need for volunteers and the roles they will play in the Mad Hatters responsibility for hosting the competition on March 19 & 20.

*Continued on the next page*

## Baritone Deep Thought of the Month

**Since Americans throw rice at weddings, do Asians throw hamburgers?**

## Board Meeting

*Continued from the previous page*

The Bridgeport Chapter has volunteered to be the mic testers for the chorus competition on Saturday and then help out with escorting choruses and other tasks while Danbury is competing.

Swing Shift, out of Poughkeepsie, will be the quartet mic testers. Transportation arrangements for judges were also discussed with additional volunteers needed. Lyle LaPlante is coordinating.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Discussions were held about hiring a coach to work with the chorus, in addition to continuing the remaining sessions with our Singing A's Coach, Butch Ashdown.

We agreed to continue discussions next month on the possibility of hiring Scott Brannon of the Big Apple Chorus and Our Town quartet to work with Danbury after the competition, focusing on our improvement needs from our contest performance.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** D. Sutherland, C. Zlamany.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** D. Anderson, F. Baran, A. Bayer, J. Hopper, J. Hudson, L. LaPlante and R. Walter. Absent: D. DeMarche, R. Golenbock, A. Roberts, C. Rosa and R. Bradley.

Meeting adjourned at 7:02 PM. Motion to close D. Anderson, seconded by J. Hudson. Approved. Next meeting on April 6, 2010.

## Why Can't I Sing in Tune?

*From the Barbershop Harmony Society Web site*

Singing out of tune is a recurring problem that we hear from performers. An important element of the barbershop "lock and ring" sound is in-tune singing. We need to sing quality musical tones that are specifically in pitch to the anticipated melodic line. To make this happen, we must sing in tune both horizontally and vertically.

Do we sing out of tune because we can not hear the pitch we are trying to sing, or because we just can not support the pitch in good quality in which we are trying to sing?

The answer is support. Chest breathing or shallow breathing causes the pitch to sag at the middle or end of every phrase. A freely produced, well supported, resonant quality tone with a good head voice will solve many tuning issues. Poor posture, mental and/or physical fatigue can also have significant influence on horizontal and vertical tuning. Spend time on good diaphragmatic breathing exercises every day to help develop better support and, therefore, better tuning.

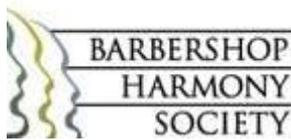
Singing with a heavy vocal production throughout your range can also cause flattening, especially as you carry the weight of your chest voice up into your head voice. Learn to keep your head voice in your voice throughout your range. Furthermore, the use of warm air to support every pitch of every phrase will open up all the spaces needed for quality singing.

Some other more obvious reasons: singing wrong intervals, or taking too small of a step in an ascending line, or too large of a step in a descending line. Spend time singing major, minor and chromatic scales, both ascending and descending, with accuracy. Relaxing support when you're singing descending lines can also allow you to flat. Reaching for high note without lightening up and using your head voice can also cause flattening.

Scoping is another cause of tuning problems for your quartet, especially for the lead. Spend rehearsal time duetting in your quartet practice. It will make a difference in the overall sound and tuning of your quartet.

Lastly, it is important to pick songs appropriate for your quartet's vocal range and to sing them in the right key for your group. Avoid songs written too low for the quartet to sing comfortably. Be warned that if the melody has too many thirds or sevenths, there is a good chance the quartet will go flat





## Society and District Notes



### American Harmony - The Movie

*American Harmony - The Movie*, will be coming to the Avon Theater, 270 Thayer St., Providence, RI on Sunday, April 25th. Doors open at 3:00PM, Live Show at 3:30 pm. The movie starts at 4:30 pm and runs 90 minutes. Tickets are \$10.

If you buy your tickets in advance, your name will be entered in a drawing for a free dinner for two at Andrea's Restaurant, located next to the theater.

Make your check payable to: "Generations" and mail it to:

179 Ontario St.  
Providence, RI 02907.

Don't miss this opportunity to see a great film that promotes the Barbershop Harmony Society at its best.

### LiveWire

Did you know that *LiveWire* brings you a quick read of current and upcoming activities and programs of the Barbershop Harmony Society? This is a free service we offer in hopes that you'll share this information with your chapter, quartet and district to help all Barbershoppers get the most from the barbershop hobby. To subscribe to the weekly, online newsletter for FREE, Go here:

[http://visitor.constantcontact.com/manage/optin/ea?v=001povWiHOjwz8d6\\_YRzTC-rg%3D%3D](http://visitor.constantcontact.com/manage/optin/ea?v=001povWiHOjwz8d6_YRzTC-rg%3D%3D)

To view past editions of LiveWire, go to:

[www.barbershop.org/livewire](http://www.barbershop.org/livewire).

### 2010 Northeastern District Convention

Fellow Barbershoppers, I am pleased to announce that the 2010 Northeastern District convention will be held in Portland, Maine, on Oct 22- 24, 2010. The Portland "Downeasters" chorus have graciously agreed be our hosts. Stay tuned to the NED web site for further info.

See you in Portland!!!

Joseph Millett  
Barbershop Harmony Society  
Northeastern District - VP Events

### Harmony at Sea

Harmony at Sea to Bermuda, July 18th-25th, 2010 , on Holland America's Veendam Out of New York City.

Sing four-Part Harmony around the Beautiful Island of Bermuda and be part of a "Harmony at Sea" Show Spectacular on the Ship

Get Personal Coaching, Voice Lessons, Classes, Seminars and Much More.

Contact Gwen Coles at 800-882-0499 , or email her at:

[gwenc@travelexonline.com](mailto:gwenc@travelexonline.com)

GET PERSONAL COACHING, VOICE LESSONS, AND TRAINING BY SOME OF THE BEST COACHES SWEET ADELINES INTERNATIONAL AND BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY HAS TO OFFER:

CINDY HANSEN ELLIS, International Visual Performance Coach.

JOE CERUTTI, Musical Director of the Alexandria Harmonizers, Barbershop Int'l Champions. Joe is the current Music Director of the Alexandria Harmonizers, the reigning Mid-Atlantic District Chorus Champion. Joe was most recently the director of the Concord, MA and Five Towns, NY choruses of the Barbershop Harmony Society, and the Harmony Inc. chorus, Women of Note, in Hudson, MA.

A Music Education graduate of Five Towns College, he received his Masters degree in choral conducting from Boston University, and has served as faculty at Harmony University for the past four years.

Joe is also an international quartet competitor. He has taught secondary school music and has a wide variety of conducting and performance experience in both classical and popular musical repertoire for men's and women's ensembles.

Joe will teach your heart to sing while training your vocal cords. You will see the many faces of Joe Cerutti while sharing this cruise with him. Fun times will be had by all.

DAVID ELLIS, Singing Coach and 3rd Place International Medalist

LORI JO WHITEHAUS, Chorus Director and Education Expert, Certified Director SAI

# Ye Olde Joke Boarde



*Submitted by the Unknown Barbershopper*

A barbershop baritone rushed into a busy doctor's office and shouted, "Doctor! I think I'm shrinking!!" The doctor calmly responded, "Now, settle down. You'll just have to be a little patient."

...

A barbershop baritone broke into the local police station and stole all the toilets and urinals, leaving no clues. A spoke person was quoted as saying, "We have absolutely nothing to go on."



...

At a job interview, a barbershop baritone decided to lie and say he had experience as an illusionist and as a window cleaner. They saw right through him.

...



A barbershop baritone was driving down the street in a sweat because he had an important meeting and couldn't find a parking place. Looking up to heaven he said, "Lord take pity on me. If you find me a parking place I will go to mass every Sunday for the rest of my life and give up my Irish Whiskey!"

Miraculously, a parking place appeared.

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## Current Mad Hatter Repertoire

### Performance A

Always  
I Feel a Song Coming On  
The Way You Look Tonight  
You Make Me Feel So Young  
Cabaret  
Heart  
Hey, Look Me Over  
There is Nothing Like a Dame

### Performance B

I Found a Million Dollar Baby  
I'm Always Chasing Rainbows  
Sh-Boom  
Breaking Up Is Hard To Do  
How Are Things in Glocca Morra  
Over the Rainbow  
Please, Mr. Columbus

Can Blue Men Sing the Whites ?

### Patriotic

Star-Spangled Banner  
America the Beautiful  
God Bless America

### Inspirational

I Believe  
Let There Be Peace on Earth  
Lord's Prayer  
Amazing Grace

### Upcoming Songs

Give My Regards to Broadway  
You'll Never Walk Alone  
This Land Is Your Land  
Lullaby in Ragtime

If I Loved You  
The Bonnie Broken Banks of Rhode  
Island  
Chicken Cordon Bleus



"He who sings  
scares away  
his woes"

Miguel de Cervantes  
Saavedra

## The Danbury, CT Chapter SPEBSQSA

PO Box 5149  
Brookfield, CT 06804-5149

President:	Danny Anderson
Musical Director:	Joseph Hudson
Assistant Director:	Jim Hopper
Assistant Director:	Don Sutherland
Membership VP:	Andy Bayer
Public Relations VP:	Dickson DeMarche
Music VP:	Jim Hopper
Secretary:	Robert Golenbock
Treasurer:	Dick Walter
Member at Large:	Fred Baran
Member at Large:	Art Roberts
Member at Large:	Charlie Rosa
Program Committee Chairman	Lyle LaPlante
Uniform Chairman:	Andy Bayer
Harmony Foundation Chairman:	Danny Anderson
Music Librarian:	Lyle LaPlante
Sunshine Chairman:	Don Smith
Package Show Chairman:	Dick Walter
Chorus Manager:	Robert Golenbock

### The Hatter Chatter

Serving the Mad Hatter community since last Tuesday

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*The editors of the Hatter Chatter welcome submissions from all chapter members and friends of the Mad Hatters. E-mail, mail, paper airplane us your thoughts, observations, opinions, singing tips and whatever, and we'll turn them into Pulitzer Prize copy*

### April Milestones

#### Birthdays

4 – Patricia Griffin  
11 - Robert Golenbock  
12 – Carl Zlamany  
15 – Bill Keenan  
16 – Vivien Cheeseman  
27 – Ronnie Fehling  
28 – Don Sutherland



#### Wedding Anniversaries

14 – Fred and Vera Baran  
16 – Diane and Craig Johnson

## Mark Your Calendars

**April 11:** Chapter Sing-out, Brookfield Commons, 246 Federal Road, Brookfield, CT. Warm-up 1:00, sing 1:30.

**May 1:** Chapter Show, Bridgeport, CT. Tomlinson Middle School, 200 Unquowa Rd., Fairfield, CT. \$20.

**May 22:** Chapter Show, Poughkeepsie, NY. Cunneen Hackett Cultural Arts Ctr., Poughkeepsie. Two performances, 2:00 PM & 7:00 PM. \$15.

**October 2:** Mad Hatter Annual Show. Brookfield High School.

**June 28 - July 4, 2010:** Philadelphia, PA

Headquarters Hotel: Philadelphia Marriott Downtown



Contest Venue: Pennsylvania Convention Center

### What They Were Saying About the Mad Hatters



- Who let you bums in?
- Looks like the recession hit Danbury really hard.
- You guys better hope health insurance reform passes soon.
- Is there a freight yard nearby?
- The showers are near the stage.
- The District better tighten-up on security.