



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

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Songsters Serenade Sweethearts

By John Bradley, Robert Golenbock and Terry Dunkle

Danbury, CT – From Redding to New Milford, quartets from the Danbury Mad Hatter Barbershop Chorus fanned-out throughout the Valentine's Day weekend to share songs, roses and cards with romantics of all ages.

Compared with previous Valentine's Days, orders for Singing Valentines initially came in slowly, but accelerated as the day approached. "Cupid got a late start this year," said lead, Bob Bradley, who sang on Friday with Dick Walter, Jim Hopper and Fred Baran to form Rare Chemistry. "Unfortunately, the weak economy even effects love."

According to chapter treasurer, Dick Walter, about 30 valentines were delivered from Friday morning until Sunday evening, February 12 – 14. That was two fewer than in 2009, but less than half of the total number of jobs logged in 2008.

"Calls kept coming in all day Saturday while the quartets were out," Dick explained. "

Singing Valentines form memories, not only for those who receive them, but for the singers as well.

According to lead Robert Golenbock, lead of Rare Occasion, their "best" stop of the weekend wasn't on the quartet's schedule. The guys misread the address, and the people who answered the knock on the door invited the quartet in, then called some neighbors to help find the right house. According to Robert, the quartet serenaded them, before moving on to the intended house, three doors down.

Rare Occasion also sang at Danbury Hospital. One of the nurses popped her head out of the delivery room with a baby that had just been delivered. According to quartet members, the baby wasn't impressed, but the mom appreciated the singing.

Terry Dunkle filled-in at bass for Rare Occasion on Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

According to Terry, the highlight of his singing weekend was getting kissed by a "wild Czechoslovakian rose."

Rare Occasion went all the way to North Stamford to deliver combined Valentine's Day and birthday wishes. While they were preparing to sing, the valentine told her husband to hurry up, and he showed up wearing nothing but a towel. "I'd shake your hand," he quipped, "but my towel would fall down."



Rare Occasion, with Terry Dunkle filling in for Steve Holtz on bass, delivered a Singing Valentine to Libby Kapelari on Sunday afternoon, February 14, at her home on Whaley Avenue in Danbury. Libby, a seamstress who grew up in Czechoslovakia, especially enjoyed hearing "My Wild Czechoslovakian Rose," the quartet's on-the-spot adaptation of the Irish classic. "Dividing four extra syllables between two notes was a formidable challenge," reports lead Robert Golenbock, "but I'm Prague to say we did it."

According to an anonymous quartet member (who was filling in at bass), Robert, learning Libby was a seamstress, considered leaving his pants with her for alterations, but he thought better of it.

More Valentines stories on Pages 4 and 5

Do You Recognize This?

Below is a venue at which the Mad Hatters sang a few years ago. Do you recognize it? Only old timers will get this one. If you are the first to respond by email with the correct answer, you win 100 points!



No one guessed last month's entry, GW Tavern in Washington Depot, CT. Baritone John Bradley remembers the chorus singing there several years ago for a corporate event. "I was hungry," John remembers, "and there was a big tray of hamburgers just beyond my reach. Of course, we weren't offered any."

The Butch Report

Submitted by Dr. Robert Golenbock

On Tuesday evening, February 9, our Singing A's coach, Garry (Butch) Ashdown of the Poughkeepsie New Yorkers, joined us for another highly beneficial coaching session. This one focused on preparation for next month's Yankee Division contest.

As always, Butch left us with a number of things to think about and work on, not just for contest but to help us improve our singing and performances in general. I have summarized those points to share with everyone.

Keep smiling, everyone! We learned that raising your eyebrows and putting on a smile helps us sing brighter and prevents us from going flat. Get in position – feet shoulder width apart, chest up, head slightly down.

Open your throat as if you're starting to yawn. Take a deep breath using your abdomen. Let the air out from your abdomen, not straining from the throat.

Make an "ah" by dropping your jaw and showing your teeth. When you "ooh" your lips should fit around your thumb. Keep listening to the voices around you.

And did I mention keep smiling?

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Midwinter Convention a Blast

by Bill Manion and Dick Zang

The Midwinter Convention was held in Tampa the last week in January. For the third year, it featured the International Youth Barbershop Chorus Festival as well as the traditional International Seniors Quartet Contest. About 2,200 barbershoppers and guests enjoyed the contests and the Friday and Saturday night Shows of Champions.

Barbershoppers had to share the streets on Saturday with pirates who had invaded the city as part of the Gasparilla Festival. They were a mean looking bunch who had held the mayor hostage and showered us with beads and trinkets as we made our way between the Sheraton headquarters hotel and the Performing Arts Center.

The 27 quartets who competed in the Seniors Contest on Friday afternoon were all superb. The top ten all scored over 70. The winners, Resisting-A-Rest, sang "The Sunshine of Your Smile" and "Heart Of My Heart Medley." One of the crowd favorites was Benchmark from Australia who sang a rousing "Alexander's Ragtime Band".

Our two Northeast District competitors, the X-Men and Port City Sound, finished 13th and 21st respectively.

The contest moved right along with emcee, Keith Hopkins, who kept us entertained all weekend with poetry such as:

*Mary had a little lamb,
Her father shot it dead.
She took the lamb to school that day
Between two slabs of bread.*

Mad Hatters Dick Zang, Nancy and Bill Manion, attended the Midwinter and had a ball. Speaking for a lot of us, Bill said, "How good is good! They certainly held the banner high for us old fogies."

The Friday evening Show of Champions featured the 2006 and 2008 senior quartet champions, Antique Gold and Eureka; the 2009 college quartet champs, The Vagrants; and the two fourth place International Quartet Medalists of 2009, the Ringmasters (from Sweden) and State Line Grocery.

Closing the show was the Toast of Tampa, a perennial top-ten Sweet Adeline chorus under the direction of Tony DeRosa, with enough choreography to make your head swim!

Bill Manion commented, "For my money, State Line Grocery was superior to Ringmaster,s although they tied at International. And the bass of the Vagrants is a young man that can't go more than 120 pounds, but what a set of pipes! He needs a bit of coaching because he not only edged toward the microphone, but blasted away to the point that the melody was lost. I'm surprised they won the college contest."

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Butch Report

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Tenors and baritones, great job with the unit sound. Basses, avoid that gravelly sound by pushing a lot of air from the abdomen. Save your voice so you can hit that low F. You're all capable of it. Leads – that unit sound is really close. Try to match Danny's vowels – he's standing behind you where you can hear him.

And, of course, keep smiling.

Remember to concentrate on the initial vowel of diphthongs. Way = weh – eey. I'm = Ah – eem. Work on the "uh" of "world.." Think "jum-book" but sing "jumble"-- the vowel sounds are the same.

Remember if a note is too high or too low, it's ok not to sing it. But keep smiling.

In contest, we will be judged primarily on the first eight bars. In "Hey, Look Me Over," don't chop. Imagine your arm is swaying as you sing. And no scooping on "So-o-o Hey." On the tag stay bright. Tenors – as much "ping" as possible.

Leads, plan to build and build. In "Over the Rainbow" we must sing this song with emotion. Believe what you're singing. Make the audience cry.

Again, the first eight bars have to be perfect. That means match those vowels. Since Butch won't be singing with us, we'll have to do the tag without him. The leads can take breaths subtly on the tag, but the hanger should make the audience scream with excitement.

And, don't forget to smile.

What is the Singing A's Program?

By Jim Dodge, NED/HEP Singing A's Coach

The goal of the Singing A's program is to instruct you on how to build an ensemble, the very essence of what we do in our hobby—ensemble singing.

We still pay very close attention to basic skills like posture and breathing and vowel placement, as these are the building blocks for great singing. But we are now adding another dimension: What am I, as a singer, supposed to be doing when my ensemble sings?

"Ensemble" means "together," so the difference in what you likely have been doing and what we want to teach you to do is simple.

We want you to learn to "sing together" rather than "sing at the same time." There is a huge difference!

Midwinter

Continued from the previous page

The Saturday Youth Chorus Contest was a real treat. There were eleven choruses of about 325 young men ranging from high school age to an average age of under 25. They came from Canada and all over the U.S., including Alaska.

The contest format was a bit different. Each chorus sang three songs with two required in the barbershop mode and one of their choice – no restrictions. One of the choruses did a tribute to their director who passed away, bringing tears to many eyes. The winning chorus, 52eighty, from Denver, did a beautiful rendition of the "Ave Maria" by Franz Biebl in Latin. They also sang "Yesterday I Heard the Rain" and "Hello My Baby." That chorus, with an average age of under 22, definitely would have been a top 10 at International. The future of barbershop singing is in good hands.

The evening Show of Champions was a blockbuster. It started with the young men from Denver followed by the 2009 senior quartet champions and the top three International Quartet medalists, Crossroads, Old School, and Storm Front. I couldn't tell which of the top three sang better. They were all exceptional.

For those of you who were at Harmony College in Massachusetts two years ago, you will remember Storm Front and their rendition of "Lida Rose." They have perfected that comedy routine and blew the audience away with their shenanigans. As a special treat not on the program, all the quartet champions came on stage and sang under the direction of Jim Henry. Parts of the song featured individual quartets. Naturally when it was Storm Front's turn, their very funny lead, Jim Clark, stopped singing and got into a heated discussion with the bass, insisting that they had come in second. People couldn't stop laughing.

One of the attractions about the Midwinter is its intimacy. With its smaller attendance, you get a chance to sing and spend more time with a lot of fellow barbershoppers. Dick ran into Burt Szabo and Don Gray and Bill ran into Doc Sauss and reminisced about NED, Danbury and Grossinger's. The old timers will remember that Doc was the baritone of the Four Statesmen. Bill reminded Doc that one of Bill's early quartets opened the show at Grossinger's where they were the feature act just a few months after winning International. "One of our songs was "Jean" with an arrangement by George Monaghan. After the show, the Statesmen asked us for a copy of the arrangement and we said, NO! I didn't remind Doc about that."

This mid-winter was the best attended to this date and was well worth the trip. Next year's will be in Las Vegas. That's a little bit further away than Tampa, but think about it!

This site has some good pictures of the pirate invasion in Tampa:

blogs.tampabay.com/photo/2010/01/gasparilla.html



Quartet Corner

News from our chorus quartets

Rare Occasion – By Fred Baran

Rare Occasion had a busy schedule for the weekend of Singing Valentines. By Sunday evening, we had delivered a total of 23 paid jobs plus our donation of \$70 in tips and a \$100 job (extra \$50) for the equivalent of 25 Singing Valentines. We actually started on Tuesday evening, February 9th, prior to rehearsal, by videotaping a Singing Valentine for Paul Symanowitz (a prospective new member) to send to his girlfriend in New Hampshire.

On Friday, February 12, we became Rare Chemistry with Bob Bradley, lead, and Dick Walter, bass, of Real Chemistry, joining Jim Hopper, baritone, and Fred Baran, tenor, to cover the Singing Valentine's requests for the day. We started out at Joel Barlow High School in Redding (Jim Hopper's former employer), singing to a teacher in front of a classroom with approximately 30 young female students (many hearing barbershop for the first time).

We then delivered our annual, complimentary valentine to the Danbury News-Times staff, for appreciation of the coverage they provide to the Mad Hatter Chorus throughout the year.

We continued on to a business in Brookfield, a restaurant in New Milford and to the Pope John Paul II Center in Danbury, a nursing home, where we sang to the Assistant Director of Activities and approximately 25 residents and staff members.

We then proceeded to the Mill Ridge School in Danbury, where we delivered a valentine to an Administrator (and found ourselves on YouTube the next day). We ended the day singing to a former member of the Church of Christ, Carolyn Watson, an Alzheimer's patient, at her home, where we sang last year. Jim remembers Carolyn as having a beautiful voice. As we sang "Always" (her favorite song, and inscribed on her wedding ring), she lifted her head and began to sing along with us. Needless to say, it was a very touching moment for us, as well as her husband and care giver who were both present in the room.

On Saturday, February 13, with Steve Holtz, our bass from the Manchester Chapter, we started the day at Danbury Hospital singing to the nurses and staff of the Labor and Delivery Room. In the audience were two newborn babies in the arms of nurses who listened to our valentine deliveries. By the end of our last song, one had fallen asleep and the other listened peacefully, with eyes wide open.

We moved to the Family Birthing Center Area and sang to the nurses and staff, and a proud young father holding his days old baby, and gazing lovingly at her face. We have sung to these nurses in the past, and they told us much they look forward to our return.

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Emails to the Editors

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

To the Editors:

Thank you so much for the Singing Valentine for my wife Karen at the Animal Hospital in New Milford. It was a moment she said she would never forget. Of course, she also said that she turned many shades of red. Ha-ha - gotta love it! Again thanks so much. I will pass this incredible treat on to others.

Alan Machado

To the Editors:

Congrats on your award! The bulletin alone must take up quite a bit of time. Question: where do you get the "Baritone Deep thought of the month" stuff?

Andy Lesperance

Andy, we can't reveal the identity of the "Unknown Barbershopper." The Feds would get very upset with us.

To the Editors:

Hey Everybody, Just a quick note to let all my friends know that on Sunday, February 21st at 3:00, I will be doing an interview with a Connecticut radio station DJ, George Ward. George does a Doo-Wop radio program for WESUFM in Middletown, CT (Area covered: New Haven and Hartford, CT, up to Springfield, MA).

The show is called "The Doo-Wop Corner," and it is aired from 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm every Sunday. The Doo-Wop Corner can also be heard world wide on the web at www.wesufm.org. George will be playing songs recorded by groups that I sang with (The Cordials, Occasionally 5) in the past. He will also feature songs recorded by my present group "Uptown Express" on their recently released CD "Smooth Sounds". Please feel free to visit the following websites:

<http://www.uptowndoowop.com> (Uptown Express website where our CD can be purchased).

<http://www.myspace.com/rgstew47> (My Myspace page that will let you play 4 songs from our CD).

Good Harmony to all,
Bob (Bulldog) Stewart

Bob who now lives in Florida, sang lead with several Mad Hatter Quartets in the 70's and 80's, (Cold Water Flat with Larry Angeli, Gene Buck, and, Dick Zang and others with Mario Merolle, Jack Foley and Len Carlson).

Quartets

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They all work with Dr. Bob, and he manages to ham it up a little for them. On our way out of the hospital, as is our custom, we stopped and sang a valentine for the ladies at the reception desk in the main lobby, which they thoroughly enjoyed (and where the acoustics are spectacular).

Continuing on with our Doctors, Nurses and Hospital Tour, we stopped at the home of Dr. Raul Arguello, the new Head of Pediatrics at Danbury Hospital, in Sandy Hook, where we sang to his wife and three charming children. While en route, we received a call from Bob Bradley about a new phone-in valentine, and we drove to the Candlewood Animal Hospital in New Milford. There we sang to a young lady in the lobby area, and to a cat which seemed to enjoy the music, and to a dachshund who hid under a chair. Singing to pets is not new to us and in the past we have entertained a python, a hawk, a cockatoo and a bulldog (who became quite amorously attached to Dr. Golenbock's pant leg.)

We delivered several more valentines and ended up at the Stop and Shop deli dept. in New Milford. As is often the case, the young lady working behind the counter was totally embarrassed, but the customers waiting to be served loved the Singing Valentines.

At this point, we had a long break between valentines, so Steve Holtz returned home to Wethersfield. Our schedule resumed again with Terry Dunkle joining us, singing bass, and we drove down to North Stamford to sing at a birthday party for an 18 year old girl and a Singing Valentine for her Grandmother. In addition to the Singing Valentines, we sang "My Wild Irish Rose" to Grandma (and switched parts: Jim-tenor, Bob-lead- Terry-bari and Fred-bass). We also sang "Happy Birthday" to the young lady and received an extra fee for our efforts (along with libations and hors d'oeuvres and an invitation to stay at the party). We then headed back to Danbury to sing at the Valentine's Party at the Church of Christ and to Mary Dunkle at a lasagna dinner at the King Street Church (to an estimated crowd of about 60 people).

On Sunday, February 14 (Valentine's Day), with Terry singing bass, we delivered our first valentine at the New Colony Diner to the owner's wife before a packed house of over 50 people, and received a generous tip. We continued on to Danbury to sing for Libby Kapelari, a member of The Church of Christ, and a great seamstress to many Mad Hatters.

We sang two more valentines, including one to Marti Hopper. Our last appearances for the day were at Danbury Hospital to a staff member on the 8th Floor - East Wing, and a return to the nurses and staff of the Labor & Delivery Area (a different shift who had not heard us on Saturday).

While there we met Dr. Richard Ruben of the Pediatrics Staff, who had hired us for these appearances for the past few years.

He was very complimentary of our singing and expressed the very positive feed-back from his staff.

The HatterTones – By Dick Zang and Joe Hudson

The HatterTones may not have delivered the greatest number of Singing Valentines, but we certainly spread them out the most. Starting on Friday night, through Saturday with Danny Anderson filling in at lead, we didn't finish up until the next Friday, with Dan Griffin back on lead singing for his legendary Dunkin'Donuts lady at her chiropractor's office in Brookfield

Along the way, the HatterTones made a lot of people happy and only got lost once in spite of having two navigation devices on the job. It turned out that the road in Weston had been recently closed (someone built a house in the middle of the street - some nerve!), and were it not for a friendly neighbor, we still would be driving. That turned out well though. The neighbor happens to lead a gospel choir in the area, and enjoyed our song offered in thanks for her help.

On Saturday, our first stop was at the State Police barracks in Southbury. Talk about empty. There were two people in the building at the time, the officer at the front desk and the woman to whom we were singing. Boy, was she surprised! Then, it was off to Wilton to sing for a couple living in The Green at Cannondale. The woman we sang to there was very "sprite and energetic."

Next stop was for a woman who looked very familiar, but I'll get back to that later. To get to this valentine, we had my GPS set up, and it told us to take a right onto a street. We made the turn and discovered it was someone's driveway. So, Danny set his GPS up, and it told us the same thing. We stopped at someone's house to ask directions. Dick Zang came back and told us that there used to be a street there, but someone built a house in the middle of it. That's right, A HOUSE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE STREET!! We finally reached our destination, where both Chuck and I said the valentine looked familiar. Come to find out, she was an English teacher at Danbury High School., where both Chuck and I have taught.

After that, we had some time on our hands as our next and final stop was scheduled for 5:15 pm in Oxford. So, we went and sang at Stop and Shop for my wife. While singing for Liz, we received a request to sing for this gentlemen's wife in Brookfield (impromptu singing can do that). So, we went and sang for him. We then started on our way to Oxford, making a stop at a diner first.

We drove to the house in Oxford, which turned out to be a party. We sang our two valentines songs and "Happy Birthday" for Karen. You can find the video on YouTube. Afterwards, while Dick was getting directions back to Route-34, the lady came up and said that her mother wanted to know if we were strippers. That was funny. After stripping for the mother, we headed back home (only kidding Liz).

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Stories About Songwriters

By Fred Baran

Jerome David Kern was born in New York City on January 27, 1885, twenty years after the Civil War ended. He died there on November 11, 1945, the last year of World War II. His 60 years spanned an era of cataclysmic change in American life.

The America that used to take its cultural cues from European mentors blossomed during Kern's lifetime into a country buoyant with self-assurance and perfectly secure in its strong preference for dress, manners, morals and entertainment.

Kern was more than an eye-witness to this cultural revolution. He was an integral part of it. Indeed, he was one of the powers behind it. Kern has been dubbed the sire of American popular music.

He elevated the art from the epidemic of Victorian ditties and Viennese waltziness that turn-of-the-century America tried so nobly to import and assimilate comfortably. From his teens at least, Kern was convinced that America wanted good popular music in a good stage production that was intimate, vital and appropriate to the audience.

His first contribution was made while he was still in high school, when his original composition for the class song was published. No one, at this point, even his musically talented mother, realized the boy's genius. Certainly not his father, a successful business man who had very business-like aspirations for his son.. What a crashing business disappointment Jerome was to become!

Jerome's early business failures were almost as monumental as his later musical success. A favorite anecdote illustrates the point.

Persuaded to go into his father's merchandising business after high school, young Jerome was sent to purchase one piano from a New York merchant. Slightly confused, but very eager to please, the boy was persuaded by a very convincing sales pitch to contract for 200 pianos. The expression on his father's face can be imagined all too easily; the family was almost wiped out financially.

So, an acknowledged failure, the boy who was to write "They Didn't Believe Me" and *Showboat* was sent in disgrace to London. There at age 18, he got a job with a London office of noted theatrical producer Charles K. Frohman, writing "openers," the mild background songs that were played by theater orchestras as the audience took their seats before curtain.

In 1904, Kern was back in New York, determined now that he would write good popular music.

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The President's Podium

By Danny Anderson



Wow! Another Tuesday and more snow. Two weeks in a row we have cancelled practice because of the weather. I cannot recall having to cancel practice in the five years I have been a member of the chapter. I am really looking forward to spring.

Calling off practice or a sing-out is not done lightly. As someone mentioned to me tonight, we have to consider the safety of all members, whether it is while traveling to practice or the possibility of injury while walking in the parking lots.

There is less than a month before the District contest. Plans are coming together for the weekend. Bob Bradley has been a busy man coordinating all the activities between the District and the chapter. Joe has reported during our weekly meeting that we are still in need of volunteers to help on Friday and Saturday. If you know of someone who could help, let Joe or Bob know.

Our last session with our Singing A's coach, Butch, was another good one with lots of good work. We had a long evening and made tremendous improvements with our singing. Butch praised the baritones and the tenors for their unit sound.

Doctor Bob passed on several suggestions for all of us to consider and practice during the week. I would encourage each member to spend time listening to their CDs, working on their vowels and practicing the moves to the songs. One suggestion that has been made is to sing looking into a mirror, watching how you are forming your mouth and practicing your smile.

I had the pleasure of singing with the HatterTones on Friday and Saturday during the valentine's weekend, Dan Griffin returned to the quartet on Sunday.

There were a couple of memorable Singing Valentines. After having to stop for directions, even though employing two GPS systems, we found our way to the 3rd appointment. We were to sing to a gentleman whose wife had arranged the valentine. She told him to expect company. We went into the family room where his teenage son and daughter joined their parents. Needless to say, the children ribbed dad. He was embarrassed, but definitely loved the attention from his wife.

Our last engagement on Saturday was a birthday and valentine party. The husband had called Dick Walter several times on Saturday to ensure that we would be on time.

He said, "I wanted to do something unique for my wife this year since she is a Valentine's Day baby. A good friend suggested doing something 'quirky' and suggested a barbershop quartet."

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Stories

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Things were spotty for awhile, but he ultimately landed a job with the eminent music publisher T.B. Harms.

These were the days when sheet music was the backbone of the industry and Kern's position was that of "plugger," which meant travelling up and down the Hudson Valley, stopping at dime stores, or wherever music was sold, to give a lively performance of Harms' music. Kern had a style and an obvious "feel" for popular music that gave him a good reputation with the publisher.

The doors were opening. In 1910 he married Eva Leale and they had a daughter. His first published score was an operetta, *The Red Petticoat* (1912).

In 1914, his former employer, Charles K. Frohman, hired Kern to "Americanize" a show he was importing from London called *The Girl From Utah*. The young composer sat down and knocked out a few new songs, among them, a melody number called "They Didn't Believe Me." The song made Jerome Kern.

Between 1914 and 1929, Kern was represented on Broadway by at least one show a season. His prolific output included *Rock a Bye Baby* (1918), *Sally* (1920), and *Sunny* (1925). In 1926, he wrote the score for a Broadway adaptation of an Edna Ferber novel, and Oscar Hammerstein II wrote the lyrics. The result was the musical classic *Show Boat*.

It opened in 1927 and ran for 572 performances. It was later twice made into a Hollywood film. One of its songs, "Ol' Man River," is perhaps Kern's most famous. In 1941 *Show Boat* was transposed into symphonic form and performed by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra.

Other Kern successes include *Music in the Air* (1932) and *Roberta* (1933), and, for the movies, *Swing Time* (1936), *You Were Never Lovelier* (1942), and *Centennial Summer* (1946).

Among his most popular songs are "My Bill," "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," "Who?," "They Didn't Believe Me," "Look for the Silver Lining," and "The Last Time I Saw Paris" (his only hit song not written for a specific play). Others include "The Way You Look Tonight," "All the Things You Are," "I'm Old Fashioned" and "All Through The Day."

Kern was interested in a number of scholarly pursuits. His collection of rare books brought nearly two million dollars at auction in 1929. He was also a collector of art, a numismatist, and a philatelist.

In his 40 year career, Kern wrote 104 stage and screen vehicles. A film biography, *Till the Clouds Roll By* (1946), was one of many tributes paid to him.

Podium

Continued from the previous page

To preserve the day, our performance was recorded and later posted on YouTube. Joe has requested that this performance be added to the chapter's web site.

Danbury will have a couple of quartets and a VLQ in competition at District. Plan now to be in attendance on Friday to encourage the quartets.

It is always good to have friendly faces in the audience when performing.

Robert's Raconteuring

By Robert Bradley



Contest Status

We do not have enough volunteers to help on the Saturday of contest while we are singing. Joe and I will be sending impress gangs to your homes soon to make sure we can cover the contest.

There are nine groups from the Yankee Division who are singing, which is great, but that leaves us without help for the chorus contest. We need help. HELP!!!!

With the snows of February upon us, we have not seen each other as often as we'd like before contest, which means we are going to have to work three times as hard in the time we have left.

The key is to know what we are going to do so well that we will not have to think about it when we are on stage. To the judges it must look effortless and smooth.

Remember that after the quartet contest, we are hosting a party at the hotel. Please be sure to bring family and friends to this, all are welcome. We will have a cash bar and we will provide munchies.

Most of the "grunt work" at the contest site is covered at this point. We still need someone with energy and a healthy back to stand by on Friday when we start to set up. We need to move our risers, and our judges (the judges do not have to be carried). We will need some transport for the judges from the hotel to the school and back for the length of the contest.

Please let Joe and I know of anyone who may be able to help us. The district is beginning to panic about what to do on Saturday.

I am making a trip to the White Plains chapter next week to beg for assistance.



February Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Submitted on vellum foolscap by Robert Golenbock

Meeting called to order by Danny "Heart of My Heart" Anderson on February 2, 2010, at 6:08 pm, at the Church of Christ.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: The minutes were discovered in the *Hatter Chatter*. A motion to accept them by J. Hudson, seconded by A. Bayer, was approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: A report for the month and the chapter yearly summary for the society were received. Spontaneous four-part harmony of "We're in the Money" followed.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Nate Chester handed in an application last week. Joe Hudson proposed the following motion. First-time visitors get a welcome sheet. On the second visit, they receive a folder with information about our society, our chorus, and a learning CD with three songs: "Cabaret," "Heart," and "Over the Rainbow." The motion was seconded by A. Bayer. Approved. Joe sent e-mails to previous guests inviting them to return. We hope to have Joe continue to send e-mails routinely, as a letter from the director has more clout and shows our strong interest in our visitors.

VP PUBLIC RELATIONS: John Cheeseman has agreed to work with Dickson on PR. We are making plans to stay in touch with the *News-Times*. Dickson wants to have a more organized plan for yearly PR.

MUSIC COMMITTEE: Lyle LaPlante suggested the chorus needs to know the songs better. Joe added that we will be doing "mini-group sessions" to fix this.

OLD BUSINESS: Bob Bradley is our contest chairman and is identifying what we need to do to host the contest in March. Our Singing Valentine campaign is in full swing.

NEW BUSINESS: We want to get involved with the Singing for Life campaign, where we sing during a blood drive. It's great publicity and a good thing to do. Joe is chairing a committee to set goals for our chapter. First step is a survey to identify where we are/should be going.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Doyle Stoppel

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

Next meeting: March 2. The meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm. It didn't have to. It just did.



The Director's Den

By Joe Hudson

A Look Back at February

Wow, what a different sound we are creating! It's a great feeling to see and hear the improvements as our chorus coaches get better at helping each member get better.

It was great to welcome guest Joe West back. He and Nate Chester have both filled out applications to join the chapter. We also welcomed new guest, Michael Macri. What a nice tenor voice!

We had another great session with our Singing A's coach, Butch. We all need to remember that when we are working with a coach, we need to be very flexible.

What a difference in our sound from the beginning of rehearsal to the end. We need to remember that EVERY TIME we sing, we need to be PERFORMING. Until it becomes second nature, we need to work at getting better. Take where we ended last rehearsal and build from there!!! The sky's the limit!

As we sing at the performance, keep thinking about the things we worked on during rehearsals: tall vowels, forward placement, SMILING!

Remember all of these things and the audience will enjoy the performance more, which will make them applaud more, which will make us feel better, which makes us sing more confidently, which leads to... catch my drift?

We've lost two rehearsals and a performance to the snow this month. The joys of winter!

Here's a reminder to keep every night as a guest night. We have had a guest every week for two weeks. Let's keep it up.

Dr. Golenbock will have his camera set up for our first March rehearsal so we can watch our performances improve and improve. When you watch, make sure you are focusing on yourself and not everyone else besides you, because that would defeat the purpose.

Contest is one month away.

We are all EXPECTED to be present as the host chapter to show support, help where needed, give directions, etc.

Specifically, the following volunteers are needed. You, your spouse, significant other, kids, even friends can volunteer.

Continued on the next page

Director's Den

Continued from the previous page

Please respond to me and I will put you/their name down on my list.

- Friday Night Quartet Contest - 1 person on the inside of the doors
- Friday Night Quartet Contest - 1 Person to help the photographer
- Friday Night Quartet Contest - 1 Person to check competitors registrations
- Friday Night Quartet Contest - 6 People to move quartets
- Saturday Afternoon Chorus Contest - 2 People for outside the door
- Saturday Afternoon Chorus Contest - 2 People for inside the door
- Saturday Afternoon Chorus Contest - 7 People to move choruses
- Saturday Afternoon Chorus Contest - 2 People to check registrations of competitors
- Saturday Afternoon Chorus Contest - 1 Person to help the photographer
- Saturday Night Quartet Contest - 2 people on the inside of the doors
- Saturday Night Quartet Contest - 1 Person outside the doors
- Saturday Night Quartet Contest - 7 People to move quartets

Please think about it, and get back to me either by e-mail or at Tuesday's rehearsal.

The Letter I

Another letter in our continuing skills alphabet is "I." "I" for Intensity. And I have the best saying to go along with the letter "I."

Intensity does not equal loud. If you want something to sound intense, you put more emphasis behind it, NOT, necessarily, more sound or volume.

A way to describe this is the way it was explained to me. If a parent yells at their kid to clean-up their room, it may not be effective. But, if the parent says, in a low tone, "I thought I told you to clean your room," the kid will probably run to do it!

So, add intensity, not volume to your sound when you sing softly, because, the softer you sing, the more intense your sound will be. You'll have your audience on the edge of their seats!

Quartets

Continued from Page 5

Thank you, Danny Anderson, for filling in on lead with us.

The next day, Dan Griffin was able to join us again. We started our Valentine's Day at a house around Candlewood Lake. It was on a nice dirt road, and the house smelled AWESOME! The woman was cooking when we got there, so she was REALLY surprised.

The next job was around the corner from the first one, so it was really convenient. The woman we sang to loved it so much, she wanted us to stay for coffee, tea, and desserts. But, we had to go. The third and final stop of the day was to sing for a woman whose husband is in charge of the Danbury Area Youth Organization. We sang our two songs while he taped it. He was so impressed, he asked for an encore, to which we were happy to oblige.

Our next valentine came on the Friday after Valentine's Day. Dan Griffin goes to Dunkin Donuts whenever he can. The woman at the counter there asked for a Valentine for her fiancé, so we sang at a Chiropractor's office where he works. It was then off to dinner, and then a stop at the First Baptist Church in Brewster. We got there a little early, warmed up, then sang love songs for a half hour. We ended with the crowd-pleaser, "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." All in all, it was a GREAT Valentine's Day week for the HatterTones.

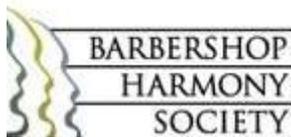
The HatterTones on YouTube

Why wait until their next gig? Enjoy the HatterTones now on YouTube, and while you're there search for more barbershop harmony.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hgh1Yp7dm1c>

Baritone Deep Thought of the Month

I wonder what Geronimo says when he jumps out of a plane?



Society and District Notes



The deadline for early registration has been extended to March 8th for Western Regional/ International Prelims in Danbury, CT. I hope you find the online registration to your liking & we will be making further changes as we move forward to better serve the membership of NED.

This online form allows for registration of both contestants & spectators. You will need a separate form for each individual, but there is no necessity to print out the forms for mailing. Send a quick note along with your check to help us match the payment to the registration and you will be all set.

You may register at this address:

http://www.nedistrict.org/index.cfm?page_id=248

If you are in need of any assistance reach out to Michael Klein, E mail:

songstermike@gmail.com

He prefers you reach out "as you sense frustration beginning to occur, not after the last straw has broken."

Based on the tests done so far, we do expect that you will find the process easy & quick. We expect Eastern Regional Information to be released shortly.

I appreciate your patience during this process, & look forward to seeing you at the conventions.

In Harmony,

Joseph Millett, Northeastern District - VP Events

Best Chorus Contest Song Ever

For the past fifty years, the International chorus competition has displayed countless performances that we would consider monumental in the influence towards the artistic direction of our barbershop art form. Some of these songs helped choruses earn the title "International Champion" while others broadened our creativity to help bring more diversity to the contest stage. **YouBarbershop** has set out to decide which song has had the largest impact on our barbershop culture. There are dozens of per, so \ YouBarbershop has decided to narrow the list of songs to just eight. However, you will have a voice in the final selection!

Follow this link read about each nominated song and why we chose them as a quarterfinalist. At the bottom of the article

there will be a link that will direct you to the four voting booths that will pit two songs against each other.

<http://www.youbarbershop.com/articles/20091201>

The eight nominated songs are:

1. Seventy-six Trombones - Ambassadors of Harmony (2009-1st).
2. Strike Up The Band- Westminster (2007-1st).
3. Song For The Little Guy - Toronto Northern Lights (2003-2n).
4. Here Comes The Showboat - Masters of Harmony (2002-1st).
5. Brother, Can You Spare A Dime - Toronto Northern Lights (2001-2nd).
6. Love Me And The World Is Mine - Masters of Harmony (1996-1st).
7. Just A Baby's Prayer At Twilight - The New Tradition (1993-2nd).
8. Waiting For The Robert E. Lee - The Vocal Majority (1988-1st).

Humor in Music

A C, an E-flat, and a G go into a bar. The bartender says: "Sorry, but we don't serve minors." So, the E-flat leaves, and the C and the G have an open fifth between them.

After a few drinks, the fifth is diminished and the G is out flat. An F comes in and tries to augment the situation, but is not sharp enough.

A D comes into the bar and heads straight for the bathroom saying, "Excuse me. I'll just be a second." An A comes into the bar, but the bartender is not convinced that this relative of C is not a minor.

Then the bartender notices a B-flat hiding at the end of the bar and exclaims: "Get out now! You're the seventh minor I've found in this bar tonight."

The E-flat, not easily deflated, comes back to the bar the next night in a 3-piece suit with nicely shined shoes. The bartender (who used to have a nice corporate job until his company downsized) says:

"You're looking sharp tonight, come on in! This could be a major development."

This proves to be the case, as the E-flat takes off the suit, and everything else, and stands there au natural. Eventually, the C sobers up, and realizes in horror that he's under a rest.

The C is brought to trial, is found guilty of contributing to the diminution of a minor, and is sentenced to 10 years of DS without Coda at an up scale correctional facility.

On appeal, however, the C is found innocent of any wrongdoing, even accidental, and that all accusations to the contrary are bassless.

Ye Olde Joke Boarde



Submitted by the Unknown Barbershopper

A **barbershop quartet** was disbanding after many years of singing together, but they agreed to reunite once a decade to enjoy a great meal, sing together and catch up on their friendship. For the initial event, they discussed and discussed where to meet for dinner. Finally, it was agreed they should go to the Chez Francé restaurant, because the waitresses there wear low-cut blouses.

Ten years later, when they were all about 50 years of age, the group reunited and once again they discussed and discussed where they should meet. Finally, they unanimously decided to dine at the Chez Francé, because the food there is fantastic and the wine selection is also very good.

A decade later, at 60 years of age, the men met and again, they discussed and discussed where they should gather. Finally it was agreed they should meet at the Chez Francé, because they can eat there in peace and quiet and the restaurant is smoke-free.

Ten years later, at 70 years of age, the group reconnected and once again they discussed and discussed where they should dine. Finally it was agreed they should meet at the Chez Francé, because the restaurant offers a senior discount and is wheelchair-accessible.

Amazingly, a decade later all of the men are still living. At 80 years of age, the quartet manages to gather, and once again, they discuss and discuss where they should meet. Finally, they all agree it would be a great idea to dine at the Chez Francé restaurant because they have never been there before.

There were two barbershop baritones who love to fish and they wanted to do some ice fishing. They'd heard ice fishing was great up in Canada, so they took off up there. The lake was frozen nicely. They stopped just before they got to the lake at a little bait shop and got all their tackle. One of them said, "We're gonna need an ice pick." So they got that, and they took off. In about two hours, one of them was back at the shop and said, "We're gonna need another dozen ice picks."

Well, the fellow in the shop wanted to ask some questions, but he didn't. He sold him the picks, and the baritone left. In about an hour, he was back and said, "We're gonna need all the ice picks you've got."

The bait man couldn't stand it any longer. "By the way," he asked, "how are you fellows doing?" "Not very well at all," the baritone said. "We ain't even got the boat in the water yet."

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

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
They'll Find Her When the Leaves
Blow Away 'Cause I'm Not Raking
'Till Spring.



"He who sings
scares away
his woes"

Miguel de Cervantes
Saavedra

The Danbury, CT Chapter SPEBSQSA

PO Box 5149

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Chairman:	Danny Anderson
Music Librarian:	Lyle LaPlante
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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

March Milestones

Birthdays

13 - Pete Huester
15 - Terry Dunkle
22 - Vera Baran
25 - Nick Godano

No anniversaries in March.

Mark Your Calendars

March 6: Mad Hatter Sing-out, Meadow Ridge.100 Redding Road, Redding, CT. Warm-up 3:30 PM, sing 4:00 PM.

March 19 and 20: Yankee Division Convention. Danbury High School.

March 23: Mad Hatter Sing-out, Ridgefield Crossings, 640 Danbury Rd., Ridgefield, CT. Warm-up 6:30 PM, sing 7:00 PM.

March 30: Mad Hatter Sing-out, Bethel Health Care Center, Cascades. 13 Parklawn Drive, Bethel, CT. Warm-up 6:30 PM, sing 7:00 PM.

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

June 28 - July 4, 2010

Philadelphia, PA



2010 International Convention

Philadelphia, PA June 28 - July 4, 2010

Headquarters Hotel: Philadelphia Marriott Downtown
Contest Venue: Pennsylvania Convention Center

