



*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 10

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

October 2010

## Mad Hatters Survive The Evil Witch in Annual Show

*By Robert Golenbock and John Bradley*

**Brookfield, CT** - Dorothy (Joe Hudson), The Cowardly Lion (Jim Hopper), the Tin Man (Dick Zang) and the Scarecrow (Dr. Bob Golenbock) opened *The Wizard of Barbershop*, The Danbury Mad Hatter Barbershop Chorus's 43<sup>rd</sup> annual show on Saturday, October 2, at Brookfield High School.

Joining the 32 Mad Hatters on stage in singing for their lives (as the Queen of Hearts and the Wicked Witch of the West decided their fate) were the Honeymooners, a mixed-gender comedy quartet from Vermont and New Hampshire, as well as the Rebel Clefs, an a capella ensemble from New Fairfield High School.

"This was the best Mad Hatter show I've been to," said chorus fan, Maggie Seligman. "The singing was good and the script was very funny."

Created and organized by Mad Hatter lead, Dr. Robert Golenbock, *The Wizard of Barbershop* was a "madcap musical review" that incorporated the *Wizard of Oz*, *Alice in Wonderland* and a touch of Groucho Marx.

Joe West once again served as emcee.

## Danbury Director Dives While Directing at District Debacle

*By John Bradley*

**Westbrook, ME** – Joe Hudson, music director of the Danbury Mad Hatters, did his best imitation of a hockey player flying into the glass as he directed the chorus to a 13th place finish at the Northeastern District's Fall 2010 Convention and Contests.

Joe, moving away from the chorus during a comedy routine in the song, "Five Foot Two," lost his footing and crashed shoulder-first into the risers, just missing two of the leads in the first row.

"I'll be a little sore and black and blue in the morning," said Joe after the Mad Hatter's performance, "but I'll be OK."

According to bass, Dick Zang, "If Joe were sliding into second base, I would have called him out."

The Mad Hatters, also performing "I Don't Mind Being All Alone," scored a combined 1,090 points for a 60.6 average, 271 points behind the 2010 district champions, the Narragansett Bay Chorus from Providence, Rhode Island.

*Continued on the next page*



## Mad Hatters Risk Life and Limb to Celebrate Danbury

For the second time in as many years, the Danbury Mad Hatter Barbershop Chorus motored down Main Street in Danbury to help *The News Times*, Danbury's daily newspaper, celebrate the city's 325<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Seven chorus members arrived at Rose Street on Sunday morning, September 12, and climbed aboard a flatback truck to take part in the parade.

"Caberet" and "I Feel a Song Coming On" were the songs of the morning, as the small troupe of singers sang each song at least twenty times to the spectators lining the streets. They even had a chance to serenade the crowd a second time as the truck turned around and returned to Rose Street.

"I hope I never heard either song again for a long time," said baritone John Bradley.

"Maybe next time we should bring something to hold on to," added lead Robert Golenbock.

The parade was part Danbury's "A Taste of Greater Danbury" celebration, which featured food from many parts of the world.



*The Mad Hatters testing their motive power just before the News-Times parade*

## Baritone Deep Thought of the Month

**The face of a child can say it all, especially the mouth part of the face.**

## Looking Back at 1685

What was going on in the rest of the world when Danbury was founded?

- Fort St. Louis is established by a Frenchman at Matagorda Bay, thus forming the basis for France's claim to Texas.
- The first organised street lighting was introduced in London with oil lamps to be lit outside every tenth house on moonless winter nights.
- The Chinese army of the Qing Dynasty attacked a Russian post at Albazin, during the reigns of the Kangxi Emperor and the dual Russian rulers Ivan V of Russia and Peter I of Russia. The events led to the Treaty of Nerchinsk.
- Johann Sebastian Bach, German composer, was born.
- James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth, illegitimate son of Charles II of England was beheaded.

## District Contest

*Continued from the previous page*

Before the contest, former Mad Hatter president, Bob Bradley, commented on how well prepared the chorus was this year.

"I think our extra practices and coaching will pay off" Bob explained. "In all my years in the chorus, this is the best prepared we have been for contest."

The preparation did pay off. In 2008, the last time the Mad Hatters appeared in a district contest, the chorus scored 1,001 points for a 55.6 average and a 16<sup>th</sup> place finish.

As mentioned, Providence, RI won the 2010 Northeastern District Plateau AA Chorus Champion, the District Chorus Champion and qualified to represent the Northeastern District at the International Chorus Contest in Kansas City, MO, next July.

Concord, MA, took second place in the chorus contest with a 1,351 score, and Lowell, MA won third place with 1,306 points. Concord, MA also is the Northeastern District's Most Improved Chorus, and Lowell, MA is the Small Chorus champion.

Manchester, CT won the Northeastern District Plateau AAA Championship.

Snapshot, from Providence, RI, Lowell, MA and Appleton, WI, won the District quartet championship with a 72.6 average. Second place went to The Academy with a 72.5 average, and Average Joes came in third with a 72.2 average.

X-Men, from Providence, RI, won the District Seniors quartet championship. They will represent the Northeastern District at the International Seniors Quartet Contest next January.

## 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 Mad Hatter baitone, Michael Slater, who correctly identified last month's venue as Lake Carmel, in Kent, NY, where the chorus sang and shivered at the community's Christmas tree lighting for a number of years.



*Dick Zang as The Tin Man*

## Sorry for the Delay

For the first time in the over four years we have been co-editors of the Hatter Chatter, we almost missed a month. A very busy time at work, along with other obligations, forced us to push the October issue back a few weeks. But, things have quieted down a little and we hope to be back on schedule.

Also, due to careless editing, the names of some of our angels did not appear in this year's show program. Dick Zang apologizes to the families of Chuck Kreiger and Art Roberts and any others for this omission and thanks them for their continued support.

## 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 would like to respond to Bob Bradley's column in the September issue of the Hatter Chatter. He complained that chorus has been adding too many songs to the repertoire too quickly to sing them all well. Further he suggested that nobody is working on them between rehearsals because there are too many to learn. He asked if it would be better to sing a dozen songs very well, know them inside and out, and be sure that all chords are rung every time. Why do we move on to learn new songs when we do not know the old songs?

Bob claims his quartet, Real Chemistry, has been singing the same songs for 12 years. Their precision is better than what our chorus often attains while singing songs that we have been doing for a much shorter time. Their quartet is very entertaining, but they have a different vision, I think. They can take their well-learned set from venue to venue. And it's their right to limit their repertoire.

Many decades ago an entertaining group like the Marx Brothers could perfect a routine and take it around the country for years. By the time they came back to a town, the people – hungry as they were for top-notch entertainment – would laugh at the same routines all over again. Today the fast pace of entertainment media eats up material at a very rapid rate.

Our own experience as a chorus is that we are generally doing a lot of repeat business. We will never succeed if we sing the same set for 12 years – or even two. Frankly, I don't think most of us want to sing the same 12 songs over and over again.

There is something exciting about picking up a new piece of music and seeing what we can do with it. I can't imagine trying to sell show tickets to my friends if we sang the same songs we sang last year – even if we were as good as the Whiffenpoofs or one of the top ten choruses at International. I do agree that every time we perform for an audience – any audience – we should give them excellence. Jim Henry has admonished us not to try to represent Barbershop with music sung with mediocrity.

So what should we do? I think we all know what we need to do even though we are not primarily a "competition" chorus. We need to take responsibility for our individual performance at every sing-out and every rehearsal. We have to take seriously all the excellent advice we have received about breath control, unit sound, proper stance, and shaped vowels. And we need to work on the music between rehearsals!

*Continued on the next page*

## Emails

*Continued from the previous page*

Are we all that busy that we can't listen to our repertoire – or even three songs – from one Tuesday to the next? When Joe says that we should be off-paper for the next rehearsal, we need to try to sing the song without music before we get to the rehearsal. Yes, barbershopping is “only a hobby,” but it's one that many of us take very seriously. Our director certainly does. If you think he's pushing you too hard, let him know. There are other chapters out there dying for someone dynamic like Joe to push them. Frankly, I want to keep Joe around where I can take advantage of his expertise.

We need to take responsibility for pursuing excellence. There is only so much time in each rehearsal for sectionals, repertoire, new music, fun tags, socializing, and contest songs. If we are not prepared, then we're wasting time going over words and music that should already have been learned. And speaking of contest songs, Bob Bradley (who is going to contest with us) knows how much effort some of our members are willing to expend to approach perfection.

That kind of work ethic and intensity can only help the chorus as a whole when we apply the techniques we are learning to our chorus songs. In the future, I'm hoping that any 11 guys from our chapter will be able to perform at a sing-out and do the Mad Hatters proud. And that future won't take 12 years.  
Robert B. Golenbock, MD

*Robert, both writers have valid positions. But just as some members, including those who are not ready or interested in quartet singing, learn notes and words quickly and are ready and able to sing new songs note-perfect in the chorus, some other members, even those in quartets, need more time and help to learn new songs and may feel comfortable only after many months of performing. The question then becomes: at what level – how well – does the chorus have to perform any song in public? Does it make a difference if it is at a retirement home, an annual show or a competition? Our chapter answer now is that we only have to sing well at competitions.*

*We've scheduled extra rehearsals and qualified everyone for the competition chorus going to Portland this month, but not for our annual show or any of our recent sing-outs. And it showed – at our annual show last Saturday we sang some of our new songs poorly and at least one horribly off key.*

*So what is the solution? Is there an ideal pace to adding new songs to the repertoire? Should members be asked to qualify on every song? Here's this editor's idea: Introduce new songs in groups of three or four and take three or four months to rehearse and perfect them. We'd each have our music and learning tapes in advance and enough time to perfect them even if someone missed a rehearsal or two. It would be just like college with three or four semesters a year – we could even drop a song along the way if it wasn't working.*

*Any other suggestions?*



## Quartet Corner

*News from our chorus quartets*

### Rare Occasion – By Terry Dunkle

Because three of our members are rehearsing with the contest quartet most Thursdays, Rare Occasion has suspended its own Thursday-evening get-togethers for the past couple of months.

Nevertheless, new bass Terry Dunkle is working on Rare Occasion's extensive repertoire, as the group expects to rush back into action after the Northeastern District contest is over.

Dunkle has a new incentive: tenor Fred Baran recently booked our third consecutive appearance at the New Milford Historical Society's annual wine-tasting and holiday party on December 4. The gig is 2 1/2 hours. That's a lot of songs!

### The Travelling Men – By Danny Anderson

The Travelling Men have been meeting weekly at Tim Keiser's home where we terrorize his family and dogs. We have several songs which could be presented, but still need some polishing.

Tim and Wynn are both gifted musicians and men who have a great deal of creativity, which has helped the quartet establish a unit sound.

Our initial performance was at Harmony College where we sang “I'll Go Sailing No More.” We received coaching on the song and have since improved the sound of this song.

We have had the pleasure to sing at three different sing outs along with the chorus and lately we sang during the chapter's Annual Show.

Many people have given us encouragement, which we greatly appreciate. The Travelling Men plan to compete in the spring with a goal of qualifying for the spring district competition.

We have submitted the application to become a registered quartet.

### Real Chemistry – By John Bradley

The rains of autumn might have rained-out our annual golf adventure at the Sedgewood Club in Kent, NY, on October 1, but it didn't keep the quartet from performing at Arts on the Lakes' annual fundraising dinner that evening at the club's boathouse on China Lake.

We sang for about forty minutes, including our golf rain-out song, “Coney Island Baby.” We later went out to the boathouse deck overlooking the moonlit lake and sang “In the Still of the Night” to a small group.

# September Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

*Submitted in 12-point Times New Roman by secretary Robert Golenbock*

Meeting called to order by Danny “Trust but Verify” Anderson at 6:12 pm on September 7, 2010 at the Church of Christ

SECRETARY’S REPORT was handed out. Motion to accept was made by Dickson DeMarche, seconded by Art Roberts. Approved.

TREASURER’S REPORT: A light month. Receipts and bills from the annual show will be accounted for in next month’s report. We will be donating our portion of dues to the Harmony Foundation. A check is going to SPEBSQSA to cover payments to ASCAP for our annual show.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: No new members. 11 renewals. We want to make sure we are following up on guests.

VP PUBLIC RELATIONS: Dickson has a proposal for an advertising budget for the annual show which includes the *News-Times* online and print ads, the *Ridgefield Press*, the *Newtown Bee*, and the *New Fairfield Citizen News* (to encourage local readers to support the Rebel Clefs). Art Roberts made a motion, seconded by Dick Walter, to allow up to \$1,000 for advertising. Approved.

MUSIC COMMITTEE: No meeting. We are still considering a new song.

OLD BUSINESS: Registration for competition to be paid next week. Motion by Dickson DeMarche and seconded by Robert Golenbock to adopt Groupanizer was approved.

Annual Show – Show plans are proceeding. The costume will be green Mad Hatter shirt and black pants. We plan a tech rehearsal on Friday before the show. We are awaiting word from a videographer. The script is nearly complete. We will be contacting the school to arrange for students to help with lighting and audio-visual.

NEW BUSINESS: *The News-Times* is once again sponsoring a parade. This one is in honor of the 325<sup>th</sup> year of the founding of Danbury. Sunday September 12. We meet on Rose Street at 10:30am.

Dick Walter reminded us to make sure there is more “fun time” scheduled in our meetings. He says we need to sing more tags and Pole Cats. President Danny Anderson assured him that the schedule would be normalized after the competition in October.

Andy Bayer will have a recommendation for us about new uniforms. There are no more green shirts and khaki pants, and they are no longer in production in our styles and sizes.

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Sutherland, C. Rosa, D. Stoppel.

OFFICERS PRESENT: D. Demarche, D. Anderson, A. Roberts, R. Golenbock, R. Walter, A. Bayer, H. Truman.

Next meeting 10/05/2010. Adjourn.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:24pm.



# October Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

*Submitted (actually beaten into submission) by Robert Golenbock, secretary*

Meeting called to order by Danny “Kim Oen” Anderson at 6:06 pm on October 5, 2010 at the Church of Christ.

SECRETARY’S REPORT made up on the spot. Accepted on a motion by A. Roberts, seconded by L. LaPlante.

TREASURER’S REPORT: Income from the show seems to be about the same as last year, possibly a little better. Report received on a motion by J. Hudson, seconded by D. Demarche.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: John Cheeseman regrets to inform us that because of a job he has accepted, he will no longer be available on Tuesday nights.

We also discussed the situation with regard to uniforms. Andy Bayer is coming up with a long-term plan.

VP PUBLIC RELATIONS: Ticket sales have remained flat or worse and are mostly sold by our members. We need to find venues where we can impress younger people. We can query service organizations, for example. We will put together a packet for the City Center group that handles A Taste of Danbury. Perhaps we can use yard signs, community service bulletin boards on TV, and the WesConn public service TV bulletin board. We need to decide if there is any point to continuing with the Chamber of Commerce.

MUSIC COMMITTEE: New songs: “Loch Lomond,” “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas,” and “If I Loved You.” We also need to go over the other holiday songs. We may have the chorus learn “Auld Lang Syne.” “Somewhere Out There” has also been approved.

OLD BUSINESS: Annual show review: There was a great deal of effort on the part of many members (and their families); yet the ticket sales were disappointing. We discussed moving the time of the show, but came back to a fall show as optimal for us.

We are considering a fall show after districts next year in early November with a theme of “Salute to America and its Armed Forces”.

*Continued on the next page*

## Board Meetings

*Continued from the previous page*

We are looking at scripts that have already been written. The Society makes the scripts available with all the music at a very reasonable cost.

**NEW BUSINESS:** Although Butch has graciously offered to coach us for only travel expenses, we approved \$150 for Butch's all-day session on a motion by L. LaPlante, seconded by D. DeMarche.

We approved \$150/session for Joe Hunter to come from Long Island to coach us on a motion by R. Walter seconded by R. Golenbock.

Joe Hudson prepared a contract for our perusal that we might use for next year's competitions. It outlines what the chapter will provide and what the individuals must do to compete. He developed this contract based on a similar contract from Portland, Maine.

Fred Baran reminded us that the cost to the chapter and the loss of meeting time of those not competing should be considered in making plans for next year. Lyle LaPlante suggested that possibly some of the cost could be borne by participants and competition rehearsal could be held on a separate night just as the member quartets have their own expenses and rehearsal time. Joe pointed out that if they did that, they would essentially be their own chapter except that new chapters need 50% new-to-the-Society members.

An interchapter meeting is planned for October 26 after the competition. The Big Apple Chorus is coming down to sing with us. They are also offering us the opportunity to sing on their Singing Christmas Tree on November 26, 27, 28 at the South Street Seaport.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** C. Zlamany, C. Kreiger, J.Tull.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm. Next meeting 11/2.



*Mad Hatter Board of Directors Meeting*



## The President's Podium

*By Danny Anderson*

Another annual show is now behind us. Several of the people who attended the show told me that this year's program was better than last year's. They said that the singing was better, the flow of the show was good, crisp and funny.

I wish to thank Bob Golenbock for chairing this year's show. He was the author of the script, communicated with our guests and performers, worked with the sound person and set up the filming of the show along with many other aspects of preparation.

A big thank-you to everyone who sold ads and tickets, for your contribution to making the show profitable.

Dick Zang spent many hours setting up the program booklet and getting it to the printer. This is a special talent which requires time and patience. Helping Dick was Lee Smeriglio, who recorded the ad sales.

Advertisement and ticket sales were handled by Dickson DeMarche and his team of Lee Smeriglio and John Cheeseman. Dickson printed the large cards which were displayed during the show, along with the pricing and information signs.

It is encouraging to see different individuals portraying characters to enhance the show production.

Each quartet's performance was "top shelf." It speaks highly of our chapter to be able to present four quality quartets. We might want to think about featuring these quartets in place of a guest quartet for next year's show.

We have selected our Board for 2011. Fred Baron and Dick Walter chose to not seek another term in 2011, therefore opening the door for other men to fill their position in the chapter's leadership.

There is a great deal of excitement and enthusiasm being displayed by the men who will represent our chapter at district competition. Many long hours of singing and choreography practice has gone in to preparing for the competition. The level of singing and presentation has continued to rise during each practice.

We have discussed during our weekly business meetings the tool, Groupanizer, the chapter is using. It is important that each member log on, update their personal information and attach a picture of themselves.

While logged on review our repertoire of songs. You will find the sheet music and voice specific music for each song. Joe will be posting the Christmas songs and music on the site shortly.

*Continued on the next page*

## Podium

*Continued from the previous page*

Please begin to review this music in preparation for our December sing outs.

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the sing outs which have been booked by Dick Walter.

We need to have each member in attendance at these performances. By being there you are an encouragement to each member of the chorus, you improve your presentation skills; so that when we go to competition we are comfortable being before an audience.

## Repertoire Notes

*By John Bradley*

“Loch Lomond” has been recorded by many performers over the years. The original author is unknown.

About 1876, the Scottish poet and folklorist, Andrew Lang, wrote a poem based on the song titled "The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond," The title sometimes has the date "1746," the year of the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie's rebellion and the hanging of some of his captured supporters.

There are many theories about the meaning of the song. One story is that the song was written by a Scottish soldier who awaited death in enemy captivity. In his final letter home, he wrote this song, portraying his home and how much he would miss it.

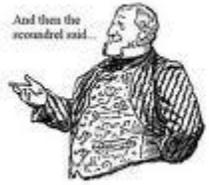
Another tale is that during the 1745 Rebellion (the Jacobite Rebellions), a soldier on his way back to Scotland during the 1745-6 retreat from England wrote the song. The "low road" is a reference to the Celtic belief that if someone died away from his homeland, then the fairies would provide a route of this name for his soul to return home.

Some attribute the song to a Jacobite Highlander who was captured after the 1745 uprising. The English played games with the captured Jacobites, and said that one of them could live and one would die. The song is sung by the one who was sentenced to die, the low road referred to being the passage to the underworld. Some believe that this version was written to a lover who lived near the loch.

One more interpretation is that the song is sung by the lover of a captured rebel set to be executed in London following a show trial. The heads of the executed rebels were then set upon pikes and exhibited in all of the towns between London and Glasgow in a procession along the "high road" (the most important road), while the relatives of the rebels walked back along the "low road" (the ordinary road travelled by peasants and commoners).

## Robert's Raconteur Ramblings

*By Bob Bradley*



### Another op'nin, another show

The Mad Hatters finished another annual show and it was quite a bit of fun. It is good that we give our audiences a few laughs.

Cudos to Dr Bob who did a fine job. The script was just crazy enough to be fun, yet not over the top, yet. Now that this year's show is over, it is time to work on next year's. I would like to make a few suggestions:

Let us not have it so close to contest, and let us try and begin to sell tickets now to fill the auditorium. We also should market more toward other choruses and musical organizations in the area.

I do not think that we appreciate Joe Hudson enough for what he does for us and how hard he works. Looking at Joe on Saturday during the show, you could see a young man who put his heart and soul into the performance. After every rehearsal and sing out, we wear him out. Someday we must have a Joe appreciation day.

It was good to see some new members on stage at the show. At the afterglow, I was talking with my brother about the shows we used to have at the Elks Hall. We stated by doing the cooking ourselves and when we lost the kitchen, we had the show catered. It was more of a showglow. The good part about it was that we needed fewer people to fill the seats.

We can look forward to contest in Maine and hope that we perform as well as we did on Saturday night at the annual show. The show was a good runthrough, and the audience's reaction to the choreography was a good way to tell what worked.



*Charlie Rosa as "Tink"*

# The Director's Den

By Joe Hudson



## What A Time To Be A Mad Hatter

Well, the Annual Show was a hit! I was in a dress and make-up while directing. We had a rabbit, the Mad Hatter, the Tin-Man, The Cowardly Lion, and The Scarecrow on stage with us! The chorus sounded absolutely awesome! We sang seven brand new songs! We had five guys on stage who were singing in their first Annual Show!

The contest chorus keeps improving week by week. The performance chorus keeps improving week by week! This is an awesome time to be a Danbury Mad Hatter!

Now it is time to look ahead to the up-coming year.

I am happy to say that I have a new motivation going into the upcoming year. Seeing how well we can sing when asked to, I will not be accepting anything else. We will take time to make sure each measure sounds as good as the last, etc. This will take patience, but I think we are at the level at which we can EXPECT greatness out of ourselves.

Our next three new songs in order will be:

- “Loch Lomond” taking the place of “Glocca Morra.”
- “Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” added to the holiday music.
- “If I Loved You” taking the place of “Always.”

Let's see just how great we can be with these songs while we bring our older songs up to that level.

And, once the Music Committee has chosen the songs for next year, let's sing those at a new level. Each song should get better than the last!

HERE'S TO ANOTHER GREAT YEAR!

## Joe's Compilation of “Three Things”.

After each coaching session, Joe asks the chorus members attending to contribute three things they learned or experienced to share with the rest of the chorus. Following is the list of three things Joe compiled after our coaching session with Joe Hunter.

- We are actors. Stay in character from the moment the curtain opens until the moment it closes.
- Sing to ring.
- Every song is a story, and its engines of suspense are dynamics and phrasing.
- Maintain connection with the audience with facial expression and posture as well as phrasing.
- Sing in a relaxed manner, but maintain brightness and energy from one phrase to the next.

- We want to grab the attention of the audience by making the story compelling and maintaining their interest by avoiding gaps in the music or story.
- Forced singing is off pitch and makes an unpleasant sound. Relax
- Never lose your emotion in telling the story of the song. Stay focused on every phrase, not just the special ones.
- Big over the top smile when Joe turns around during intro of *Five Foot Two*, contrasted with intent look at him when his back is turned.
- Make the singing of the up tune just as smooth as the ballad. Finish every phrase strongly and connect smoothly to the next one.
- Don't break your connection with the audience
- Simply relaxing helps us stay on pitch
- Keeping some movements in the arms and not using the whole body (like in the "ignoring Joe" section of *Five Foot Two*) helps maintain the integrity of the singing.
- Don't let the moves get in the way of the singing!
- Making the moves smaller and more natural (less exaggeration) will make the story more believable and should help the singing.
- Remember we are singers and entertainers.
- We must truly inhabit our roles to tell the story of the song.
- Communicating to the audience requires understanding the motivation for how we express each phrase.
- We all bounce together when Joe lands.
- Relax don't push or force my singing
- Complete the Phrase
- Remember to make the ending as strong as the beginning.
- During opening of *Five Foot Two*: soften up on the "yelling somethin' 'bout a girl".
- End phrases and carry the energy to the next phrase.
- Natural moves look good ONLY if they are believable.



Jim Hopper as *The Cowardly Lion*

# Program Posts

By Lyle LaPlante

What's Fun? Funny You Should Ask.

I have had several comments regarding putting more "fun" activities into our chapter programs. One of the comments I got as I was discussing this with members was, "Isn't singing fun?"

The obvious answer is, "Of course!" If singing wasn't fun for us, if we didn't enjoy this activity, we would spend our free time elsewhere. However, there are at least two types of "fun" musical activities, assuming we define fun as doing something enjoyable.

The first is the improvement in our musical sound that comes with practicing, both during weekly rehearsal activities as well as home practice. But this type of fun does require hard work and discipline if we want to enjoy the results. The fun part is producing an individual and chorus sound that we and others can enjoy.

The other type of fun is using our instrument in a less disciplined fashion, with more freedom of expression. As an amateur instrumentalist, it was always fun for me to produce a good performance either individually or in a musical group, but that also entailed the hard work of practice, practice, practice. However, it was also fun to just horse around with improvisations, embellishments, playing the part assigned to another instrument and so forth.

The same rationale seems to apply to our barbershop singing. The formal rehearsal portions of our chapter meetings are more disciplined, and even though we enjoy the sound we produce while rehearsing a song, and even more having it sound good, it is still hard work if we want to improve. So we probably need to have activities that produce the other kind of fun – less disciplined and maybe trying new things like singing another part or adding a little comedy into a pickup quartet performance.

You have asked to include more of this latter activity into our chapter meetings. The meetings are somewhat constrained by the time window available, but less so once the contest practice is concluded.

Working with the chorus music director, we will try to get a balance so we can have both kinds of "fun." As always, you can help us with your suggestions.

But we still need to have fun meetings with all of this focussed activity. One of the things everybody seems to enjoy is tag singing, so throughout this period, the chapter meetings will include tag singing as our "fun" time.

Something to look forward to: after all the we've done preparing for the show and contest, the last meeting in October will be a time for relaxation.

We'll singing some tag, do some quartetting, discuss the show and the competition.

Do you have any other ideas? Maybe some pizza? Let me know.

## The Five Steps Necessary to Produce Quality Tone, Part 5

By Bud Miller, Music VP, Cherry Hills NJ -- part 5 of 5

The fifth and last lesson in this series on producing good tone will deal with the proper release of the tone. Just as you must have good posture, breathe correctly, start the tone properly and sustain the tone correctly, you must also be able to release the tone with finesse. The best way to do this is to let the vocal folds open to release the tone by allowing air to pass between the folds as they open and relax.

A singer may either inhale or exhale to accomplish the task. I think it is preferable to release by inhaling because it prepares the throat for the next phrase. The breath which releases the end of one phrase actually is the breath which initiates the next phrase; there is usually not time for anything else.

Upon those occasional situations where we want a special effect, a different technique can be employed.

Here is a drill.

- Sing a long tone. At the end of the note, quickly diminish the volume.
- Quickly release pressure and inhale.
- Do not take much time when you diminish the tone. When done properly you produce a "tear-drop" effect as the tone diminishes quickly.

If this technique is used it allows the director to accomplish his job with much less arm-waving. In many cases, you would release the tone on the director's upbeat, breathe on the downbeat, and sing on the next downbeat. In a very fast song you could simply release and breathe on the upbeat and be ready for the next downbeat.

What you want to avoid is stopping the tone so it sounds abrupt and choppy as it does when you simply clamp the valve shut. Do not squeeze the vocal folds together at the end of the phrase; this causes change of vocal color, change of vowel and wear and tear on the voice, none of which is desirable.

As you know, producing good tone quality takes practice on a consistent basis. Each of us must strive to become better singers by practicing those lessons taught at rehearsal and in this bulletin and at the many schools offered by our society.

To reach a goal, one must know what it is and work to achieve it. Nothing comes without work. Good luck in your pursuit of excellence!!!!



## Society and District Notes



As the current Historian for the Northeastern District, I am always looking to add historical memorabilia to our archives.

Historical memorabilia can be any of the following:

- Society Magazines
- Society Newsletters
- Contest Score Sheets
- District Publications
- District Newsletters
- Contest Score Sheets
- Chapter Publications
- Chapter Newsletters
- Show Flyers
- Member Rosters
- Score Sheets
- Banners
- Posters
- Barbershop Albums, 8 Tracks, Cassettes, CDs
- Contest Videos, VDs, Recordings
- Old Trophies
- Awards
- Ribbons
- Pins
- Membership cards
- Photos of Chapters, Quartets, Members, Events, etc.

Basically, anything you think will help tell the story of the Society, our district, your chapter or your personal experience.

So if you are thinking about cleaning out that desk drawer, file cabinet or closet, please consider donating those items to the district.

They will be well cared for and preserved for the education of our future members and the public.

You can email me with items that you have or you can bring them to the district contest in Portland, ME. I will be happy to take them.

If you have any questions, just drop me a note.

In harmony,  
Steve Isherwood  
NED Historian  
Lincoln, RI  
Chapter - VP of PR/Marketing  
Generations Quartet – Lead



*Bob Bradley as the Mad Hatter*



*Robert Golenbock as The Scarecrow*



*Joe Hudson as Dorothy*



## Ye Olde Joke Boarde

*Submitted by the Unknown Barbershopper*

**The strong young man** at the construction site, a barbershop baritone, was bragging that he could outdo anyone in a feat of strength. He made a special case of making fun of one of the older workmen. After several minutes, the older worker had had enough.

"Why don't you put your money where your mouth is," the older worker said. "I will bet a week's wages that I can haul something in a wheelbarrow over to that outbuilding that you won't be able to wheel back."

"You're on, old man," the baritone braggart replied. "Let's see what you got."

The old man reached out and grabbed the wheelbarrow by the handles. Then, nodding to the young baritone, he said, "All right. Get in."

**A barbershop baritone** had an ice delivery business. Most of his customers were bar owners. One day, he had two more stops to make, one at Barb's Place and one at Sue's Stop. Barb had forgotten to order ice this week and asked if he had any extra.

The baritone said, "No, I only have ice for Sue."

**The jockey saw the horse groom** sprinkling something behind his horse's neck.

"What's that?" asked the jockey.

"It's yeast," answered the groom, who was also a barbershop baritone. "This will discourage birds from mistakenly building nests in your horse's beautiful mane."

"Will that really work?" asked the jockey.

"Of course!" replied the groom, "For yeast is yeast and nest is nest, and never the mane shall tweet."

## Current Mad Hatter Repertoire

### Performance A

Always  
Breaking Up Is Hard To Do  
Give My Regards to Broadway  
Goodnight Sweetheart  
Heart  
Hey, Look Me Over  
How Are Things in Glocca Morra  
I Feel a Song Coming On  
I Found a Million Dollar Baby  
You Can't Deal Me All The Aces And  
Expect Me Not To Play  
Lullabye in Ragtime  
On the Sunny Side of the Street  
Over the Rainbow  
Please, Mr. Columbus  
Thanks For The Memory  
There is Nothing Like a Dame

### Contest Songs

Five Foot Two, Eyes of Blue  
I Don't Mind Being All Alone

### Patriotic

Star-Spangled Banner  
This Land is Your Land/America the  
Beautiful Medley  
God Bless America

### Inspirational

Amazing Grace  
I Believe  
Lord's Prayer  
You'll Never Walk Alone

### Upcoming Songs

Loch Lomond  
Have Yourself a Merry Little

Christmas  
If I Loved You

### Holiday Music

Angels We Have Heard On High  
Jingle Bells  
O Come All Ye Faithful  
Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer  
Silent Night  
We Wish You a Merry Little  
Christmas



"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

John Bradley, Hatter editor  
39 Beekman Drive  
Lake Carmel, NY 10512  
[Jbrad1313@earthlink.net](mailto:Jbrad1313@earthlink.net)

Dick Zang, Chatter editor  
2 Camelot Crest  
Sandy Hook, CT 06482  
[jezang@charter.net](mailto:jezang@charter.net)

Proofreader: Miss Taralily

*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*

## Mark Your Calendars

**November 14:** Chapter Singout. New Milford Library, New Milford, CT. Warmup 1:30 PM, sing 2:00 PM.

**November 19:** Chapter Singout. First Congregational Church, Newtown, CT. Veterans Day fundraiser. Warmup 6:30 PM, sing 7:00 PM.

**December 2:** Chapter Singout. Barbershop Harmony Introduction at Western Connecticut State University. About 4:30 PM.

**December 9:** Chapter Singout. Maplewood of Danbury, 22 Hospital Ave., Danbury, CT. Tree Festival. Warmup 6:00 PM, sing 6:30 PM.

**December 23:** Chapter Singout. John C. Prendergast Elementary School, Ansonia, CT. Arrive 9:00 AM.

**January 27:** Chapter Singout. Danbury Men's Club, Hatters Park, Danbury, CT. Warmup 10:30 AM, sing 11:00 AM.

## October/November Milestones

### Birthdays:

10/3 - Danny Anderson  
10/6 - Joanne Bartley  
10/6 - Marti Hopper  
10/17 - Augie D'Aureli  
10/31 - Bill Manion  
11/9 - Roseann D'Aureli  
11/11 - Ray Wixted  
11/14 - Dick Walter  
11/28 - Liz Hudson

### Wedding Anniversaries:

10/21 - John and Vivien Cheeseman



*The Honeymooners holding court*