



Association of Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors

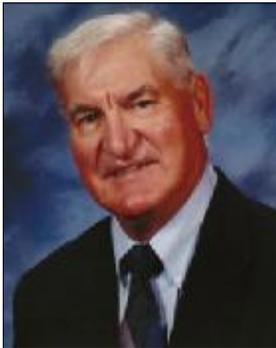
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PROBEmoter

Vol. 44, No. 3 Published Quarterly July/Sept 2007

International Bulletin Contest
**Bulletin Editor
of the Year**
Owen Herndon
Colby, Kansas



Int'l On-Line Bulletin Contest
**Bulletin Editor
of the Year**
Clary Reinhardt
Appleton, Wisconsin

A TIP OF THE HAT

Place/Bulletin (25) Chapter	Editor District	Content			L&R			G&S			TOT
		1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	
1 Tumblewords Colby, KS	Owen Herndon RMD	267	255	265	178	189	191	193	193	198	1929
2 Harmonotes Kansas City, MO	Todd Anderson CSD	267	238	233	180	170	175	195	197	200	1855
3 In Tune Hunterdon, NJ	Linda McWilliams MAD	256	198	238	179	181	162	196	196	198	1804
4 Derbytown Gazette Akron, OH	Mike Sitter JAD	233	198	226	185	167	180	198	199	199	1785
5 Star Gazer Greater St. Paul Area, MN	Dick Teeter LOL	236	170	202	171	182	181	191	192	199	1724

Complete scores on page 5



**Public Relations Officer
of the Year Contest**
Single Event
Al Baum
Phoenix, Arizona

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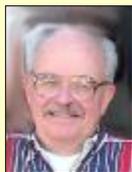
**Public Relations Officer
of the Year Contest**
Year Long Event
Ray Ashcroft
Fullerton, California





Association of Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors

P.R.O.B.E.



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Is Your Bulletin Part Of The **BULLETIN EXCHANGE PROGRAM?**

Why would you want to be? You will receive bulletins from every chapter in the program! You can discover what's happening in chapters throughout the society. You can swipe material for your own chapter bulletin! (always giving proper attribution of course, but be careful of using material that has a copyright on it without first getting permission from the copyright holder). You can meet and talk with your fellow editors at conventions. You can correspond and exchange ideas with other editors. What are my obligations? You only have one. It is an exchange program, so you must agree to send a copy of each of your bulletins to everyone in the exchange program (currently 50 people). How do I sign up? To be a part of the exchange, simply contact coordinator **Alexander Edwards** and tell him you want to be a part of it, by email at edwardsalexander@sbcglobal.net or by postal service at:

**Alexander Edwards, 535 W. Broadway #150A
Glendale, CA 91204 Tel. (818) 956-1132**

He will add you to the list for other editors and will send you a list of current participants to add to your mailing list.

International Blood Drive

By Bruce Anderson

On May 10, 2008, we as barbershoppers have one of the best opportunities to impact the community we serve. At the International Convention in Denver this year we were informed about an International Blood Drive and Donor Recruitment Project. On May 10th, the society is asking that every barbershopper who can donate blood to their local blood bank.

What a great opportunity to be in the public eye! Contact your local blood bank now and start the planning. Why not have a quartet at the donor site to sing during the day to those who donate? Let the donors know about you and your chapter, put up publicity about your show and your chapter, when and where they meet. With a little more effort you could appear with a quartet on a radio or TV show for the promotion.

Your local blood bank would welcome any help getting donors into their center and can work for you. I have already contacted our local blood bank and they are really excited about the prospect. It is a win/win situation for both your chapter and the blood bank. Our local blood bank only recently went in one morning and only had 8 pints of O Positive blood in their cooler. When the appeal went out people came out in masses.

We can help the blood bank have people come out in masses with the attraction of being entertained while they donate. What a great picture of a quartet - either all giving at the same time or singing to a donor - a real photo op. I am sure that the society will have more information on this project as we get closer so keep your eyes and ears open. This being an International project we could even make the national news media. Start your planning now!

Secretary/Treasurer

Dick Girvin



**PROBE Launches
Cartoon Contest**

New cartoons needed by Society BE's

Acting on the approval of the **PROBE** membership, as represented at the International meeting in Denver, on July 5, 2007, a search for new barbershop cartoons has been set in motion. A "call for new cartoons" and a contest to reward the best of the submission were approved, as well as a plan to pay the creator for his/her work upon acceptance. Further, it was determined that the results of the cartoon contest" would be made available on the **PROBE** website for Society bulletin editors to select and use (for a nominal fee) in their own publications.

PROBE Treasurer/Secretary, **Dick Girvin**, who proposed the plan to the **PROBE** members, has been given the leadership of the committee to implement the contest and establish and publish the rules of engagement. Generally the cartoons must :

- Be new
- Be of good taste
- All submissions that are accepted and paid for (at a price to be established) by **PROBE** become the property of **PROBE**.
- Accepted cartoons are to be placed on the **PROBE** website for purchase. Each cartoon will be shown in a reduced size and with an overlay to prevent direct copying.
- Each cartoon will be stamped as copyrighted.
- Interested parties can purchase any cartoon from **PROBE** for a nominal price (to be established).
- At the end of the year, the authors of the cartoons that have had the most copies purchased will receive recognition and prizes.

The newly formed committee will be charged with the review of all entries, will provide for payment of accepted cartoons and place them on the **PROBE** website. Methods for procuring of the cartoons for use in Society bulletins will be established and posted.

Artistic members, especially the youth, are solicited to submit their ideas and finished cartoons (in digital format). They are encouraged to take playful stabs at the "old guys" and concentrate on how the "young guys" are excelling, and to include funny mishaps at practices and performances and the like.

Questions and future submissions should be addressed to:

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951-926-8644
dickgirvin@juno.com

Deadline for Oct/Dec PROBEmoter is Sept. 25th

International Bulletin Contest — IBC
Top Five Editors — 2006



SECOND PLACE
"Harmonotes"
Kansas City, Missouri
Todd Anderson
EDITOR
Central States District



THIRD PLACE
"In Tune"
Hunterdon, New Jersey
Linda Williams
EDITOR
Mid Atlantic District



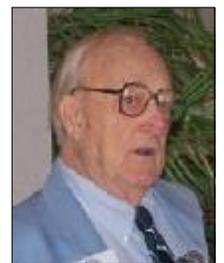
FOURTH PLACE
"Derbytown Gazette"
Akron, Ohio
Mike Sitter
EDITOR
Johnny Appleseed District



FIFTH PLACE
"Star Gazer"
Greater St. Paul Area, Minn.
Dick Teeters
EDITOR
Land of Lakes District



MOST IMPROVED BULLETIN
SEVENTH
"The Heartbeat"
Central Florida, Florida
Ron Hesketh & Don Himmelman
EDITORS
Sunshine District



President Lowell Shank

Thoughts from the Denver
PROBE meeting



Twenty two attended the **PROBE** meeting in Denver. That's great. I am extremely pleased that we have two new men willing to assume an office in **PROBE**. I also like to see the award recipients there to receive their award and get their picture in the next **PROBE**emoter. That also means we don't have to send their plaque to them by mail. We did decide that the traveling plaques would travel no more, but would be housed in the Barbershop Museum in Nashville, so that saves not only mailing costs but also the difficulty of getting them to the convention site.

We have a new contest – new Barbershop cartoons. See article elsewhere.

Secretary/Treasurer **Dick Girvin** reported that we have 206 members and money in the bank. I'm pleased on both counts, however there are many barbershoppers involved in bulletin editing and marketing/public relations who are not members, and I have to wonder why they are not. All the IBC editors this year are members which is better than last year when two editors who qualified for the IBC chose not to be members. One was very irritated when I would not return his judged bulletins.

If you read the minutes you will see that a committee was to be formed to review the possibility of having a booth at the Harmony Marketplace at the Nashville convention to promote membership in **PROBE**. I have checked with Charlie Davenport and Drew Ellis, the Society membership men about sharing their membership booth, and they are in favor. I have also sent a request to John Schneider and am waiting for a reply.

I am making an executive decision and am announcing that **PROBE** will have a **PROBE** booth in Nashville if I have to pay for it myself. At this booth (either whole or half) we will display all the traveling plaques. As soon as the contest results are announced at the **PROBE** meeting, their names will be added to the plaques. We will also promote membership, have copies of the last **PROBE**emoter to hand out, bulletin editing handouts, and marketing/public relations handouts. I need HELP in determining exactly what handouts would be most useful. Now the challenge will be to staff this booth. I'll be looking for volunteers for two or three hour blocks next May/June. If we share the booth with Society Membership, they will help man the booth.

CSD Barbershopper of the Year
Bruce Anderson



Photo — Dick DeLorm, chapter editor
Scott Spilker, right, winner of the 2005 Barbershopper of the Year, presents Bruce Anderson with the 2006 CSD Barbershopper of the Year award at the Lincoln Continentals annual show



Bridget Anderson accepts the 2006 CSD Barbershopper of the Year award for her father, Bruce Anderson, at the CSD Spring Convention as announced by 2005 BOTY Scott Spilker.

Thanks, **David Haase**, editor, *CSD Serenade*, Nov. 2006

RMD Barbershopper of the Year
Steve Jackson

Steve Jackson received **RMD Barbershopper of the Year** April 28th at Spring Prelims in Ogden, Utah. Steve is the **PROBE**emoter editor, **RMD Vocal Expressions** editor, and the **Mountain Talk** (chapter) editor. Steve was at home and was called by me (District President **Mike Deputy**). Asst. Awards Chairman and past District BOTY (2004) **Tony Pranaitis** was making the introduction. I put Steve on speaker phone to hear Tony read the presentation. Steve and Tony have been good friends (fellow quartet members) for about 10 years. Tony sings baritone and Steve sings tenor in **Joyful Noise**, from the **Denver MountainAires**. There was a good response from the crowd as Steve is well known and respected throughout the RMD.



Photo — Al Klinger (bass, *Joyful Noise*)
Steve Jackson & Tony Pranaitis
Taken at chapter meeting May 8th (Steve's birthday)

The kicker? Tony was duped two years ago when the Awards chairman honored him as RMD BOTY. Since Tony was supposed to make the presentation as RMD President, the Awards Chairman came to Steve for a diversion. They set Steve up as BOTY and he supplied our chairman with a phony intro AND the necessary documentation to honor Tony. Tony's parting line this year? **Gotcha!** Yes, he did!

Mike Deputy
RMD President

2007 PROBE International Bulletin Contest (2006 Bulletins)

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5 Star Gazer Greater St. Paul Area, MN	Dick Teeter LOL	236	170	202	171	182	181	191	192	199	1724
6 The Music Beat Sarasota, FL	Frank Astorina SUN	210	210	191	162	176	166	193	193	198	1699
7 The Heartbeat Central Florida, FL	Ron Hesketh/Don Himmelmann SUN	219	168	189	179	165	176	198	195	200	1689
8 CHORDINATOR Minneapolis, MN	Hardin Olson LOL	186	185	168	177	177	176	195	192	199	1655
9 Swipes & Tags Sacramento, CA	Alan Swanson FWD	208	147	177	176	178	176	194	192	194	1644
10 Key Notes Worcester, MA	Roy Hayward NED	235	172	185	161	145	159	194	193	199	1643
11 Atlantic Gazette Red Bank Area, NJ	Christopher Papa MAD	233	174	184	155	150	137	195	195	199	1622
12 Off the Risers Barrie, ON	Wayne Whittaker ONT	234	122	186	167	170	150	195	192	194	1610
13 Pitchburg Press Greater Pittsburgh, PA	Tom Koch JAD	208	190	182	152	153	120	195	192	199	1591
14 The Score Fort Wayne, IN	Ken Steffen CAR	205	160	194	147	155	144	193	188	195	1581
15 Harmony News East Aurora, NY	Dick Westlund SLD	171	131	164	179	172	176	195	192	197	1577
16 The Beat Greater Indianapolis, IN	Duane Henry CAR	181	149	138	171	171	159	195	195	199	1558
17 InCider Press Manhattan, KS	Karen Nanninga CSD	166	155	179	160	149	146	190	190	197	1532
18 Quotes & Notes Mount Forest, ON	Clayton Cober ONT	204	162	154	161	149	114	192	198	197	1531
19 The Bullingtone Burlington, VT	Jerry Huetz NED	179	127	165	155	153	136	195	191	197	1498
20 Harmony Gazette Northbrook, IL	Don Meseth ILL	164	157	162	156	144	132	191	187	196	1489
21 The Windmill Blade Holland, MI	Art Lane PIO	145	132	114	152	131	145	190	192	190	1407
21 Smoke Signals Pontiac/Waterford, MI	John Conlshaw PIO	182	155	162	130	95	83	197	194	197	1395
23 Upbeat Hemet, CA	Bruce Smith FWD	126	126	105	141	147	157	195	173	195	1365
24 Sounds of Savannah Savannah, GA	Derek Ball DIX	193	91	88	124	126	121	196	186	198	1318
25 C-U ReCHORDer Champaign-Urbana, IL	Andy Isabell ILL	118	108	70	88	59	66	191	189	192	1081

NOTES

- *Don Himmelmann & Ron Hesketh "The Heartbeat" is the winner of the *Dick Girvin Most Improved Bulletin Award*. (15th place to 7th)
- There were no entries from EVG and SWD and only one entry from DIX, RMD and SLD.
- Judges: Content: 1) Grant Carson 2) Elbert Ford 3) Tom Wheatley
L&R: 1) Bruce Anderson 2) Dick DeLorm 3) Dick Girvin
G&S: 1) Jerry Kindred 2) Craig Rigg 3) John Shuron
- IBC Chairman: Lowell Shank
- Preparation of Participation Certificates and Plaques for the winners: Bruce Anderson

On-Line Bulletin Contest Results



	Appleton, WI Fox Tales		Rapid City, SD Voice of Democracy	
	March	April	Nov	Dec
Design & Graphics				
DeLorm	156.00	159.00	170.00	172.00
Jackson	157.00	157.00	163.00	163.00
Totals	311.00	316.00	333.00	335.00
Accessibility				
Anderson	65.00	65.00	67.00	67.00
Haase	81.00	81.00	67.00	67.00
Totals	146.00	146.00	134.00	134.00
Grammar and Style				
Edwards	58.83	60.34	62.77	58.17
Rigg	57.70	60.00	55.80	57.80
Total	116.53	120.34	118.57	115.97
Content				
Stock	144.00	179.00	197.00	157.00
Wheatley	162.00	161.00	117.00	135.00
Total	306.00	340.00	341.00	292.00
Total per bulletin	881.53	922.34	899.87	876.97

1803.87

1776.54

Bruce T. Anderson
Vice President - Bulletin Editors - PROBE
job60@ix.netcom.com

Panel of Judges

Design and Graphics

Dick DeLorm
Steve Jackson

Grammar & Style

Alexander Edwards
Craig Rigg

Content

Dave Stock
Tom Wheatley

Accessibility & Functionality

Bruce Anderson
David Haase

Improve Your Singing Tips

First Quarter, 2007

By Jon Wagner, Sun City, FLA

Dynamics of Good Barbershop Music

I'm not a professionally trained musician, but by listening to the champion choruses and quartets, I've determined that our music is enhanced using changes in meter (faster and slower tempo) and volume (louder and softer). For simplicity, if we assign three levels to each, maximum, medium and minimum, that gives us multiple variations we can apply to each phrase of a song. It can be fast and soft, fast at medium volume, and fast while blasting eardrums. Ditto for each speed.

Why do we want changes like this in our music when popular music maintains more of a constant pattern? Like the Wolf's big teeth were better to "eat you with," variations can better evoke emotion to tell the lyrical message. Compare our style with a philharmonic orchestra's expressive presentation, but then add words for even a clearer understanding. Some ringing chords also help!

Stealth Breathing:

It's worth repeating from recent rehearsals:

Breathe to your diaphragm instead of to lungs; Do not close your mouth (it calls attention to your breath); breathe **before** you run out of air; when you sing to the end of your air supply, you lose support and will go flat - when you come back in, chances are very good that you'll pick up where you left off... flat! Blend in smoothly, easing back to a matching volume.

We will be practicing blending and stealth breathing independently of a song -- holding a note in unison for extended periods until we can do it as seamlessly as reasonable for older guys like us.

Ooo's, Ohhh's, Ahhh's

These three vowel-sounds add great backgrounds to the emotion of a song, building or diminishing the intensity of the music when sung by a section or two behind a solo part, or by the entire chorus behind a dialogue. You used it at the opening of our 2006 show as we started a humming sound behind closed curtains and then increased the intensity of the sound as the curtains opened and you took your tune-up pitched. I just never explained what we were doing.

We'll be hearing how this works when we start *'The Lord's Prayer'* later this spring and behind the BBS-styles of *"I've Been Working On The Railroad"* first introduced by Lee two years ago.



VP for Bulletin Editors

Bruce Anderson



Bulletins and more Bulletins

INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN CONTEST

"But, I only publish a bulletin for my chapter and its members."

"Most of the articles concern only what is happening this week (or month)."

"I really don't have that good of editing skills to compete with the big chapters."

How many times have I heard these excuses for not entering the District Bulletin Contest? This year the International Bulletin of the Year comes from a small chapter in Colby, Kansas. Never heard of Colby, Kansas? Probably not very many of us have. **Owen Herndon** has been producing a bulletin for his chapter for many years. It is a quality bulletin and has more than just the schedule for the week. As vice-president for bulletin editors, I get many bulletins in the mail. The information about what is being done across the country is amazing. I get to read about innovative programs and share the information not only with my chapter but with many other chapters in my district.

I am sure that your chapter has something good to share with the Society. Perhaps one fact that many editors forget is that your bulletin is a history of your chapter. You report on a monthly basis what is happening and that then becomes a record of your chapter's activities. My chapter recently had their 60th Anniversary. We looked at old bulletins to develop a book on the history of our chapter. It really was interesting to look back and see where we have been and how we have progressed over the years.

Perhaps each and every one of us wants to improve ourselves and what we do. When the chorus goes to district competition we have an evaluation session afterwards and the judges help coach us on our weaknesses and our strengths so that we can better our chorus and become a better chapter. Sometimes we also have coaches or district officers come in and take a look at how we can become better at our craft. Needless to say our directors on a weekly basis work with us to sing and perform better.

A bulletin contest on the district level is no different. Even if you don't win and perhaps finish dead last, (I finished 5th out of 7 in my first contest), the person judging your bulletin will write comments on how to become better. When he started, I am sure Owen did not win, but he took the comments from the judges and improved his bulletin until he has a first rate and the number one bulletin this year in the Society.

If you need any help with your bulletin all you need do is contact any of the PROBE officers ([or other PROBE leaders-SJ](#)) and we can put you in touch with the experts in the area that you need help with. I would hope that each District would have at least four bulletins entered in next year's contest. Let's make the judges really work next year.

Get involved in the bulletin mentoring program

ON-LINE BULLETIN CONTEST

Technology is a wonderful thing when it works. More and more of our chapters and districts are communicating with their member via the internet. I don't know the numbers, but the numbers of on-line bulletins are increasing everyday. With this technology we save paper and postage. There are drawbacks but these are minor.

About four years ago PROBE announced an On-line bulletin contest; unfortunately many editors don't know about the contest, since we only average two or three entries per year. To enter is so easy that every chapter that produces an On-line bulletin should be entering.

At this time we only have one contest, the International Bulletin Contest (IBC) that our editors actively participate in. ([One of the advantages of an on-line contest is that it can be international in scope—SJ](#)). This would also allow chapters in countries other than the US to enter. Wouldn't it be great to have a bulletin from Australia or Great Britain entered in the contest?

The guidelines for the contest are on the PROBE website. We are currently making some changes but those will be forthcoming. For now I would like to have at least six to eight bulletins entered next year and really make the judges work. Plan now to enter the On-line contest next January.

You Just Might Be A Bulletin Judge....

When you get a bulletin in the mail or in your email, do you start picking it apart, wondering, "Why did he (or she) do that or why did they write it that way — don't they know about the KISS principle?"

Keeping it simple, silly!

Public Relations Officer of the Year Award



Al Baum, Greater Phoenix chapter, displaying his 2006 Single Events PR award



Ray Ashcroft, Fullerton, Cal. Chapter (honored in 2004) receives the 2006 Year Long PROTY award while Bulletin VP Bruce Anderson holds the permanent plaque which will go on display in Nashville.

Photos by Steve Zimmerman, Longmont, Colorado

PROBE Annual Meeting July 5, 2007 — Denver, Colorado

Meeting Minutes

The annual meeting of PROBE (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors of the barbershop harmony Society) was called to order by President Lowell Shank at 9:01 a.m

PROBE Officers Present:

- Lowell Shank, President
- Bruce Anderson, VP Bulletin Editors
- Ted Sayle, VP Marketing & Public Relations
- Dick Girvin, Secretary/Treasurer

PROBE Officers Absent

- Dave Wagner, VP Membership

Attendees (including those listed above) for a total of 22.

Ray Ashcroft	FWD	Mary Ashcroft	FWD
Allen Baum	FWD	Linda Baum	FWD
Al Bell	FWD	John Elving	RMD
Mike George	SUN	David Haase	CSD
Steve Jackson	RMD	Grady Kerr	SWD
Harvey Kiser	CSD	Art Lane	PIO
Karen Nanninga	CSD	Terry Nanninga	CSD
Richard Romley	SUN	Lee Roth	MAD
John Suggs	SWD	Jon Wagner	SUN

Agenda

1. *The Old Songs*, lead by John Suggs (SWD)
2. Minutes of the Indianapolis Meeting (July 6, 2006) were approved as received. (Motion 1 to approve as received. MSP)
3. Officer Reports

Lowell Shank, President

Comments regarding the IBC printed media contest including the observation that *Grammar and Style* total spread for the printed media contest was only 33 points. Should the points be increased or the discipline removed?

Bruce Anderson, VP BE

Discussion of the need for change in the On-Line Bulletin Contest (Motion 2 to modify On-Line Rules as presented MSP)

Ted Sayle VP PR

Reviewed the close associate of *Marketing, PR & Membership*. identified an ongoing development in the FWD COTS curriculum to include it. Promoted COTS attendance for PR Officers.

Dick Girvin Secretary/Treasurer

- Inflows: \$1420.00
- Expenses \$668.78
- Annual: \$751.22
- Current Balance: \$2,066.32
- Motion 3 to receive report MSP





Ted Sayle has a captive audience at the annual PROBE meeting in Denver July 5th.



Bruce Anderson shows off the big traveling BE trophy, which will be displayed in Nashville to minimize wear and tear. Winning editor will still receive a personally sized plaque and a certificate of participation, states President **Lowell Shank** after discussion was held among those assembled.



Silver medalist **John Elving** (*Voice of Rushmore*, Rapid City, South Dakota) accepting his "On-Line Bulletin" award from BE VP **Bruce Anderson**.

The winner of the 2006 On-Line Bulletin contest was **Clary Reinhardt**, *Foxtales*, Appleton, Wis. chapter, Land of Lakes District.



How big was that bulletin? Chapter, District, or **PROBE^moter**? Editor **Steve Jackson** makes a plea for more contributions and not to ignore his deadlines.



That's a pretty IBC plaque — hey Lowell, I'll deliver this one, heh, heh. heh! We'd better keep an eye on Ted.

4. Awards

PROBE Hall of Honor

(None awarded)

PR Officer of the year

Single event: Al Baum (FWD)

Annual Award: Ray Ashcroft FWD

Online Bulletin Contest

First Place: **Fox Tales** Clary B. Reinhardt (LOL)

Second Place: **Voice of Rushmore** John Elving (RMD)

International Bulletin Contest:

First Place: **Tumble-Words** Owen Herndon RMD

Second Place: **Harmonotes** Todd Anderson CSD

Third Place: **In Tune** Linda Williams MAD

Most Improved Bulletin:

The Heartbeat

Don Himmelman and Ron Hesketh SUN (15th to 7th)

5. Unfinished Business

Secretary/Treasurer Dick Girvin reported on the membership status: (206 paid members as of June 29, 2007)

6. New Business

a. The proposal to develop a series of new cartoons for BE use was discussed. Dick Girvin offered to set up and manage for first year subject to approval. (Motion 4. MSP)

b. Winning PR Materials to be made available

(Ray Ashcroft and Al Bell to make a proposal to the Fullerton Chapter (FWD) to absorb the cost of copying the appropriate portions of Fullerton's two winning PR entries in a form that will allow posting on PROBE'S website along with commentary regarding the materials)

c. Should there be a PROBE booth at the Nashville Convention? Committee to be formed to review and advise as to costs and availability. Such a venture would require a substantial PROBE manning of the booth

7. Election of Officers

Nominating Committee Slate:

(Bruce Anderson, Chair Nominating Committee)

John Elving VP Bulletin Editors

Dave Haase VP Membership

Bruce Anderson VP P.R.

Dick Girvin Secretary/Treasurer

Nominations from the floor None

Secretary was directed to cast a unanimous ballot to the slate Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Dick Girvin, Secretary/Treasurer

Online Marketing for Chapters and Quartets

by Dave Baker, *Spirit of Phoenix*, Glendale, Arizona

Pre-reading: [How Search Engines Work](#)

Why Market Online?

All things are never equal, but all things being equal, online marketing is quickly becoming the most effective method of reaching a barbershop audience in a very targeted, cost-efficient way. Let's face it: few barbershop choruses or quartets have the ad dollars to really penetrate traditional marketing venues such as television, radio and newspapers. We can sometimes get freebie mentions in the "Happenings" or "Community Calendar" section of our local newspapers, but most of us don't have the means to command a full-time advertising presence in a local paper, or on television or radio.

The cost of print ads keep increasing in spite of the fact that newspaper readership is in decline. Broadcast and cable television are losing audience every year as many people turn to the Internet as a primary source of entertainment. That's not to say that we should give up on traditional media altogether. But with the Internet's continuing maturity and growth, choruses and quartets in the **Barbershop Harmony Society** can't afford not to exploit this critical medium. There are plenty of reasons to market online. Just in case you need some convincing, here are just a few:

It's highly targeted. You can't very well tell your local newspaper, *"Will you please print my ad in the newspapers of just those people who are interested in barbershop music."* With online advertising, you can target your advertising in this way. It's budget-friendly. You can't tell a radio station, *"I want to just target people who like a cappella harmony, but I only want to spend two bucks a day."* They'd laugh in your face. But with certain types of online marketing, two dollars a day can actually buy quite a lot. Little leads to big. The interconnectedness of the Internet gets you a good bang for your buck. On the radio, a 15-second spot leads to ... the next 15-second spot. On the Internet, a cheap three-line text ad can lead to your entire chorus or quartet website, complete with bios, performance schedules, full contact information, and so on.

It's a much younger demographic. One of the often-repeated mantras in the society is that we need to get younger. The Internet is where the younger people are. A visit to the **Westminster Chorus'** shrine on [myspace.com](#) shows how effective a solid online presence can be in promoting a barbershop group to younger people. (That's not to say that there aren't plenty of 50-ish and up guys online.) We got sights, we got sounds. If we want to help spread the word about barbershop harmony and preserve this style of music we love so much, what better venue than the Internet, where we can shower our audience with video and audio of people actually singing barbershop? The purpose of this marketing tutorial is to help chorus and quartet personnel harness the power of the Internet to further their groups' marketing goals. Hang on tight — there's a lot to cover.

1 A Tale of Two Quartets

Quartet A, the **Newsprint Ramblers**, wants to promote its annual singing valentines fund-raiser, so the members decide to advertise in their local newspaper, the Hometown Times. This paper has a daily circulation of 250,000. They pay \$150 for a newspaper ad that runs the week before Valentine's Day. During its one-week run, the ad generates 19 calls from readers, resulting in 15 gigs at \$45 per valentine. (Note: \$150 is a very conservative single-placement figure in many markets.)

The **Newsprint Ramblers** generated a total of \$675 in revenue for the quartet with a cost of \$150 for the Hometown Times newspaper ad. More than 20% of their revenue went to on their advertising. Quartet B, **Sound Byte**, advertises their singing valentines through an Internet search engine. So they set up an **AdWords** campaign on Google and sit back and wait. In the month up to and including Valentine's Day, their ads are displayed 2,400 times to people searching for terms like "singing telegrams," "singing valentines," "Valentine's Day gift ideas" and so on. Forty-five people in this quartet's home town click on these ads, and 15 end up ordering singing valentines, at \$45 per valentine. **Sound Byte** also generated \$675, but spent just \$14.85 on their entire advertising campaign, which lasted over a month. The average cost for the 45 clicks was 33 cents per click.

Their online advertising cost them just 2.2% of their total revenue, and they had more than paid for the ads before they hit the tag on their first time through *"Heart of My Heart."* These examples are not just sample illustrations. In reality, Quartet B wasn't really called **Sound Byte**. It was actually my own quartet, **Equinox**. And the numbers weren't entirely accurate; in reality, we charged \$50 — \$60 per gig. Cha-ching!



Found a great piece on marketing from barbershopper David Baker on his website. Reprinted with permission.

Because of the length, it will be reprinted in several sections.

Introduction

Why Market Online?

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Thinking Like a

Marketing Wonk, Part I

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 - Easy Contact
 - Be Available
 - Pass the Baton
 - Conclusion

David Baker (me@bakerdavid.com) is the national Internet marketing manager for a large auto finance company, overseeing more than a million dollars in annual online advertising expenditures. He also consults with businesses and other organizations (including choruses and quartets) to help them meet their online marketing needs. He sings tenor with Equinox quartet and the Spirit of Phoenix chorus.

Thinking Like a Marketing Wonk, Part I

If you want to use the Internet to promote your chorus or quartet, you need more than a snazzy website—you need an online marketing plan. So just for a moment, put down your pitch pipe and disengage your conscience, because you need to think like a marketing person. We like to spout platitudes about barbershop music as an art form, a uniquely American genre of music, a really cool hobby, or even a way of life. When we're planning our online marketing strategy, though, we have to think of barbershop as a product. There are consumers out there who want our product—whether they know it yet or not—and our job is to find these people (or help them find us) and "sell" them some barbershop.

We also have to think of ourselves and our "brand." Whether it's a quartet, a chorus, a division or district, or the society in general, marketing requires building and promoting a brand. Like it or not, that's what the society was trying to do in migrating from SPEBSQSA to the "Barbershop Harmony Society." It's also one of the major reasons for pushing the much more memorable barbershop.org over the arcane www.spebsqsa.org. So one of the first things to do as you begin formulating your strategy is to think about your brand. Ask yourself questions like these:

- What is the name of the quartet or chorus, and what does that name suggest?
 - Do you have a logo or logotype, icon or mascot that you use with your advertising?
 - What is the "personality" of the group?
 - Are you a very serious, very determined contest-bound chorus or an informal group that emphasizes friends and fun over perfection?
 - Are you a comedy quartet or do you focus primarily on religious repertoire?
 - Aside from your mothers, spouses, girlfriends and so on, has anyone ever heard of you?
 - Are you an established group or a recent startup?
 - Do you have any competition that you need to consider when marketing in your area?
 - How will you position yourselves versus other choruses or quartets in your market?
 - How about versus other non-barbershop groups?

Take some time to think about who you are and what you want to do with your group. If you think a name change is going to be necessary to better represent your group, now is the time to do it. Since we're talking about online marketing, now's probably a good time to see whether the domain you want ("YourNameHere.com") is available. Head over to NetworkSolutions (www.networksolutions.com) and use their "Find a domain" lookup tool to see whether GenericQuartet.com or GenericChorus.com is taken. (As of this writing, both are available!) Then try your own group's name and see if someone's already grabbed it. If so, you might consider a name change to accommodate the available domains.

Now that you know who you are, the next part of your online marketing plan is a statement of what you want to accomplish. Here are some possible goals:

- Increase visibility—garner more name recognition, or brand equity, in the community.
- Grow membership—increase membership by X singers or Y percent in Z period of time.
- Get gigs—increase distribution of your "product" through increased bookings.
- Attract more to your shows—another example of increased distribution of product, except that you don't go to the consumers; the consumers come to you.

Once you have your goals in mind (or better yet, on paper), you need to come up with your online marketing plan. There are several major tasks to consider:

Creating Your Website
Optimizing Your Website
Generating Traffic
Other Online Marketing
Web-centric Offline Strategy
Customer service

We'll talk about each element in turn, giving tips and ideas for both planning and executing each.

Creating Your Website

A website doesn't have to be a big, expensive thing. You might decide to create it yourself, or to have it designed by a friend. It might make more sense for you to spend a couple hundred or even a couple thousand dollars to have a site created by a professional. Whatever the site ends up costing you, it will be worthless unless it accomplishes the goals you set forth for it. So careful planning is necessary. There are a few things you'll need to get started:

A host.

In order for other people to see your website, it has to be on a public web server (a computer running special software that "serves" your site to anyone who visits it). Since most people don't own their own web servers, they have to rent space on someone else's. If you don't know someone who can "host" your site, ask around to find someone local—chances are someone you know has had good results with a hosting company in the area.

A domain.

We've touched on this already. This is YourQuartetName.com or YourChorusName.org or whatever you choose. Having your own domain is much preferable to "piggy-backing" on someone else's domain, where your website would require the dreaded slash, as in "www.SomeoneElsesSite.com/YourSite". You can get your own domain through a domain registrar such as godaddy.com or networksolutions.com. Keep your web hosting people on speed dial when you register your domain, because the registrar will need some information about the web server to complete the registration.

Implementing Your Chapter's Public Relations Plan

This article assumes that you were so inspired by my last article that you created a marketing and public relations plan for your chapter. Having done so, your next step is implementation; how do you get the word out? This article covers the basics of distributing your news to the media.

Create a media list

Creating a media list is not hard, just time consuming. Public relations professionals subscribe to databases that are constantly updated with the new personnel at newspapers, television and radio stations. Some PR firms may put a list together for you for a small fee (this is a service that my firm offers). Otherwise, you are on your own. Start by assigning homework to your chapter's members. Ask them to write down each newspaper, magazine, and radio station that they read or listen to during the week. Chances are you'll already be familiar with most of the media in your market, but there are a lot of local radio stations or neighborhood newspapers that you may be surprised to learn about. Look up each on the Internet, or obtain a copy. Take note of the types of articles that they run, and who the writers and editors are for the sections that may be appropriate for your chapter's news. Media lists should be updated every six months or so to make sure you have the most current contact information.

Identify news

Not everything is news. The fact that your chapter sang at the dedication of a new wing on a nursing home is not news. That a local nursing home added a wing to accommodate the growing number of seniors in your area *is* news, and mentioning that your chapter sang at the dedication is a nice addition to the story.

Identify the news, even if it is not focused on your chapter. Getting a mention at the end of the story is better than not having a story run at all. Work with other organizations to distribute news. Ask the nursing home if they are sending out any press releases, and ask to be included in them if they are. If they aren't sending out their own, ask them if you can help publicize their great news.

Timing is Everything

In August, no one cares that you have a father-son team that sings barbershop together. Around Father's Day this suddenly becomes a cute story for your local papers. Has one of your members been deployed overseas? Recording your chorus singing patriotic songs and sending it overseas with care packages is a great community service project that may land you coverage in your weekly papers.

When should they be sent?

Press releases should be sent out within a day after the event. Media alerts should be sent out twice – once 3-4 days before the event and again the day before or the morning of the event if it is in the evening. A media alert is a just that – an invitation to attend an event and cover it. A media alert should have a grabbing headline, and the basics of the who, what, when, and

where. It should also include the boilerplate for your chorus (see below) and a contact and cell phone number of someone who will be attending the event.



Format is Everything

Just like a resume, there is a standard format to follow when writing a press release. At minimum your release should include a release date and contact information in the top left hand corner, an attention-grabbing headline, and the traditional end marks (### or end).



Kristine Parkes

When writing the body of the release, be sure to follow the inverted pyramid style of writing, in case last-minute editing results in the bottom of your release being cut out. Your first paragraph, or lead, is all important. It is the hook that entices the reporter or editor to read further, and should contain the who, what, when, and where of the release. I like to follow this paragraph with a solid quote from the chapter president or director; attributions add interest to your press release. What comes next is more information about the event and then, of course, don't forget to close your press release with your chapter's boilerplate.

What is the boilerplate? A boilerplate is the last paragraph of every press release that provides your chapter's mission, meeting date and location and contact information (website, chapter phone number). Remember that the contact information at the top is for the media outlet's use and not for publication. The contact information in your boilerplate is for publication.

Other general tips to remember when preparing your press release include:

- Use plain white paper or your chapter's letterhead. A press release is not the place to show off your design skills.
 - Use 1-1 ½ inch margins on all sides.
- Double-spacing your press release allows for ease of readability and editing.

Everyone Loves Photos

A photo often makes the story, and many papers will be more likely to run your story if you have a photo to go with it. Photos should be digital, saved as jpegs, and be 200 dpi at approximately 4" across. The "medium quality" setting on most digital cameras will accomplish this. Do not use the "Export for Email" function found in many software programs. This will usually shrink a photo to the point where it is too small to be printed.

A photo of your whole chorus isn't going to make it. By the time the paper shrinks it down, no one will be identifiable. People's heads in the photos should be larger than a dime when printed. Photos of quartets singing to people work well, even if the quartet's backs are to the cameras (although being able to clearly see everyone's face is best). Capture the delighted reaction of the listeners.

Distributing photos can be a bit tricky. The best bet is usually to put a note at the end of your press release that a photo is available upon request. When you email the photo, make sure you identify everyone in the photo, preferably with hometowns.

No Press Release Required

A press release is not always the best way to entice a media outlet to cover your event or story. Sometimes a personal pitch works better. Pitching takes practice, and should be saved for stories like the Father's Day story referenced earlier.

MORE >>>



APRIL, MAY & JUNE SINGING TIPS
Jon Wagner, Sun City, Florida editor/director

What is it that takes up your time? Is it your job? Honey-do lists (retirement)? Church? Family? Being a great husband? Those are all priorities, or should be, in our busy lives.

All of those things can cause stress in our lives. But what about our hobbies? Are we able to "get away" from those things that cause stress?

Many of us come to enjoy the company of other men. It's fine to want to affiliate. Others are more achievement oriented. That also is alright. Just so long as each of us leaves our worries and stresses at the door when we enter.

Our chapter meetings should be harmonious, fun-filled evenings, where we can, for a short time, forget about our problems. We should go home each Thursday evening with a feeling of exhilaration knowing we enjoyed, in our own way, and allowing others to enjoy in their own way, the time spent together. All of us should have one common goal of making this experience the best for all of our members.

Let's have some fun singing together!

"Voice of Democracy" bulletin
 Rapid City, SD John Elving, editor

"Nothing's worse than having a website that's displaying three year old information."

Implementing Your Chapter's Public Relations Plan



Krisp Communications was able to get this exact story covered in a local Philadelphia paper by calling the editor and telling him our story idea. The editor loved the idea and assigned the story to a reporter. Of course, you will need to work with the reporter to schedule interviews and to provide the basic information about your chapter. If a reporter is assigned the story, they will most likely request any information you have. Make sure you have a fact sheet on the chapter and the basics of the story you pitched written up so you can email it easily as soon as it is requested. Having materials ready will make the reporter's job easier, and will help minimize inaccuracies in the finished story.

For more information on any of the information presented here, check out the Public Relations Society of America's website (www.prsa.org) or feel free to contact me directly at Kristine@KrispCommunications.com. Also, don't forget that the Barbershop Harmony Society's website is a great resource for creating the tools of the PR trade.

Something this week reminded me that when listening, we automatically add missing letters of words and will even add words to incomplete sentences or mentally correct improperly pronounced words or improper grammar. Assuming you know the correct way.

What this means to us as singers is that we often don't want to enunciate complete words. We try to carry ending consonants over to the beginning of the next word and when that's not appropriate, we can even delete letters (sounds) because the audience will add the missing letter automatically, unaware that you didn't sing the common "T", "R", or "D". Huh?

Personal Recorders

I'm soon going to ask that everyone bring their recorders back to rehearsals. Huh? I know, I told you NOT to bring them, but taping yourself to practice against during the week is a very bad plan! It only reinforces your mistakes and doesn't help improve your singing techniques.

Our Section Leaders are talented experienced singers. I'd like you to give your tapes to them for a confidential review. It will help them help you, and better understand what skills they need to be teaching in our new Section Meeting program.

Vowels ARE the key

Vowels ARE the key to making beautiful music; all the other letters are window-dressing. **Marvin Lent** continues to ask why the printed music doesn't spell the words as they should be sung. He certainly has a point and the new phonetic lyrics to our songs, written by your Directors, are designed to make that happen.

One key point to remember in singing is to hold the vowel as long as possible before turning the consonant. To help us learn this, we're going to be singing some music vowel-to-vowel so you 'hear' what should be emphasized, and with more songs having consonants sung by only the section with the melody, our sound should improve immensely. (maybe!)

"The Beat Goes On and On" But Should It?

Ray Codner regularly questions changing note values from the printed charts, and seeks reassurance that the Director(s) recognize the differences. We usually do, Ray. Once in a while we even change them on purpose!

Church music is in slow static time so everyone can follow along; band music is at a regular beat for marching feet; straight-meter music is also best for dancing; Barbershop is sung at variable speed and greater dynamics for listening enjoyment.

Speeding 1/4 notes to 8th notes to improve the conversationality of the lyric, changing the mathematical structure of the measure in the process, is not uncommon in Barbershop and usually improved the listener's story-line comprehension. It's acceptable in our singing because we can!

I've been known to say that if you want to sing hymns as sung in church, then you should be in a church choir. If you want to sing for dancers, then sing with a band. But for the most fun and musical freedom, you've got it.... barbershoping!





PROBE Webmaster **Dr. Arnie Wade** has been a barbershopper for 40 plus years, although he didn't begin as early as many today. Growing up in Southern Indiana, there were no choruses nearby, and other than his father's church quartet which occasionally did barbershop arrangements, he remained fairly ignorant of the Society until after college (music education), a stint in public school teaching, and more college (master's in counseling).

He began barbershopping in 1968 when three members of his church choir kidnapped him and took him to a guest night of the Evansville, Indiana *Songfellows*. Guest performers were Louisville's *Citations*, demonstrating overtones you could walk on and **Ed Gentry**, whose talk and demonstration about theory convinced him that this was serious music, not the drunks under the lamp post at all. He joined the *Songfellows* under the direction of **Mac Huff** (later Society music staffer and Assistant Director **Bill Myers**, bass of 1998 champ *Revival*), as soon as the three week waiting period was over.

Over the next 13 years, he sang with Evansville and Lafayette, Indiana, Duluth, Minnesota, and Abilene, Texas, before settling in Milledgeville, Georgia in 1981 and joining the Macon chorus. During this time, he sang in several different quartets (at least one in each location), directed three choruses (Lafayette SAI, Duluth and Macon), and held several offices - including that of bulletin editor in Duluth.

In the summer of 1998, **Grant Carson**, then VP-BE mentioned that President **Waldo Redekop** had been pushing for a **PROBE** web site but they needed a volunteer to set it up. Having gotten involved in writing and maintaining web pages at work, like a fool he volunteered to look into it. By late summer, **Steve** and **Kerry Denino** at *harmonize.com* had volunteered to host the site and **PROBE's** web presence was born.

In 2003, he married **Rae Phillips** (harmonet contributor, cat lady and singer/dancer with *Hickory Tree* and *Ramapo Valley* choruses), and in 2005 retired from his position as Associate VP of Student Affairs at Georgia College & State University.



Clary being presented with the LOL BETY award

Meet Dr. Clary Reinhardt On-Line Bulletin Editor of the Year

I have been singing barbershop music since 1984. My first big thrill was when I went to a Mini-HEP school in June of 1985 and sang with several hundred barbershoppers. My second thrill was when I got the chance to "man the door" at the 1985 International Convention which was held in Minneapolis.



I have been a member of three chapters: Anoka County *Northern Gateway Chorus*, Minneapolis *Commodores* and the Appleton *Fox Valleyaires*. This is my 23rd year as a bulletin editor. I have been bulletin editor for all three chapters.

Chapter offices held

Membership VP of all three chapters
President of Anoka County and Appleton chapters
Secretary — Treasurer — Music Librarian
Board members of all three chapters

On the District level

Chapter coach — eight years
Chapters Vice President — four years
LOL District nominating chair — four years
I have received several awards both at the District and chapter level.

Received chapter BOTY in 1988 and 2001

Outside of barbershopping, I am the finance officer of two American legion organizations. I sing in the church choir and help out in the church office. I love to play golf and play every day, (about seven months) here in Wisconsin.

CONGRATULATIONS!

My Reflections on “Open Mouth, Insert Foot”

Written by Dick Kury, St. Louis, MO



Greetings,

I thought I would alert those not yet involved in bulletin editing to be aware of the “Open Mouth.. Insert Foot” method of getting involved. **John Conrad**, past editor of **By-Lines**, monthly publication of the St. Louis Suburban Chapter, one evening announced his retirement. The chapter President quickly said, “*Who wants to try it?*”

Having been involved in several volunteer groups before I knew of the danger of giving the job to anyone who could merely stand erect, pronounce their name or fog a mirror with regard to their ability to do the job, I quickly spoke up and said, “*For Pete’s sake don’t just give the job to anyone willing to TRY IT. After all, John has garnered quite a few awards in the 15 years he did the job, many District awards and a first place International award. Let’s not tarnish his record by giving the job to anyone just willing to TRY IT!*”

The president then said, “*Are you volunteering?*” I quickly said “NO,” but please don’t make that mistake. The next week after a good deal of encouragement, I became the new editor, i.e. Open Mouth.. Insert Foot. Not having had any specific editing experience but with some other abilities necessary, there I was! I must say, it has been a good experience for the last nine months.

“Open Mouth.. Insert Foot No. 2”

I am now webmaster of our website which had just been started and was not quite functional when I opened my mouth again. This, too, has been a lot of fun and quite interesting. Now it feels like I have a full time job in our barbershop chapter. I wouldn’t trade the experience for anything, not even the million dollar salary I was offered and turned down.

One of the best things about all this is the privilege I have had in meeting so many of the Society’s editors and web folks. What a great bunch of guys and gals, always ready to help, even with the dumb questions. Bless you all for the work you do for our wonderful society. If you find yourself in the St. Louis area, look me up, let’s sing a tag or two.

Dick Kury, “Bird”

“**By-Lines**” editor and webmaster

55 Years in Sales & Marketing...Still Going Strong!
Realty Services, Inc. — Broker ~ Consultant

By-Lines is available on line at: gentlemenofsound.org

Incoming VP — Bulletin Editors

John Elving

Rapid City, South Dakota
leaderman@earthlink.net



What an experience Denver was! Those of you who missed it missed a great contest and convention. Speaking of experiences, I’ve never been party to a train that left the station so fast as the one that elected me **VP-Bulletin Editors!** I didn’t even have a chance to hop off. That being said, let me introduce myself to you so that you know a little bit about me.

Although I formally started barbershopping in 1976, due to family obligations, I only show 25 years on my membership card. Thanks to a great fellow teacher, I was introduced into the barbershop family, and a year later started my first directing tour. I’ve sung and directed in Evergreen, Far Western and now Rocky Mountain districts. I think I’ve finally decided to settle down!

As to my background in journalism, it started while I was teaching music in the public schools. While teaching at a small school, I was sort of “coerced” into also teaching journalism and producing the school newspaper. This was before the use of computers and involved pasting & layout for scanning onto a mimeograph stencil.

I have also been fortunate in having a great proof-reader and layout expert in my wife, who is a “journeyman” printer and layout artist. Barbara keeps me mostly on track, although I sometimes over-ride her ideas, even when she’s right.

During my time as **VP for Bulletin Editors** I would like to see **more involvement** by the individual chapter editors. If their goal is the same as mine – that is to make the best bulletin for my chapter members – then by being more involved it helps us all become better editors.

There is a need for more certified judges in all categories. This is especially true if we expand the number of bulletin editors who are entering the district and international contests. I would also like to see online contests for all districts. Right now, in my district at least, only the hard copy contest was promoted. If we are to have the online contest for international, then we also need it at the district level.

In answer to a question aimed at me, “What is a bulletin VP, anyway?” let me offer my opinion. In my case it may just be a rabble-rouser who isn’t satisfied with the status quo, but wants to look forward to what can be. The glass is never half empty!

From the PR Pen of W. Grant Carson

“Sometimes You’ve Got To Give To Receive!”

Our classical chorale has concerts in an auditorium with 330 seats. We usually have an attendance of about 100. This small town in Texas, population 15,000, would prefer country and western or gospel to classical requiems, sigh! Whether the town folk would take to barbershop is undetermined, since barbershop has never been done here.

In addition to our usual performance publicity of fliers, posters and announcement in the arts section of the newspaper, we decided to give complimentary tickets to all who help us or have the potential to help us. The only cost was the printing of the tickets, and that filled some empty seats. The chorale prefers to sing for people, not empty seats.

We gave two tickets each for “HMS Pinafore” to vocal music teachers, to the mayor, to the head of the chamber of commerce, to the president and fine arts department head of the college that provides our rehearsal and performance facilities for free, to the members of the county arts council that gives us a grant, and to the editor of our daily newspaper.

I personally delivered tickets to the newspaper editor. He remarked that nobody had ever given him tickets to anything, and he would provide page one publicity. He was good to his word. A page one story about “Pinafore,” well done, appeared two days before the concert.



I wish I could say we had a capacity crowd, but we didn’t. We did have about 30% more than usual, but some of that may have been because we were doing a comic operetta instead of our usual heavy classical works. I do know that we generated good will among the folks who most matter to the chorale. If you have a sell-out crowd at your performances, forget it! But, if you have dependably empty seats, why not?

Fill Seats and Generate Good Will

If your chapter performances are sold out, then you needn’t read this. But if there are empty seats, here is an idea.

I no longer sing barbershop, Gainesville, Texas, not being the center of gravity of the barbershop world. But I sing in a classical community chorus. Our challenges of public relations and selling tickets are no different from a barbershop chapter. The attendance at our performances is usually about 150 in an auditorium that seats 330.

For our next performance, in addition to the fliers, posters, etc., the Public Relations Committee has decided to provide in advance complimentary tickets to college administrators, who provide the auditorium free, to music teachers of all schools in the county, to church choir directors, to the editor and reporters of our local newspaper, and to the mayor and city councilmen. This will cost us nothing except printing tickets. The chorale members will feel better about singing to a larger audience, rather than to so many empty seats. And we may even pick up some members.

In addition to the pre-concert publicity in the local newspaper, today's paper (April 23) devoted a third of the front page to color photographs of the performance.

Something To Warm The Hearts Of Bulletin Judges



Written by Grant Carson

Linda Williams has been publishing “*In Tune*,” the bulletin of the *Hunterdon County* chapter (New Jersey, Mid Atlantic District) since at least 2000. That’s the first time I judged her bulletin in a BETY contest, in **Content**. I’ve been judging the bulletin from time to time in BETY and IBC contests ever since.

The first time I judged her bulletin, Linda was producing a three-pager, and in three issues had only one contribution from a chapter member. I just judged her bulletin again, one issue, eight pages, in **Content** again, for the IBC. She accomplished 96%, with many contributions from chapter members.

Sometimes we judges are disappointed, when we carefully coach editors on how to do better, but receive the same bulletins in subsequent contests with little or no improvement. Well, Linda Williams and “*In Tune*” has warmed my heart.

Speaking of heart-warming, how about that third place finish in the IBC for Linda? Wow, and how about that? I wonder — is this a milestone for PROBE, having a lady editor achieve a top five finish? Anyway, congratulations are in order; in addition, Linda also edits the *MAD Mid’l Antics*; she’s one busy lady!

Editor’s Note: Any similar or other judging experiences floating around out there that someone else would like to share with our readers? C’mon bulletin and PR judges, send me your “stuff!”

PROBEmoter Editor

Steve Jackson

**Just my opinion, but....**

Were you in Denver for the International Convention? This was my fourth; my first convention was St. Louis in 1984 — I drove there with a fellow chorus member. Had a ball partying with the Scarborough chapter all week long. That's what happens when you arrive early. I had just transferred to **Denver Mile Hi** so I wasn't eligible to compete. Did that slow me down? Nope. My friend Marty said, *"Hey fatkid, let's drive to the convention; I've got relatives in Jonesboro that I can visit Monday and Tuesday. I'll drop you off at a cheapie hotel until the chorus checks in on Wednesday then we'll start the celebration."*

Our main hotel was right by the arch, so we found a small hotel three blocks away. My friend drove away; hmmm, alone in a strange city with money and no agenda — I gotta find some friendly faces! So I promptly walked over to the Marriott where the chorus was slated to be housed and started looking around. Marty and I figured that we couldn't get into our rooms until Wednesday when the rest of the guys arrived from Denver. Came to find out that I could have stayed there Monday and Tuesday at the convention rate; oh well.

Anyway, back to the story. I heard singing coming out of the lounge area in the middle of the lobby. I walked over, sat down at the edge, and prepared to listen. That didn't last long. One of the guys looked around, saw me and hollered, *"Hey what the heck are you doing way over there? Come on over and sing with us!"* Never being one to miss an opportunity, I promptly joined them.

"Hey kid, ever do any singing? By the way, I'm Al Baker, the lesser."

"Huh?" I replied promptly.

"There's two Al Bakers in the Ontario District; I'm the one that's not the judge!"

That being said, they were all prepared to indoctrinate me into the world of four part harmony. I didn't have the heart to tell them that I already had nine years of harmonizing under my belt. So, we started singing tags, Canadian style! Over and over 'til we got tired of it and went on to another one! After a few hours of this, I thought to myself, *it's time for something more challenging*, so I promptly started the lead line to **From the First Hello**. Jaws dropped, beer spilled, baritones started rioting (well, maybe not). Within eight bars, everyone was singing along. Afterwards, Al looked me straight in the eye and asked, *"OK bub, who are you singing with?"*

"Denver Mile Hi," I responded, *"but I just transferred in from the chapter across town, so I can't compete this week!"*

"Oh, so you're just here for the beer and the harmony — a real conventioneer!"

I couldn't have said it better myself. I explained about Marty and I driving from Denver and that he'd be here Wednesday afternoon driving back from Arkansas.

"OK bub, you just became an honorary member of the Scarborough DUKES OF HARMONY!"

So I sang and drank with my new friends for two solid days; when Marty got in, he asked me what I had been doing to keep busy. I told him all about it and as I explained, his grin got wider and wider and his head started bobbing.

"Figured that might happen, that's the beauty of being a barbershopper — when it's convention week, there are no strangers, only friends you haven't met yet! You see, it's not always about the competition; it's about the experience!"

Thanks Marty — those are words I still carry today. How about you? I bet you've got some great convention stories and memories to share, too. Put them in your bulletins, on your websites — it's good reading! I wonder whatever became of little Al?

Steve

You Might Be A Barbershopper if....

If you think **Air Supply** would have been much better with a good bass, you might be a barbershopper.

If you've tried to tune your wind chimes to a barbershop seventh, you might be a barbershopper.

If your wife no longer cares how you got makeup on your shirt, you might be a barbershopper.

If you mistake the hum of an air conditioner for the sound of a quartet somewhere in the hotel, you might be a barbershopper.

If you look like a bottled water deliveryman, carrying around a 5 gallon jug of water, you might be a barbershopper.

If you memorize 20 arrangements for a show and forget your anniversary, you might be a barbershopper.

If you won't go to the market and get your wife some pantyhose, yet you'll wear lipstick and rouge in front of 400 Shriners, you might be a barbershopper.

If your doctor schedules your heart surgery on a rehearsal night and you gotta think twice about it, you might be a barbershopper.

If, on meeting someone for the first time, you ask them what part they sing before their name, you might be a barbershopper.

If your parents suspect you have joined a religious cult because of your obsessive behavior (actually true!), you might be a barbershopper.

If, when you leave the house, you always check to make sure you have a pitch pipe with you BEFORE you check to see if you have your keys, you might be a barbershopper.

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