



Singing every Thursday at 7:00 PM, Community United Methodist Church of Olathe

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Blessed

or

Cursed

Submitted by Carl Shultz

The question I would ask "Is printed music a blessing or a curse"?

A little background.

Most of us know that in 1938 two men, (Owen Cash and Rupert Hall) felt that the style of Barbershop singing was about to be lost to the future generations of singers. Their vision was that it was unique and should be preserved. Hence the birth of SPEBSQSA in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

There are those, (Jim Henry and David Wright among others) who claim this style evolved from the black community. This may well be true as there is no written history on which to draw and

there was no published music in the style referred to as Barbershop. Published music of the late 19 and early 20 centuries was usually written for a single voice and the singers would add their harmony to supplement in place of an instrument. This style of singing was done in barbershops and hence the name which defines this art form. Many of the singers at the barbershop, did not read music and relied on what is known as "by ear" singing. Because there wasn't a written score to follow the singers were free to follow their instinct for the duration of a note. When they struck a chord they might prolong it for several measures, known as "milking a chord".

Printed music was not used in the early days of the Society. A song was learned much like the way a tag is taught today. Someone would sing the melody while others would search for a note that would complement what was being sung. This is known as "woodshedding".

There was some resistance from members when the Society started publishing music and asked chapters to purchase copies for their members. It took some time for members to realize that learning a song was faster using a printed arrangement. They no longer needed to find a note that fit, it was right there in print. Everyone had the right notes and words. One could argue that this is a blessing. We now rely on the printed arrangement and it could be argued that this is a curse. Printed charts have made the need for "woodshedding" of a song obsolete.

However, we need to remember that in singing Barbershop we are not bound or restricted as we interpret a song. For those who are new to Barbershop I would say do not try to sing it in the church choir style or adhere to strict note value, but rather explore the freedom which the style allows.

In one of the chapters where I belonged (I've been a member of 10 chapters) we had a new member who sang Opera. He could not let go of his opera training and enjoy barbershop. In another chapter the director had perfect pitch and was intolerant of a wrong note. Attendance went from 59 to 15 before the board determined that he was a problem. When someone or a section is continually berated in the presence of others it ceases to be fun and members lose interest under those conditions. We sing not only for our benefit but for others to enjoy the art form.

I would encourage all members to sing in quartets. You learn very quickly to recognize a wrong note. You have no one to lean on as you are the lone voice for your part. Directors tell us to listen to those next to us and match our voice to theirs. When you sing in a quartet this is critical,

otherwise, you stand out and the sound isn't pleasant to an audience.

For years the Society has encouraged the Barber Pole Cat Program. The idea is that this is common ground and you can sing these songs with members from other chapters. I would take this idea a step further and encourage you to learn all songs as they are printed. When you get an opportunity to sing with men from another chapter or district you would have a larger selection of songs from which to choose. Arrangers spend countless hours in preparation of the song for publication. Take advantage of their experience and sing the song as written. There are many songs arranged by multiple arrangers. Some are difficult while others are easy. Select an arrangement which suits you or your quartet and enjoy the thrill of Barbershop singing.

Ring That Chord,

Carl J. Schultz

Why Do You Sing?

From the Internet

When my quartet arrived at "The Asylum," a Dead Kennedys CD was playing at about a zillion decibels. The flat plasma TV screens suspended from the ceiling were showing MTV, and the oldest person in sight appeared to be about 25. It turned out we were delivering a singing Valentine to the owner and staff of one of LA's hottest visual effects studios. We asked for the owner who appeared to be about all of 30 years old. He in turn paged the entire staff of about 20 to come out and see what his friend had sent him for Valentine Day. Well, all these kids assembled in the lobby. I would venture to say there was not one body that was not pierced or tattooed somewhere. So here we were, four guys older than everybody's father, dressed with our red sequined bow ties, suspenders and arm garters. I thought to myself, "Let's just get it over with. These kids are really going to laugh at us. Let's make it quick and get out of Dodge." I couldn't have been more wrong.

They applauded. They yelled. They screamed. They whistled. They loved us! They were all in a party mood and we were the icing on the cake. It was one of the best audiences I have ever experienced. They loved our music and what we were about.

Lessons learned:

1. Sing your heart out every time you perform.
2. Barbershop is not just about singing "the old songs." It's about four part harmony sung in the unique style called barbershop.
3. And never, never prejudge your audience.

Bruce Schroffel

Santa Monica Oceanaires

CANYON CHORDS is the official monthly publication of the Black Canyon Barbershop Chorus known as the Montrose, Colorado, chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. Opinions stated in this bulletin are not necessarily those of the Chapter, the Editor, or possibly even the stated author.

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(Term expires 12/31 in year shown after office)

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Splinters from the Board

Notice: These are NOT the official minutes. Official minutes can be found somewhere in the many computers of our Secretary Frush.



The Ridgway singout was fun and allowed about \$1000 send to Red Cross via WalMart. The feeling after the sing is that the Park staff will support our future singouts and allowing us to use the conference room for potluck dinners. We expect a letter of explanation from the Park in the near future. At that time, we will consider our alternatives.

If anyone wants to attend the Fall Convention in Midway UT, please get with Coop ASAP as time is running out for registration and making room reservations.

The continuing conundrum of whether or not we should consider an expensive Guest Quartet for our 2018 Show or if should we be happy with a far less expensive and less polished local or semi-local quartet. The show goes on. A decision will be made sometime.

A needed consideration of the Guest Quartet conundrum is how would the Chorus pay for any International quality quartet. Everyone has an idea but no one is really ready to assume any responsibility at this time. Is making money on our Show the driving purpose? Or is entertainment? Probably both, but the blend is up for further discussion.

As much as non of us will admit, winter is coming and it is time to discuss caroling, where we will, what will we sing, etc., etc. We started thinking about it but will continue with that topic in October.

My wife and I had words, but I didn't get to use mine.

Yes, it is ELECTION TIME again and we will be looking for some new folks to take on one or more of the expiring board member officer positions. Now is the time to talk to Coop. The Chapter must have good leadership in order to survive. Think about it as a step up. The rewards are many, plus the food is good before the meetings.

End of the summer Ridgway State Park Celebration

And yes, we had fun, lots of fun even without a potluck. The State Park folks had 3 or maybe 4 golf-cart type work rigs to move us immobile guys to and from the overlook. Wow, they seemed more than willing to cooperate with our needs.

As you may know, we raised \$300 (thanks to Rex) dedicated to help the folks in Texas, promised by Josh R. that it would be tripled by WalMart before it is sent to Red Cross for use.

The 'new Rocky Road' with Dan Overmyer as bari and Cooper as lead did a pretty good job of getting through a couple of good songs. The audience loved them and so did we.



Photo thanks to Wilma Erven

Even though we had a nice surplus of basses, we did NOT have that luxury of having lots of leads, which are, by definition, leads. So the plethora of basses had to sing softly so as not to overpower the 3 leads who did their best to sing the melody. What the heck, the bass part is really pretty and should be enjoyed by all.

After the singing, the immobile parts of the chorus were trucked up to the top and some, without knowledge of others, completed a good evening with good food at Chili's. Well, darn, wish we had known, but that's the way it is. It was a darn fine Labor Day singout with a super generous audience, and good turnout from our Chapter to sing to them.



Hank Snyer
Bob Goodhue

Sept. 19
Oct. 12

*We don't stop singing because we get old,
we get old because we stop singing.*

Birthdays are good for you. The more you have, the longer you live.



ROCKY ROAD

Contact: Vern Dockter

970-210-1793

Exclusive (Caution, this is satire, just as is much of the stuff you read on the internet)

President Trump to Become a Barbershopper?

Washington, DC. — It seems that even Presidents need an occasional break from the demands of their office. Sources close to the International office in Nashville have confirmed that talks are underway for President Donald Trump to join the Barbershop Harmony Society. A member of the WH Press Secretary's Office, who was not authorized to comment and asked for anonymity, confirmed that the pressures of office, especially during the chaotic days following the Inauguration, caused the new Secret Service Psychological Section to explore ways for the president to "relieved his mind" from the seriousness of his work, at least for a small amount of time during the week. "The president needs an outlet, a pause, to refresh himself in order to contend with the many serious aspects of his office," a spokesman said. "He needs an outlet vastly different from his nor-mal routine and we think that singing with congenial men would be a terrific change." Joining the singing society was the suggestion of one of the White House secretaries whose uncle is a BHS member.

President Trump has always enjoyed singing, although in an informal setting, and can often be seen singing along with performers at his Mar-A-Lago resort in Florida. Most recently he sang a duet with Democratic opponent Hillary R. Clinton at the start of one of the 2016 Presidential debates (see pic). Which Society Chapter to join is still under review but one of the midsized groups in the DC area would be most likely; either the Singing Capitol Chorus of Washington, DC or the Alexandria Harmonizers in Alexandria, VA would seem appropriate. Less likely would be a chapter in the greater Miami or New York areas, although the President maintains residences in both cities. Trump/ Clinton in impromptu duet Trump sings the theme from "Green Acres" with Megan Mullally at the 2006 Grammys

Many details still need to be worked out before the president could even think of venturing any-where in public on a regular basis. Secret Service surveillance would need to be maintained at all times while rehearsals were in progress as well as clearances for chapter members. On the positive side it might be that the chapter chorus would gain covert singing members who would surround the President while at minor performances (it is doubtful that the President would be able to perform on a chapter's annual show for security reasons).

President Trump is known to have a pretty good vocal range but would be most comfortable singing the lead part. He certainly would be at ease on stage with a chorus or quartet given his commanding personality. It is entirely possible that a DC chorus could move rehearsals into the White House. One of the ballrooms or banquet spaces could be set up with risers and state-of-the-art sound systems would be available should a show be staged there. Donald Trump would not be the first President to succumb to the barbershop sound. Harry Truman, 33rd President of the US was a well-known advocate. Over the years, many in government sang barbershop: Senators John Ashcroft (R-MO), Larry Craig (R-ID), Trent Lott (R-MS) and James Jeffords (R-VT) were members of the Singing Senators, who cut a record and sang with the Oak Ridge Boys; Alfred E. Smith, Gov. of NY was a barbershopper and William Sessions, Director of the FBI also sang barbershop.

(Stolen with glee from The Troubadour, Earl Meseth, Editor, then lifted with joy from Paul White and the Concho Capers.)



Trump/Clinton in impromptu duet



Trump sings the theme from "Green Acres" with Megan Mullally at the 2006 Grammys



Great audience, beautiful sunset. Photos from Chuck Frush







Teach the Children to Sing

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here

CHAPTER MISSION STATEMENT

"Flourishing and growing as individuals, as a chorus, and as a chapter by singing in an atmosphere of musical excellence and by promoting harmony in our lives, our relationships, and our community."

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COMPLIMENTARY
COPY

Keep the Whole World Singing

Every morning is the
dawn of a new error.

The irony of life is that,
by the time you're old enough
to know your way around,
you're not going anywhere.



Aspire to inspire
before you expire.

