



Dixie Town Crier

Dixie's monthly chapter newsletter dedicated to the original town crier, Chuck Witherspoon

Volume 1, Issue 8

November 30, 2009

BHS Underwriting CACM by Paul Wietlisbach, Director of Education for BHS

I just returned from attending a workshop entitled "Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meetings" (CACM) designed and run by **Mr. Chuck Greene**. Based on my personal observations and recommendations from many respected BHS mentors - I believe CACM workshops to be a valuable tool in accomplishing the Society's #1 AIM. Therefore, I have decided to underwrite these workshops with BHS funds in order to defray some of the expense to our members. For 2010, (until my meager budget runs out) BHS will reimburse the sponsoring district or chapter(s) \$20 per CACM workshop attendee.

For all potential workshop organizers: You schedule the workshops through coordination with Chuck Greene. However, to get this rebate you must submit a verified list of attendees (with contact information) and a critique sheet from each man that I will provide upon request. Contact my office at education@barbershop.org if you are interested.

Stone Mountain Chorus from Duluth, GA by Gene Chancy, VP of Music

NOTICE: Music Director Vacancy

The Stone Mountain Chorus, located in Atlanta, GA, has a vacancy for a new Music Director beginning in January 2010 for our 65 man chorus. Our present director will remain with the chorus and continue to direct until a new director is contracted. Those who are interested in becoming a "candidate for interview" may contact Bill Banks, President SMC at 770-623-4786 home, Suwanee, GA.

The Stone Mountain Chorus, and it's four registered quartets, provides entertainment for athletic and social events, assisted living communities, corporate conventions, and charitable fund raisers. The yearly calendar normally includes a spring concert, the Barbershop Harmony Society Chorus and Quartet Convention, and a fall show with three performances.

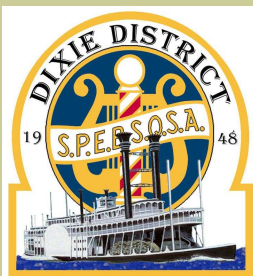
Dixie District Email Distribution List by Don Lang

Many of you have been using our Dixie District Yahoo Groups for some time. They are a very powerful tool, but not without some difficulties. We appreciate your patience as we try to make them as effective as possible.

We are currently in a major effort to get "everyone" on their appropriate Dixie District Yahoo Groups. One such group is **DIX-Dist-Members** - for all Dixie District members.

Did you receive the November 30, 2009 issue of the **Dixie Town Crier** in an email from the District? If so, you're all set! If not, you can be added to this email distribution list so that you never miss another issue. Contact me at (donl555@yahoo.com) and I will send you an invitation to join.

If you have questions, comments, or would like help, just sing out!



Atlanta Area Leadership Academy by Charlie Robinson, Coordinator

“Atlanta Area COTS”

I am reminding everyone that we are holding the Atlanta Area Leadership Academy (COTS) on January 9, 2010 at the Hillside United Methodist Church in Woodstock, GA. We realize we are a singing organization, however, like any organization it requires the leadership skills to make sure your chapter is functioning properly. Please take this opportunity to make sure that your 2010 Chapter officers receive the training necessary to perform their required duties.

Due to the Christmas holidays, the deadline for registration has been set for December 20th. Please make every effort to mail your registrations to me before the December 20th deadline so that we can be assured that your chapter is registered for the school.

The information for the school is on the Dixie web site. Go to www.dixiedistrict.org and click on Leadership Academy and it will provide the information for the school. The web site has the registration form, schedule, generic track descriptions, list of local motels, and driving directions. The faculty bios will be added to the Dixie web site shortly.

If there are any questions, or further information is needed, please contact me (csrobinson@juno.com).

Heart of Georgia from Warner Robins, GA by Bob Smith

The **Heart of Georgia Barbershop Chorus** recently entertained participants at a blood drive in memory of **George Grace** at Christ United Methodist Church in Warner Robins, GA. George was a long-time member of the Heart of Georgia Chorus before his passing from cancer in his forties. He served as assistant director for many of those years and was often the MC at our shows. **Don Schall**, our chorus president (pictured) and George were in a quartet for many years as well. Don said George had perfect pitch, which was a godsend on those rare days when someone else forgot their pitch-pipe. In fact the quartet never carried a pipe to gigs. George, a civilian engineer on Robins Air Force Base, was a choir director most of his adult life, as well as a member of the Macon Symphony (sousaphone), the Renaissance Singers in Macon, and a regular performer with the Macon Little Theater. As a singer, musician, and especially as a friend, he is sorely missed.

The blood drive attained a new high of 76 good units of blood and saved up to 228 lives. Red Cross Coordinator Ed Lee thanked the blood drive team and all the donors who helped to accomplish this level and added, “We also were serenaded by the Heart of Georgia Barbershop Chorus for the last half of the drive which ‘with the pizza (provided by the church) - amounted to dinner and a show!’”

“In Memory of George Grace”

Our chorus also visited the Houston County Rehabilitation Center and spread some Christmas cheer to the residents. I loved it when I could see folks singing and tapping their toes. We also had a couple of elves who gave early Christmas presents to the residents and staff.



Don Schall, President

Atlanta Vocal Project from Atlanta, GA by Bill Hickman

On December 5, the **Atlanta Vocal Project** will put on its most unusual Christmas show to date. Working closely with the Cure Childhood Cancer foundation, AVP will present "Christmas is For Children" to hundreds of a cappella music fans from throughout the Atlanta area. Cure Childhood Cancer is a non-profit organization dedicated to conquering pediatric cancer through research and education.

**"AVP's unique
Christmas
show"**

Featuring the renowned Voices of Lee chorus from Lee University in Cleveland, Tennessee, together with former Dixie District Champions, **The Zamboni Brothers**, Dixie Top Five Finalist, **Next Wave**, and a 200 voice mixed middle school chorus, the show is sure to be a rousing success.

The Voices of Lee have just been named as finalists for NBC's Sing Off program to be aired in mid-December. Together with seven other a cappella groups from around the country Voices of Lee will be competing for a \$100,000 prize and a recording contract. In their feature set they will show just how they intend to win the competition.

The audience response to each musical group should be amazing, especially when all the groups come together for a finale of a special **Clay Hine** arrangement of *Let There Be Peace on Earth and Christmas is For the Children* but the unquestioned highlight of the evening should be the very special *Night Before Christmas* segment read by kids from Cure Childhood Cancer. There won't be a dry eye in the house as those very special kids remind everyone present of the meaning of Christmas.

Anderson Electric City Chorus from Anderson, SC by John Yane

**"Barbershop
harmony at hot
air balloon
festival"**

During the weekend of November 6-8, 2009, people of Anderson County, South Carolina showed how much fun can be shared when volunteers are involved. Organizers of the first-ever Balloons Over Anderson festival wanted this event to be put on by the community, for the community. Based on the turnout and the smiles I saw on the faces of spectators and volunteers, the balloon festival was a success.

26 hot air balloons and their dedicated teams were the center of attention. The mass launches were breath-taking. Visitors lined up for tethered balloon rides and helicopter rides.

Between balloon events, a squadron of radio-controlled planes rose from the grassy field and garnered more than a few oohs and aahs from spectators with their acrobatic stunts and low-level, high-speed passes.

And of course, entertainment filled the gaps. **The Electric City Harmonizers** (the Anderson, SC chapter of the BHS), jumped at this opportunity. Our old-fashioned barbershop style music seemed an ideal fit for the balloon festival.

Singing outdoors is never easy; wind complicates things. We decided to form a small circle around the microphones. This was the only way we could hear each other. Folks gathered all around the small stage; it was "Theatre In The Round" with our faces to each other (and to the microphones) and with our backs to the audience. Less than ideal, but it was the best compromise.

The day was bright and beautiful. Barbershop chords filled the air.



**“Dixie District
COTS”**

Leadership Academy Schools by Randy Miller, VP-Chapter Support Leadership Training

COTS / Leadership Academy Schools to be held in 2010. First school will be in the Atlanta area, held in Woodstock, GA. This is the same site as last year and the same cost. Call me or Charlie Robinson for details.

The second school will be held in Lexington, SC, on January 23, 2010. This school has the same format and classes, but is in the eastern part of the district for convenience to those who can't travel to the Atlanta school. Again, call me or write me for information and enrollment. My email address is rm4parttoo@bellsouth.net. You can reach me by phone at (800) 434-9658.

Get ALL 2010 officers to either of these schools. It will benefit your chapter greatly.

**“Three shows in
three venues in
three different
towns”**



Land of the Sky from Asheville, NC by Bob Burns



Because we draw members from seven Western North Carolina counties (and have one member from SC), for the past several years we have had three Annual Fall Shows; this year entitled SHTICK TO SINGING!!

These shows were held in Hendersonville, Asheville, and Waynesville, NC. Interestingly, each of those shows was in a different sort of venue, necessitating a great deal of flexibility on the part of our set-up and tech crews, and especially on our performers, the amazing **Land of the Sky Chorus** and our equally amazing guest quartet for all 3 shows, 2009 Dixie District Champions **LET'S SING!**

The Hendersonville show was held in the large sanctuary of the First Baptist Church. The Asheville show, the very next evening, was held at the premier performance venue in Asheville, the Diana Wortham Theatre. The Waynesville show was held in the Tuscola High School auditorium (where we had donated \$1000 towards the purchase of a new curtain 2 years ago). For that show we also featured the Tuscola High School Camber Choir singing and dancing to a medley from *West Side Story*. Each show ended in what is now our signature *Ed Sullivan Show in 2:57*, arranged by **Clay Hine**. Standing ovations everywhere and a great time was had by all...audience AND performers! We love our show season! Whatta hobby!!!!



**“Garden City
Chorus to sing
at tree lighting
ceremony”**

Garden City Chorus from North Augusta, SC by Harry Kline

The **Garden City Chorus** will lead off the program for the tree lighting ceremony at Fort Gordon on the 1st of December. There are several groups taking part in the ceremony, which is an annual event at the fort. It is attended by up to a thousand people, so it will give the chorus great exposure on the post. Being first up is an honor for us.

The Garden City Chorus recently completed plans to become a sponsor of the local Fisher House at Fort Gordon, and this is a wonderful way to kick off the association with the military there.

We have also contracted to provide performances on the post for Fisher House activities during the year and will donate a portion of the proceeds from any of our paid performances to support the organization. Fisher House provides housing for families of ill and injured military personnel while their kinfolk are in the nearby hospital.

In addition to the tree lighting ceremony, the Garden City Chorus will also perform carols for several nursing homes, churches and hospitals in the Augusta and Central Savannah River Area district.

“Let’s Sing keeping busy”

Let’s Sing by Steve Tremper

Hi All! Your current Dixie District champs have been busy the last two months appearing on several chapter shows, working on new music, and just having a LOT of fun meeting new friends and singing together. Just a week after our win in Chattanooga, we appeared on the **Winston-Salem Chapter’s** Annual Show at Salem College, and two weeks later we joined the **Asheville Chapter** for a great show weekend with performances in Hendersonville and in downtown Asheville. Beautiful!

In November, we took part in the Mid-Carolina Barbershop Festival sponsored by the **Greensboro Chapter**, helping with some coaching and singing a few songs for the crowd of guys from area chapters. That same day we headed back west again, this time to Waynesville, NC, and joined the Asheville chapter in their third show performance! What a great time these guys have and their hospitality is second to none. Thanks Land of the Sky!!



Last weekend we appeared again with **Triad Harmony Express** in their show at Rockingham Community College, and the fun goes on. With more shows coming up in Myrtle Beach, Greensboro, Spartanburg, and Roanoke, VA., and with Top Gun and Spring Prelims just around the corner, the calendar is filling up fast and we love it! We’d love to sing for YOUR chapter show in 2010! See our web site at www.LetsSing.org for more info!

The Original “Pay-It-Forward...” by Sandy Sanders

My Dad was a very unique man. He was a World War II veteran, an artillery “Scout Pilot” with the “101st Airborne Division” (in the Vietnam War, we called them “Forward Air Controllers” because they called in air strikes on the enemy). He was nominated for the “Purple Heart” and the “Bronze Star”, but declined them both. He was a “captain” of industry, a leader in the community, a Deacon in his church, and he was my hero and mentor. He was also a damned good Barbershopper!

He sang in a quartet up in east Tennessee for 35+ years, **Class of ‘42**, was a member of the **Appalachian Express Chorus** for many years, introduced me to barbershopping, and loved nothing better than sitting around teaching and singing tags! I actually got to sing with him while we marched together with the “Big Orange Chorus” in the ABC Disney Easter Day Parade at Disney World. He passed away in 2005.

Now to the purpose of this story... It’s the Christmas Holiday Season, bordered by Thanksgiving on the front and New Year’s Eve on the rear, and as the song says: “...It’s that time of year when the world falls in love...” So, I thought I would share with you a little known fact about my Dad. He was a giver. He gave of himself in so many ways. His favorite barbershop Christmas song was **Jim Clancy’s** arrangement of “The Secret of Christmas.” Dad used to say, “Just listen to the words of that song; it will tell you how to live your life!” And that’s how he lived his!

He used to tell my brother and me, “If you really want to have some fun, do something really, really nice for someone and never tell them, or anyone else, that it was you who did it; it will be just between you and the good Lord! Then watch them go crazy trying to figure out who did this “good deed!!!” I never truly realized what he meant until a stranger named Keith walked up to me, in the reception line at Dad’s memorial service, and told me that he was there to pay tribute to Dad because Dad had mentored him in high school, encouraged him to get good grades, and then had put him through college in Metallurgical Engineering at the University of Tennessee; all on a “handshake!”

After Keith graduated and was married, he went to pay Dad back the total amount of the college loan five years later. Dad told him he’d either take the funds and conclude the deal, or Keith could put 15% additional moneys to the amount and find another “deserving youth” that he could then put through college! Keith said he and his wife thought about it and immediately decided to keep the money “in play.” He then told me that a girl at East Tennessee State University was graduating that next quarter after utilizing Keith and Dad’s funds! The most remarkable thing about this was that Keith’s final comment to me was that Dad let it “slip” to him that Keith was the 6th kid he had put through college!! When I asked Mom about this, she only knew of one student that Dad (and she) had done this for and was astonished to learn there were 5 more!

The morale to this story, and one I live by, is to always strive to “give something back.” And since it “’tis the season,” it just seems like the perfect time for all of us who love barbershopping to “give something back” to our friends, neighbors, community, etc. Don’t pass up the chance to sing for someone this holiday season; you’ll never know what “gift” you may be giving!

Music City Chorus from Nashville, TN by David Belden

"We Need a Little Christmas" is the title of the December 12 **Music City Chorus** holiday show featuring two international competitor barbershop choruses! The Nashville chapter's annual holiday extravaganza will be presented at a 2:00 p.m. matinee and a 7:30 p.m. evening performance at Father Ryan High School.

"Music City Chorus is all set to spread the holiday cheer"

The men of MCC have been working overtime perfecting challenging arrangements of many holiday favorites, including "Here Comes Santa Claus" (Marshall Webb), "Toyland" (Ed Waesche), "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" (Kevin Keller), "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear/Silent Night" (Jim Clancy), and a seven-part arrangement of "I Have Seen the Light" (Jay Giallombardo).

The chorus will also reprise last year's show-stopper, "Betelehemu," and several other classic holiday pieces, under the direction of **Mike O'Neill** and assistant director **Dusty Schleier**. Expect surprise appearances from several of the Nashville chapter's quartets.

The Music City Chorus, the reigning Dixie District chorus champion, competed at the Anaheim international convention in 2009 and will heading to Philadelphia in 2010 as the Dixie District representative. They work hard to bring that same level of quality singing to both the local and international stages.

Joining MCC will be the Metro Nashville Chorus, fresh off their October appearance at the Sweet Adelines international convention. The Metro Nashville Chorus is a two time winner of the SAI's Harmony Classic, and they are sure to give a gold-medal performance on the holiday stage.

Tickets prices \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors (65+), and \$10 for students (18 and under). Tickets may be reserved by calling (615) 469-4555.

Other notes from MCC:

The men of the Music City Chorus wish to congratulate **Mr. and Mrs. James Estes** on the birth of their daughter, Isabelle Juliette Rochon Estes! In addition to singing with the MCC, James sings with "**The Real McCoy**" quartet and is a music specialist with the Barbershop Harmony Society.

Speaking of "The Real McCoy," the Dixie District second place quartet sang the national anthem at a Nashville Predators NHL game on November 28 before a crowd of more than 14,000! Nice way to put barbershop harmony in the spotlight!

Be sure to read **Ed Watson's** column in the new issue of "The Harmonizer." Ed describes his experiences with the rapidly improving Music City Chorus.

To: You
From: Music City CHORUS

Saturday, December 12, 2009
Music City Chorus Presents...

We Need a Little Christmas
Featuring the Music City Chorus
and Chapter Quartets

Saturday, December 12, 2009

Father Ryan High School

Two Performances! 2:00 PM & 7:30 PM

with special guests:

Tickets:

\$20 Adults

\$15 Seniors (65+)

\$10 Students (18 & under)

Contact:

Phone:

Email:

Tickets can also be purchased at
www.musiccitychorus.org

Metro Nashville
Chorus

Award Winning Sweet Adelines Chorus

