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Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors



PROBEmoter

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PROBE President

Lowell Shank

**Thanks expressed for
articles and membership**

I want to thank all the contributors to the last 12-page **PROBEmoter**. I read excellent and very informative articles. Steve noted that he had "minimal contributions" so he took some articles from old **PROBEmoters**. With the turn over in chapter public relations officers and bulletin editors, very few would be reading for the second time anyway, so no problem. Those of us who have been around forever, it seems, also appreciate frequent reminders.

**"....a healthy membership is vital to
the success of PROBE."**

I especially thank **Dick Girvin** and **David Wagner** for their articles on why one should join **PROBE**. Since only 2006 members are reading this issue (the last issue was sent to all 2005 and 2006 members), I won't preach to the choir as the saying goes. Thanks for joining **PROBE**. The major benefit is the **PROBEmoter**, which is as good as YOU make it. Please share your success stories, concerns and thoughts.

The printing and mailing of the **PROBEmoter** is the major expense for **PROBE**, so a healthy membership is vital to the success of **PROBE**. The other expense is mailing bulletins and PR materials to judges and then their return. We also make new plaques for the IBC Hardcopy, IBC Online and PROTY winners, and sometimes have to mail them to the recipients.

I am amazed at how few bulletin editors enter the district bulletin contests. Here is the count for this cycle: CAR-3; CSD-6; DIX-3; EVG-0; FWD-3; ILL-2; JAD-4; LOL-3; MAD-2, NED-4; ONT-4; PIO-3; RMD-3; SLD-2; SWD-0; SUN-2. That is a total of 44 chapter bulletins entered out of some 800 chapters. Congratulations to CSD for leading the way. As to EVG and SWD for having no entries, is it a matter of no bulletins published in the district or a lack of communication to get participation in the contest?

The deadline is soon (by the time you read this, probably past) for the IBC Online contest, but **David Wagner** tells me that he doesn't have many entries so far. Last year we had 12 entries compared to three the previous year. I expected this number to double this year.

"Editors without Web access"

By W. Grant Carson

There's just too much good stuff at the PROBE website, www.harmonize.com/PROBE, for you to pass up. Ask a buddy with Web access to print out the "Aids for BE's" page. This is an index to all the articles available. Accessing and printing this page takes only about five minutes. Then later ask your buddy to print out just the articles you want. If he's really your buddy, and you give him credit in the bulletin, surely he won't mind doing you this favor.

I realize that many chapters do not even have a BE or PRO, and even a smaller number print a hard copy bulletin. I would expect that those who send Online bulletins to their members would also print several hard copies for their members who do not use computers. An editor doing this could then enter both contests.

Finally, be sure to attend the annual **PROBE** meeting in Indianapolis on Thursday, July 6, at 9:00 am in Grand 3 at the Westin (Headquarters). The agenda was published in the last **PROBEmoter**. Those who have entered one of the PROBE contests should attend to be recognized and pick up their plaque (to save mailing). We also have an election – my term is up!

PROBE Annual Meeting
9:00 am Thursday, July 6, 2006
Indianapolis, Indiana

See agenda elsewhere – but why should I attend?

- Meet other bulletin editors and public relations officers.
- Be first to hear who has won the various awards that are given out.
- Take my plaque that I have won home with me.
- Make suggestions for improving various aspects of PROBE.
- Make suggestions for improving the M&PR Track at COTS.
- Elect new officers for next year.
- Sing.

P.R.O.B.E.

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Public Relations Officers
and Bulletin Editors

SPEBSQSA, Inc.



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Send your bulletins to Bulletin Exchange Coordinator

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I do believe we need both hard-copy as well as on-line bulletins. I am aware of the economic necessities--rising postal and printing costs in particular. However, just as the computer was supposed to be a tool to enhance but not replace clerks and accountants and to help them do more work faster and better, so our internet technology should be considered in the same way--a means to enhance the quality and distribution of chapter bulletins, not an alternative to hard-copy editions. Consider the frustration and problems we have with automated communications--there's nothing like the personal, face-to-face exchange of information. Likewise, there's no better PR than the impact of a hard-copy-in-hand edition of a chapter bulletin.

"It's great to be a barbershopper [editor]!"

Editor

Steven Jackson



Where are our future PROBEster's?

This is the fourth issue that I have produced for PROBE. My regular contributors seem to be **David Wagner, Lowell Shank,** and **Grant Carson** with occasional contributions from **Tom Pearce, Robb Ollett, Dick Girvin,** and **Bruce Anderson.** Gentlemen, thank you. It sure makes my job easier when I can depend upon my fellow editors and comrades for their words of wisdom and PROBE news. Other PROBE dignitaries? Where are YOUR articles, please? I'd like to hear from ALL OF YOU!

In the years to come, who will step up to the plate to continue the proud tradition of educating, informing, and inspiring our cadre of editors, public relations VP's, webmasters, and marketing guys, etc? We have a plethora of new editors and webmasters who publish on-line and chose to inform their chapters in this fashion. Just because they resort to another medium to present their chapter news doesn't mean that their "bulletins" are not relevant to those of us who choose to publish hard copy bulletins. The way they publish may be different, but the principles are still the same.

It takes a good eye for **Layout and Reproduction,** a good vocabulary and knowledge of language arts for **Grammar and Style,** and knowing what to put into their publications for effective **Content.**

What's my rambling leading to? I would encourage all of our PROBE^{em}oter readers to submit news of interest, craft articles, and tips upon marketing, public relations, and editing to this publication. Reprinting articles of interest from old bulletins is certainly one way to go, but it would be equally satisfying if I had some new contributors as well. **Get the point?**

Please welcome aboard **Alexander Edwards** as our new *Bulletin Exchange Coordinator*, a position that long-time editor **Lloyd Davis** faithfully served in for many years. Now retired, Lloyd's words of wisdom still surfaces as I surf the web and old bulletins for suitable material for this paper.

I urge our readers to take advantage of the Bulletin Exchange program. It's not only fun to swap bulletins, but it gives you additional perspective to our "hobby" to see that all of our chapters face the same challenges. It's a great source of news and articles for use in our own bulletins. Remember, please give credit where it is due; it's always fun to see your articles appearing in other bulletins. Once an editor forgot to state where he got an article of mine from — just an oversight, I was sure. I was going to write him, but instead he got in touch with me acknowledging a hurried deadline and sloppy proofreading. I can certainly relate to that — how about you?

"Use a CD, not paper"

Written by Grant Carson

This is for those who still produce paper copies of the bulletin, whether solely or as an adjunct to on-line format. Many of you may know this, but some of you may not. I've been publishing bulletins for many years and only recently found this out. Whether your bulletin is printed or copied, the printing or copying firm would prefer a PDF copy on compact disk rather than paper. The quality, especially for photographs, will be much better.

The UPS Store, where I had my last newsletter copied, showed me a copy produced by copying the paper and a copy produced from the PDF file. The difference was startling. Incidentally, the UPS Store, formed by a merger of UPS and Kinko's, does good work at a fair price, and there are more of them than there are of Kinko's. I recently had 85 copies made of a four-page chorale newsletter, with a one-sided insert, for only \$23.00.



Headlines are different

By Lloyd Davis, Grammar and Style Judge

Headlines, because of space limitations, may contain shortened forms that are not proper in text. In text, numbers one through nine should be spelled out, but in headlines, numerals may be used.

Text: There were six of us.

Headline: There were 6 of us.

Symbols, such as "%" and "&" may be used in headlines, while they must be spelled in text.

Text: John and Mike had 54 percent of the votes.

Headline: John & Mike had 54% of the votes.

In headlines it is recommended that only the first word and proper names be capitalized. However, some publications capitalize all of the main words. I do not find a precedent for capitalizing every word, including adjectives.

Recommended: Joke of the month

Not recommended: Joke Of The Month,
or Joke of the Month.

Quotation marks

Periods and commas always belong inside of closing quotation marks. Single quotes are for use in headlines and, in text, to indicate a quote within a quote. Using quotation marks sometimes suggests an apology for their use. Don't use them unnecessarily or excessively. Wrong: They really "rang" some chords. Don't use quotation marks for emphasis. Use italics instead.



PROBE Annual Meeting

9:00 am Thursday, July 6, 2006
Indianapolis, Indiana

AGENDA

Call to Order: Lowell Shank, President

The Old Songs – All

Welcome and Introductions – Lowell Shank, President

Minutes from July 6, 2005, PROBE meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah — Dick Girvin, Secretary/Treasurer

Officer Reports

President Lowell Shank

Vice President for Membership David Wagner

Vice President for Marketing & Public Relations Ted Sayle

Vice President for Bulletin Editors Bruce Anderson

PROBE moter Editor Steve Jackson

Awards

Induction into PROBE Hall of Honor (2006)

Dick Girvin, Chair, Selection Committee

PR Officer of the Year (PROTY - 2005)

Ted Sayle, VP-Marketing and PR

International Electronic On-Line Bulletin of the Year (2005)

David Wagner, Contest Coordinator

Most Improved Bulletin Award (2005)

Lowell Shank, IBC Chairman

International Bulletin Editor of the Year Award (2005)

Lowell Shank, IBC Chairman

Award winners will be displayed for all to view

Old Business

New Business

Revision of Rules for On-Line Bulletin Contest

Other topics presented by attendees

Election of Officers (Term begins October 1, 2006)

Report from Nominating Committee

Bruce Anderson, Chairman

Nominations from the floor and Election

Keep America Singing – All

Adjourn (no later than 10:30 am)

Quartet Contest begins at noon

International Bulletin Contest (IBC)

General Guidelines - Online Bulletin Contest

Purpose

The purpose of the International Bulletin Contest is to promote better communication within our Society. All chapters are encouraged to produce a bulletin (HARDCOPY and/or ONLINE); districts are encouraged to give recognition to their chapter editors.

Administration

An IBC Chairman for HARDCOPY bulletins and an IBC Chairman for ONLINE bulletins shall be appointed by the PROBE president not later than November 15th of the year preceding the contest. The ONLINE Chairman shall appoint eight judges for the four categories with the assistance of the Vice President for Bulletin Editors. The ONLINE score sheets to be used follow these Guidelines on the web page.

Publicity

The VP-BE shall send a news release containing information about the IBC, including the chairman's name, address, and phone number, to the PROBE^{em}oter editor, *The Harmonizer*, *Live-Wire*, *PROBE^{em}ail*, the *Harmonet*, special E-mail lists and District Bulletin Editors in time for publication in the fall issues. He shall also address a letter with this information to all district bulletin contest chairmen. A copy of these guidelines shall accompany those letters.

Eligibility

Editors can enter both contests. All entrants must be paid up members of PROBE. This will be an open contest. No pre-qualifying contest by district will be necessary. The editor will submit an entry form to the ONLINE Chairman stating he has produced at least six (6) months of online bulletins during the contest (calendar) year. Entries done by a professional web page designer will not be eligible if the designer is reimbursed in any way including a fee or an advertisement in the submitted issue. That entry will be subject to disqualification as determined by the chairman of judges in advance of the contest.

Submission of bulletins

The editor will email a copy of the entry form (available via the PROBE website) with the two URL's of his two consecutive monthly issues or four consecutive biweekly issues or eight consecutive weekly issues (they may be HTML or PDF files). Entries must be accessible via the Internet and any passwords needed must be provided. Hard copies or copies on CDs will NOT be accepted.

Deadline is April 1 to the IBC Chairman who will forward to the assigned judges.

Judging

Each member of the double panel shall judge one issue of the two monthly (two biweekly, four weekly) entries. Scoring in the ONLINE IBC will be done in four categories, as follows:

Design & Graphics (D&G)	200 points
per issue (or set of issues if biweekly or weekly)	
Content (CON)	233 points
Accessibility & Functionality (A&F)	100 points
Grammar & Style (G&S)	66 points
Total	599 points
per issue or total for the set	1198 points

Reporting the Scores

Judges shall return all entries, completed judging forms, a scoring summary, and critiques (optional) to the IBC chairman by June 1. All mailings between judges and the IBC Chairman shall be at PROBE expense. The IBC chairmen shall tabulate scores from the judges' score sheets and shall determine the final ranking of all entries. In case of ties, the Design & Graphics score will break the tie. If a tie still exists, the Content score will be used as the tiebreaker.

Announcing the Winners

Winners will be announced at the annual PROBE meeting at the international convention, and awards will be made to those present. Awards for those not present will be forwarded to the appropriate district representative for later presentation at a district function at which the winner can be properly recognized. The IBC chairman will provide the results to the PROBE President and PROBE VP BE in advance of the announcement of the winners. The IBC Chairman will also distribute the results to all possible communication outlets: the First Place winner will receive a traveling trophy and a personal plaque. Second and Third place winners will receive plaques.

Returning the Bulletins

The IBC ONLINE Chairman will send the score sheets with judges' critiques (optional) to the entrants.

Winners' Further Eligibility

An IBC ONLINE winner shall not again be eligible to participate in competition at the international level for ONE year. The PROBE Secretary/Treasurer will certify each editor as a paid member of PROBE. If not, the IBC Chairman will contact the editor and ask him to join PROBE.

Rev March, 2006

With Bulk Mail delivery being so unpredictable, please contact David Wagner at <dwagner@aol.com> to see about a deadline extension.

“The Power of a Bulletin”

By Al Bell, Imm. Past Pres., Fullerton, Cal., chapter

We have all thrilled at the recognition of the excellence of our own “*Barbershop Clippin’s*” as the Society’s top bulletin. There are many things to say about that, but I want to focus on one that could not be known to the bulletin judges. If they knew, the “*Clippin’s*” would have received an additional award, not yet invented: Exemplary Achievement in Chapter Service.

As we have chronicled in other issues of the “*Clippin’s*,” last year was fraught with some serious difficulties for our chapter. Most chapters experience some time in the barrel, and they either find ways out of it, or they atrophy and die. In our case, we have come out stronger than we were before. One of the key reasons is that we had such an outstanding vehicle for reminding ourselves regularly that a lot of good things were also happening. The “*Clippin’s*,” through the outstanding editorship of **Dick Cote** and the continued positive mentality of its stalwart contributors, played a key role in preventing us from drifting into that dangerous territory where negativism is allowed to prevail.

The truth, of course, is that there were some notable successes last year, such as the record contribution we made to Youth Harmony programs and to Heartspring. What this reflects is the fact that true character may be revealed when everything is going well, and it absolutely will be evident when things are not going so well. We have demonstrated to ourselves and to fellow barbershoppers that the Fullerton Chapter is made of sound stuff (pun intended). Thanks to the ability to document the positive aspects of our chapter life last year through the pages of the “*Clippin’s*,” we have emerged into an even stronger cycle in our chapter’s growth and development.

As Immediate Past President, I am deeply grateful for the stabilizing influence the “*Clippin’s*” had during the year it qualified for the Society’s gold medal for chapter bulletins. If any of the judges in the bulletin contest read this, know that the “*Clippin’s*” demonstrates beyond any shadow of a doubt how powerfully important a quality bulletin is to the health and well being of a chapter. Fullerton proves it.

Note: *Barbershop Clippin’s* was the 1999 International Bulletin Contest winner.

The music to “Take Me Out To The Ball Game,” 1908, was written by Albert Von Tilzer, brother of Harry Von Tilzer, who gave us many barbershop songs. When Albert wrote the music, he had never seen a baseball game.

(Source: PBS radio broadcast)



Let's sing a song of five pence

By Bud Harvey, Sunshine District, 1982

As I was saying just the other day to a gentleman from the American Psychic Society, "Is there such a thing as a happy medium?" I wouldn't mention this at all except that the question has popped up again: Is barbershopping a hobby or a form of recreation, or is it another form of flagellation (that) we are expected to suffer in a kind of holy ecstasy?

One of our brotherhood, writing in *The Harmonizer*, explored the heresy of "singing for fun." I rise to protest. I sing for fun, and when it stops being fun, I'll stop singing and find something else to do. I know I'm wrong. The fact that coveys of barbershop choristers willingly submit to endless hours of mind-drugging drill proves it beyond argument. They want to win, and who am I to object to such a laudable ambition?

I am obstinately clinging to the conviction that I'm keeping my faith with the early apostles of barbershopping who selected an utterly absurd name for the Society and elected to our pantheon of heroes a quartet called **The Bartlesville Barflies**. You can't tell me that those guys would spend eight to ten hours a week standing on risers, singing the same handful of musical phrases over and over, snapping peevishly at each other, then embarking on a regimen of prayer and fasting in final preparation for The Big Six Minutes! Whatever the old Barflies lacked in musical sophistication, they made up for in good, old-fashioned sanity. Man and boy, for more than two decades, I've sought in vain to determine the precise point where barbershopping stops being fun and becomes drudgery. Reluctantly, I've come to the conclusion that it can't be done. One man's total boredom is another man's delirium of bliss. And, as Mark's mother said to his father when the family became vegetarians, "Never the Twain shall meet."

What I object to, and strenuously, is the inference by the drill instructors of our brotherhood that those of us who can't be bothered marching to their drum are satisfied to sing badly. That's the worst kind of non sequitur.

I insist that you can sing for fun and still sing well. Not as well as you might - true. And not as well as others who are chasing the will-o-the-wisp of perfection. But as well as you can within the reasonable limits (that) you set [to] sacrifice. To argue otherwise is to say you have no business playing golf unless you intend to challenge Jack Nicklaus on the PGA tour. Or that you have no business buying pastel crayons and a sketch pad unless you expect to hang your work in the National Gallery of Art. The most entertaining quartets I've ever listened to would get lost in the crowd of competition. But they're singing for fun and they're sharing their fun with an audience. And they are making more friends for barbershopping than all the perfectionists in the Society. I can't believe that's all bad.

So You Want to Edit A Chapter Bulletin?

By Dick Cote, Publisher/Editor — Fullerton, California *Barbershop Clippin's*

Some general principles

First and foremost, if you want to be an editor you have to be a friend to the chapter and its members. It's best to get to know all members by name, what part they sing, if they're in any quartets, get to know their wives, and even something about what they do and have done. In short, you have to let your members know who you are, what you're doing, and why they should take an interest in it. No matter how good you are at mechanical considerations such as using a word processor, if you don't have a good rapport with your members, chances are you won't get very far.

How about the mechanical aspects?

In the old days, production of a bulletin was a matter of using a typewriter, scissors, a glue pot, and lots of patience. Cut and paste, literally, was just that. And I think there are still some bulletin editors who use that technique. But my advice is to get yourself a reasonably good computer, a good word processor, and a nice printer. None of these items are very expensive today, and most will do the job quite handily.

So let's start with some basic equipment thoughts. You should have a Windows based PC or a MAC to start with. I use a PC and do all of my work using the **WordPerfect 12** for composition and layout. I suspect that the more popular word processor is **Microsoft Word**, but even though I have it, I've found **WordPerfect** to be easy to use. It came with my first computer and I've grown accustomed to it. I know some editors use preformatted newsletter programs, and I have some, but I've never used them because I like the latitude that I have with a good word processor. More on that later.

Today, you can get a really nice printer for very little money — under \$100.00 for one that will do the job nicely and will have more capability than you'll ever be able to use. I have three printers. The one I use for final copy preparation is a high quality black and white laser printer. I have two color printers (you don't really need all that) but I got my second one at a premium when I bought my latest computer. It's the second one that's a real gem.

It's an HP Printer/Scanner/Copier model 1210, It's inexpensive and it has wonderful capabilities, not the least of which is that it turns out very nice color or black and white copies. However, one of its best features, from my point of view, is the scanner. With that you can make copies of photos or other printed pages and really dress up your bulletin with photos of your members and their activities. That, to me, is one of the biggest selling points of a good bulletin.

Perhaps the biggest factor in the success of your undertaking is what you can put into it. That means, what kind of articles you use, how relevant they are to barbershopping, and how you put them together for maximum interest. But here's the catch — editing articles to use in a chapter bulletin can be a real struggle. I know editors around the country who are lucky to have one or two contributors in a month. The result is that most of what they publish is what they prepare themselves or what they borrow from other bulletins. By the way, borrowing is a good thing.

But getting contributors can be a challenge. The *Barbershop Clippin's* is the envy of the Society because I always have at least 15 contributors, and frequently as many as 20 in a single issue. How does that happen? Well, remember what I said about getting to know your members? If you get to know them and to show how interested you are in them, that's part of the battle. I have writers who would really hate to miss an issue—and in ten years of publishing, I have several who haven't missed even one.

Okay, you ask, how do you get people to write?

The first source should be your chapter officers, and while most of them won't contribute an article for each issue, they should do so at certain times of the year. I think the chapter president should try to get a blurb in each month. And the secretary will get in because you'll want to publish a condensation of board meeting minutes. On the other hand, the treasurer probably doesn't have much to say most of the year, but at tax time it's nice for him to prepare an article about what your membership means in terms of tax treatment. Anyway, you get the idea.

Other sources will be the guy who's responsible for quartet activities, quartet contacts, the chorus manager, youth in harmony coordinators and social directors such as your afterglow or harmony for lunch bunch chairmen. But I, for one, don't wait for articles to come out of the wood work. I'd be waiting a long time.

I see things happening and suggest to a member that perhaps he should write something about it, and that frequently works. I've been known to be really sneaky and write an article and put someone else's name on it, just to show them what can be done. It works. The main thing is to get your guys into the habit of writing, and the more they write, the better they'll write, and the bulletin will improve as a result.

Submitted by
Dick Girvin
first in a series



"The vintage voice"

Written by John Fenner, Director
Denver MountainAires, Denver, Colorado

I am going to state the obvious. Many, if not most, barbershop singers are advancing in age. It is not unusual to find men and women who are singing into their 60s, 70s, and 80s. The love of this "hobby" — the music, the entertaining, the competing, the fellowship — sticks with you. Studies and common sense have shown that we tend to repeat pleasurable or satisfying experiences. As we get older, however, our voices can change. Perhaps we can no longer hit those high notes that we once did with ease. Maybe a warble has crept into our vocal production that wasn't there before. We no longer can sustain a long phrase like we used to. Maybe what was once pleasurable and satisfying is no longer so.



The bad news is that it can happen to the best of us. I have noticed this in my own abilities, and those within my chapter. The good news is that it can be corrected. Despair and frustration can be turned into hope and a better singing experience. But it takes some work.

I recently spoke with some other directors and a Barbershop Harmony Society music educator on this very topic. The KEY to solving this problem they all tell me (no real surprise) is in the breath. Proper breath support, the concept of using "warm air" to support the tone, and taking more frequent breaths within a phrase will all help this problem.

And let me add two others: patience and persistence! It has probably taken years for bad habits to be formed. When we were younger, maybe we could get away with a few bad singing habits. Not so as we age. It will take time (maybe not years) to reverse the trend. I know that many want to have a quick fix or instant solution to get them back into their prime singing condition, but the truth is that there is no quick fix. But there is a way, there is hope, and there are results that you can expect to hear in a relatively short time. Bottom line, though, is that you as the singer must do the work necessary to make the change. All of the education and instruction in the world won't do a bit of good unless you implement the needed changes.

I invite knowledgeable people to share some techniques, craft, suggestions, and words of encouragement on this topic. Since this is a blog where comments and ideas are welcome on these topics, I encourage any of you who have had this experience to share what worked for you. If you are a director or music educator and have techniques that you can share, please do. If you are someone who suffers from this condition, take heart and read the responses. Let us all help each other become better at what we really want to do, sing better barbershop!

"Barbershop harmony really begins at the end and works backwards. If a quartet is well equipped with 'wicked' endings, the body of the song may be fairly conventional. It is the close that leaves the final fragrance of the barbershop, and if this be beautifully flavored with a nostalgic aroma, it matters little what has gone before. The most obvious harmonies are forgotten in a really subtle finish."

(Source: "Barbershop Ballads and How to Sing Them," Dr. Sigmund Spaeth, 1925).

"I Love You Truly/A Perfect Day"

By Casey Parker, President,
San Francisco Bay Cities Quartet Chapter

Carrie Jacobs was born in Janesville, Wisconsin, in 1862 and experienced a number of misfortunes in her early life. Her father died when she was twelve. Her husband, Dr. Frank Bond, died prematurely. A serious fall in 1895 left her an invalid with a young son. After a career attempt as an artist, she turned to songwriting to survive. Popular music publishers turned down her "art" songs, but she had early success with children's songs.



To succeed as a songwriter she started her own publishing business, in a bedroom, financed by a song recital. Her first book, "Seven Songs," contained "*I Love You Truly*," a standard at weddings for many years, which survives today as a Valentine's Day ballad. Her most popular song was a huge hit in 1909, "*A Perfect Day*," selling five million copies. Carrie Jacobs-Bond received many awards and is recognized as an outstanding American woman composer. She retired to Hollywood and was interred at Fairlawn Court of Honor in 1946, following notables like the sculptor of Mt. Rushmore.

"Those aggravating apostrophes"

By John Petterson, Norwalk, Iowa — CSD

You are not alone when it comes to the misuse, or misunderstanding, of apostrophes. Errors are commonly found on a variety of signs and various publications, as well as in barbershop bulletins. One of the most glaring examples I saw recently was in a J. C. Penney store. On a wall was a sign showing the Ladies Department! It should be Ladies' Department. However, the apostrophe is omitted when there is no possessive, e.g., dresses for ladies.

A common error found in signs - usually not made by a professional sign maker - is putting an apostrophe between an "s" and capital letters when there is no possessive. I have found this with VCRs and TVs. The signs show VCR's and TV's. The only time such a possessive is needed is if you were writing something like, "Where is the VCR's remote control?" However, you would not write, "Check out our VCR's on sale." The apostrophe does not belong in this statement. When abbreviating years, do not use double apostrophes, e.g., "'40's barbershop quartets' style is different from those of the '90s." It should read: "1940's barbershop..." If not a possessive, you would write, "Barbershop quartet style of the '40s is different from the '90s."

Another common error is its and it's. Its is the possessive and an apostrophe is never used (e.g., Put the CD in its box). It's is the contraction of it is and always uses an apostrophe (e.g., It's my CD player).

This article is not intended to solve all your questions concerning apostrophes. It's a starting point - a guide. In addition to the **Probe Style Manual**, there are three other reference books that would be a good addition to your library: **The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual** (\$14.00), **Merriam Webster's Pocket Guide to Punctuation** (\$3.95) and **The Elements of Style** by Strunk and White (\$4.95). All are available at bookstores.

We Get E-Mail!

Steve:

I received the latest PROBE Moter the other day, and saw your cry for help for a source of fresh, clean, dark clipart images. I have a very full collection of barbershop clip art which I've made available since 2002 to anyone who wants to send the \$5.00 to cover the costs of materials and postage. I distributed quite a few up through 2004, but haven't had many requests since.

There are uncounted hours of work behind the CD, including the scanning and cleanup of every bit of clipart in the collection. There are over 900 individual pieces of clipart on the CD, all in ".gif" format. I also include digital copies of the Editor's Manual and PROBE Style Manual that were available as of 2002.

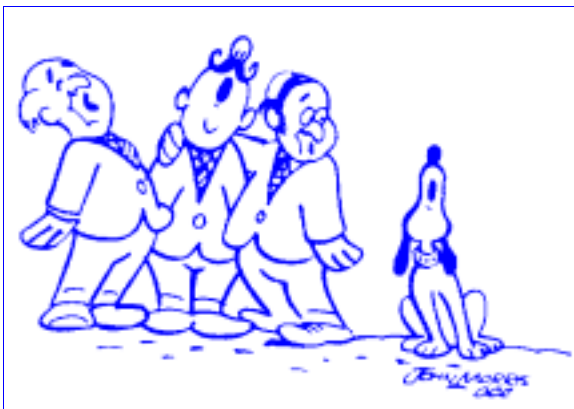
Shortly after becoming a chapter editor in 1989, I started collecting a variety of clip art which I saw in other bulletins by literally cutting them from the pages. Among the many bits of paper, of course, were a seemingly endless stream of barbershop cartoons. Prime among those were the works of the prolific John Morris.

Several years ago, the Society put out the **Barbergraphics** CD and made it available, for free, to the first 400 bulletin editors and quartets that requested it. (I wonder how many quartets took them up on that?) When I received my copy, I was initially impressed. However, I found that it lacked quite a lot of clip art files that I would have expected — most notably, none of the John Morris cartoons.

This CD of **Classic Barbershop Graphics**, first presented to PROBE members at the 2002 International Convention in Portland, Oregon, is my attempt to fill this void. The vast majority of the clip art files on this disk have been collected, scanned, and electronically cleaned over the last couple of years. The various folders were, quite literally, the names I'd put on labels on Ziploc bags where I stashed all the little bits of paper. That system has worked for me, and I hope it will work for you as well.

Not wanting to step on any toes, I have tried not to repeat any of the clip art files from "Barbergraphics;" the obvious exception will be some of the logos (Society, district, etc.)

In the Barbershop Cartoons folder, there is a folder with 226 of John Morris' cartoons. These include all of those which are included in "**Good Ole Barbershop Cartoons**" (Society stock #4349, compiled by Rusty Ruegsegger), "**John Morris Does It Again!**" (Society stock #4345), and "**More Good Ole Barbershop Cartoons**" (a booklet put together by Rusty Ruegsegger for the 1981 Convention). There are also about 30 others that I've collected from bulletins and the Probemoter.



Bulletin Editor Craft

By Lloyd Davis, who submitted the articles, with credit given to the authors

Editor's note: The following articles are of interest to all Barbershoppers; editors may want to reprint them at various times to fill an empty space in the chapter's bulletin.)

"Give the bari a break!"

By Sigmund Spaeth in *Barbershop Ballads*

The baritone should be the best musician of the four, as his part is the most difficult, generally. The range is not likely to be large, but the quality should be good and the sense of pitch very accurate. The baritone is consistently called upon to sing the trickiest intervals, whose accuracy will make or break a barbershop chord. An unerring ear and a great musical confidence are the valuable assets in a baritone. The world is full of instinctive tenors, but natural baritones are rare.

Each of the cartoon folders also have a text file with the gag lines for each cartoon. You will also find folders for the latest electronic versions of the Bulletin Editors Manual (with the bulletin score sheets) and the Style Manual.

This is a "work in progress," so perhaps I'll have an update in another couple of years. I'm particularly interested in gathering any John Morris cartoons which I may have missed. If you have any of these, or if there is something else you'd like to see included, please contact me via email at dmstock@att.net.

Dave Stock
PROBE Content Judge
805 Juniper Drive
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Checklist — Did you?

By Ed Hinkley, Asst. Chorus Director
Sarasota, Florida Chorus of the Keys

- Did you call a friend and offer to pick him up and take him to chapter meeting?
- Did you offer to sit in the role of buddy for a new visitor?
- Did you spend some extra time working on the new music so that your contribution at rehearsal will help speed up the learning process?
- Did you practice your stage face in front of the mirror?
- Did you help the librarian distribute the new music?
- Did you offer to help make learning tapes for all the guys who don't read music?
- Did you set an example in your section by keeping conversation to a minimum?
- Did you compliment the new man on his performance at the last singout?
- Did you hold out your hand and smile at the guys coming in the door?
- Did you sing all the notes and words in the new song....correctly?
- Did you help set up the risers for rehearsing the new choreography?
- Did you find it hard getting to sleep after the great rehearsal?

How many of these things are on your check list?

--Taken from Harmonet email list, June 19, 1999 and used by permission.

NO...THERE'S NO GOLD HERE, BUT- I SING BARITONE



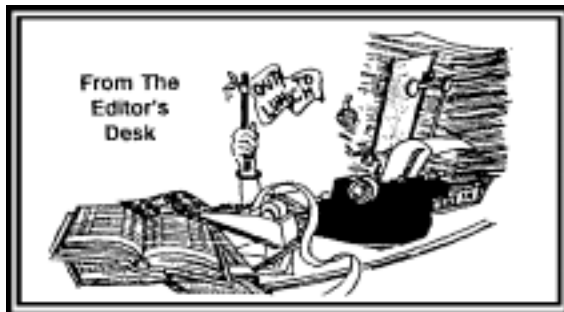
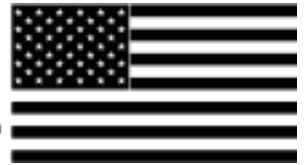
HARMONY FOUNDATION

Sing...for life

livewire
weekly news from the barbershop harmony society



UNITED WE SING



JOHN MORRIS
D.C.

“Every Chapter Should Have A Quartet Master!”

By Steven Jackson, Editor, Denver MountainAires, Denver, Colorado — Mountain Talk, Sept. 1999

What is a Pick-up Quartet?

Pick-up quartetting has always been an integral part of our chapter meetings. What is a pick up quartet, you ask? One man is selected from each voice part, and melded into a quartet to sing for the chapter that night along with other selected quartets. They were the "chapter program." They would go off into a corner at the coffee break and rehearse a song. When we were ready for the program, our Program VP would call out for each quartet, and they would come up and sing for us. Of course, their rendition of "Wild Irish Rose" or "Coney Island Baby" was always met with thunderous applause. No, they may have not sung like a medallist quartet, but at that moment, they were our chapter heroes.

What is a Quartet Master?

What is a Quartet Master, you ask? Our chapter started out, like many chapters, with our Program VP being responsible for running the chapter meeting format, which included our impromptu quartetting. Then, we added a Quartet Activities Officer. That man would encourage quartetting and the formation of quartets within our chapter.

Then, one year Dave Day was selected as our PVP, and the magic started to flow. Dave had a real talent for taking four different barbershoppers and creating great sounding pick-up quartets. The old adage, "If it aint broke, don't fix it," seemed to apply here as Dave became our permanent pick-up quartet man. The next PVP gratefully recognized an "easy out" when he saw it. Dave was now our Quartet Activities Chairman which eventually evolved into "Quartet Master," a position which Dave still holds today.

How does a Quartet Master function?

Dave sings bass in the chorus and usually sits in the back of the bass section. Our chapter meeting starts at 7:30 pm with the singing of *The Old Songs*. Then our Program VP takes over, and announces the agenda for the evening. We sing for about 45 minutes, then we have (hopefully) a short business meeting. At that time, I can see Dave going to his briefcase for something to write on. As the meeting progresses, I can see Dave looking around to see who's there. I see him looking thoughtful as he writes down the tenors present.

Then, Dave will scan the other sections to match up the voices that he's already written down. From time to time, I see Dave's eraser furiously at work. From my seat in the lead section (we face the basses), I watch Dave as he finishes up his choices for the evening program. Several of our registered quartets are here. I wonder if any will be called upon to sing for us. I see Dave nodding as he seems pleased with his combinations. I shake my head in amazement watching the "master" at work.

"Let's give all our members the chance and opportunity to sing in a quartet."

Finding enough parts

Sometimes, Dave will feature one of our organized quartets. Other times, he'll rearrange our quartets to his own satisfaction for that evening. Dave always tries to form as many quartets as possible depending upon the tenors present. Everyone is fair game for the pick-up quartets.

Every chapter needs a Quartet Master

Every chapter in the Society should have an active Quartet Master. You may respond, "Well, we just don't have the time right now because we're getting ready for (please insert the word of your choice here)." Your chapter should make the time otherwise, some of your members just might start searching somewhere else for their "quartet fix." I admit that not every barbershopper wants to sing in a quartet at first. Some of us like the security and comfort of singing in the chorus. That's okay, but let's give all of our members every chance and opportunity we can to sing in a quartet.

To preserve is to keep it pure

By Lloyd Davis

There is nothing as beautiful as the last few chords of a barbershop song when those diminished seventh chords are preparing the listener for the final tonic chord. This is why there is so much pleasure in singing tags. We eliminate most of the song, and relish those last few chords. The last chord of a pure barbershop arrangement is always made up of two tonic notes and a third and a fifth. Pure barbershop is what our organization is about. We seldom sing sixth, dominant seventh or ninth chords. On the rare occasions that we do sing these, it's almost invariably because it is unavoidable because the melody falls on one of these notes. We don't intentionally stick in these chords for variety. Our goal is to preserve barbershop harmony, and that doesn't mean intentionally singing non-barbershop.

Some Sweet Adeline arrangements are a different matter. I recently heard a Sweet Adeline chorus sing a song that ended in a chord made up of six distinct notes. The goal of Sweet Adelines is similar to ours. Some of their arrangements are pure barbershop, but some are far from it. I'm not knocking Sweet Adelines; I'm merely pointing out that some of their songs - even for competition - are entirely different from our Society's.

Harmony International, the other female barbershop group, has a goal similar to SPEBSQSA. The difference in the two organizations - Sweet Adelines and SPEBSQSA - is that Sweet Adelines sing mostly barbershop, while SPEBSQSA preserves it. Who says we can't sing sixth chords? Nobody. But, by doing so, we are not preserving our heritage.

The oft quoted, "Music has charms to soothe a savage breast, to soften rocks, or bend a knotted oak," is from a 1697 play, "The Mourning Bride," by William Congreve. (Source: "Bartlett's Familiar Quotations")

Lifted from the Feb/March "InCider Press," Karen Nanninger, editor, Manhattan, Kansas

Would You Label our Chapter a Performing Arts Organization?

One is exposed to different views and new ideas at our Central States District COTS (Chapter Operations Training Seminar). Last November's COTS was no different. The instructor of the class, which I attended for vice presidents of marketing and public relations, was Lee Roth, VP Membership, Mid-Atlantic District - Hunterdon County, NJ chapter. He has served nearly every leadership position in his chapter.

There has been an exchange of information and ideas by those of us in PROBE (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors), an informal organization within the Society. This past week someone in PROBE had heard about Lee Roth's comments about 'hobbies, amateurs and fundraising.' These comments and ideas were shared by Lee in the COTS class. His chapter applies for grants, and his ideas came from the experience he has had in his chapter. I thought we might like to read his comments and have something to discuss among ourselves. You may agree, disagree or you may be neutral. The following is FYI.

Hobbies, Amateurs, and Fundraising

By Lee Roth, VP Membership, Mid-Atlantic District - Hunterdon County NJ chapter

Barbershop singers are fond of referring to singing as their 'hobby' or referring to themselves as 'amateur singers.' There are about 800 chapters of barbershop singers in the country. My guess is that about 80 or so of these chapters are populated with men who have a sincere interest in singing as well as they can. They engage in competition, they study, they practice, and they put a lot of time into their barbershop activity. Others like to enjoy barbershop singing, but with various levels of commitment, ranging from some contest participation to social and family performing.

"Each of these groups have different goals and funding needs. Some do well on the dues and an annual show for themselves and their friends. Others seek a larger budget that will cover the cost of coaching, learning tapes, and support for their educational and improvement programs.

"The top ten percent come close to being obsessed with improvement. They regularly screen new singers and have self recording and audition programs in place to continuously improve the quality of their members' personal singing. When this top group refers to themselves as engaging in a 'hobby,' or allow themselves to be called 'amateurs,' they may do a disservice to their funding opportunities. Grant givers do not fund hobbies nor do they seek to support amateurs. Take a minute to look at the words used.

Amateur

"The dictionary says that an amateur is 'Somebody who does or takes part in something for pleasure rather than for pay.' and 'Somebody who loves or is greatly interested in something.' I take pleasure in singing with the chorus and with my quartet. I work hard to improve my singing. I invest a lot of time in the activity. I spend money on obtaining help in my effort to improve.

"But my dictionary also says that an amateur is "Somebody who has only limited skill in, or knowledge of, an activity." I'm afraid that grant givers latch on to this alternate definition and put all who sing barbershop music into this category and don't consider the ability of the amateur (Tiger Woods was once an amateur golfer).

Hobby

"We also have a tendency to refer to our activity as a hobby. As long as the definition in mind is an activity engaged in for pleasure and relaxation during spare time,' then we are probably engaged in a hobby.

"Many of our hard-working top singers get paid. Are they no longer amateurs? Our chorus and quartets are paid for major public performances to support our cost structure. The better a group sings the more they are considered to be worth. So are they engaged in a hobby? Are they professionals or amateurs?

Perhaps until grant givers and other supporters of the arts understand that we are serious about what we do, we should drop the words 'hobby' and 'amateur' from our barbershop vocabulary and tell people that we are members of an arts organization. Rather than calling ourselves amateurs and hobbyists, we should refer to ourselves as artists and performers."

Harvey Kiser VP, Marketing and Public Relations

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In 1896, when "Annie Rooney," "After The Ball," "Maggie Murphy's Home" and "Two Little Girls In Blue" were among the nation's favorite songs, the Clapp Brothers (Ralph, Randall, Albert and Arch) were singing them in four-part harmony. The quartet broke up in 1898 during the Spanish-American war, but the four brothers much later became members of SPEBSQSA in the Los Angeles area. (Source: "Heritage of Harmony," Val Hicks, Editor, SPEBSQSA, 1988.)



The deadline for the July — September PROBEemoter is July 15th

PROBE

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