

# The Newyorker Times

The newsletter of the Poughkeepsie, New York, Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society



New Series, Volume 8  
Poughkeepsie, New York

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July 2007

## Keeping Barbershop Harmony Alive

By Bill Standish  
Youth Outreach Chairman

Keeping barbershop harmony alive begins with involving young men in our local schools. Ever since I volunteered as our chapter's Youth Outreach Chairman, the Newyorkers Chorus has been actively interested and involved in promoting our barbershop heritage through sponsoring young men to the Northeastern District's Harmony Explosion Camp, providing music to local school educators, performing in tri-county area schools, and hosting and producing several HarmonyFest weekends. In case you think we have lost connection with our Youth in Harmony program, fresh on the horizon is a new high school quartet, "B-Sharps."

Fostered under the talented credentials of music educator Deb Phelps, these four young men have put together a repertoire of 13 barbershop songs and three tags. They have weathered instruction in stage choreography and additional vocal coaching. They have been entertaining Rockland County area business groups for quite a while, and most recently performed at a local Rotary luncheon. Representing Suffern High School in Rockland County, Christopher Gallen (tenor), Conrad Castro (lead), David

Dukes Memorial High School Barbershop Contest." I was honored to work with this wonderful and appreciative young quartet just before contest. Our primary focus was vocal production in concentrating on dynamic changes, vowel matching, and maintaining vocal intensity—as Steve Plumb would call it, "singing with attitude." We worked on duetting and on "voice challenging," a method used to produce greater vocal confidence, allowing for stronger growth of vocal dynamics within each voice part.

Two quartet members will be attending this year's Harmony Explosion Camp at Fitchburg State College, and a third member is working to rearrange his summer employment to attend. With individual donations from our chapter members, we will be fully sponsoring two of these young men, and the third young man will be sponsored through existing district funds. That means that you, as a chapter, believe strongly in the "preservation" part of our society's original creed. I'm sure you enjoyed mixing it up with the "B-Sharps" recently at our chapter meeting, allowing them to sing inside our chorus, and providing them a chance to showcase part of their quartet repertoire. I know they enjoyed rehearsing and performing with us—and they especially liked learning new tags. It's a great feeling to provide a base for all our young men in harmony, and I continue to thank all of you for always stepping forward to help "Keep The Whole World Singing."



The B-Sharps in action

O'Brian (baritone), and Matt Muniz (bass) recently took second place at Rockland County Chapter's annual "Ken

## Dave Maurer, Longtime Newyorker, Passes

From the *Poughkeepsie Journal*, 28 June

FISHKILL—David L. Maurer, 76, a lifelong resident of Fishkill, died Sunday, June 24, 2007, at St. Francis Hospital in Poughkeepsie. He was born October 15, 1930, in Fishkill and was the son of the late Lawrence T. and Lucy Wren Maurer. Dave was a graduate of Wappingers Central Schools and was self-employed for fifty-seven years as Dave Maurer Co. Heating and Air Conditioning. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge; former trustee of the Village of Fishkill; former trustee of the First Reformed Church; longtime member (See "Dave Maurer" on Page 3)

**The New Yorker Times**

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Editor: George L. Trigg,  
18 Duzine Road, New Paltz, NY 12561-1304  
845-255-9488; e-mail [GeorgeL.Trigg@alum.wustl.edu](mailto:GeorgeL.Trigg@alum.wustl.edu)

**Chapter Officials**

President . . . . . John Hadigan, Jr.  
845-485-2339; e-mail bigjohnbass1@aol.com  
VP, Chapter Development . . . . . John "Duke" Chisholm  
845-462-0656; e-mail Unkie907@aol.com  
VP, Music & Performance . . . . . Steve Miller  
VP, PR & Marketing . . . . . Joe O'Neill  
845-229-9756; e-mail [jockey2@optonline.net](mailto:jockey2@optonline.net)  
Secretary . . . . . Scott Salladin  
Treasurer . . . . . Mike Murphy  
BOD Members at Large . . . . . Bill Florie, Bob Hitchcock,  
Dick Schaffer  
Immediate Past President . . . . . Eric Dickstein  
Youth Outreach . . . . . Bill Standish  
Chorus Director . . . . . Renée Silverstein  
Assistant Directors . . . . . John Hadigan, Steve Hagerdon  
Chorus Manager . . . . . Scott Salladin


**Meetings**

**Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.**  
**First Reformed Church**  
**70 Hooker Avenue**  
**Poughkeepsie, New York**  
**ALL SINGING MEN WELCOME**

Website address . . . . . [www.newyorkerschorus.org](http://www.newyorkerschorus.org)

**Poughkeepsie Chapter**  
**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Poughkeepsie Chapter shall be:  
To perpetuate the art of Barbershop Harmony, and  
To promote and provide opportunities for vocal harmony activities for its members and potential members such as, but not limited to,  
    Quartetting,  
    Vocal crafts and techniques,  
    Coaching,  
    Chorus singing, and  
    Competitive preparation and participation,  
and  
To provide public appreciation of barbershop harmony through public and charitable performances, and  
To promote good fellowship and camaraderie among its Membership, and  
To foster and enhance the ideals and principles of the Barbershop Harmony Society



25 July Sing at Bartlett Park—meet at 6:30 p.m., sing at 7. Rain date 26 Jul  
8 Aug Sing for Renegades—meet at 6 p.m.  
**19–21 Oct NED Fall Convention and Contests, Lowell, MA**

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE**  
**25 JULY**

**Happy Birthdays in July:**

Werner Schanzenbach	3
Tony Krzywicki	12
Bob Hitchcock	13
Bob Waltke	14
Charlie Cortellino	28
Breck Martyn	28

**Happy Anniversaries in July:**

Dick and Lyndell Schaffer	13
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*Directions*  
by Renée Silverstein

**ASSISTANT DIRECTORS**

Just the other day when in conversation with another barbershopper, I was asked how many assistant directors I have. Before I answered I thought a moment, and when I did reply my response was that rather than my having assistants helping me do my job, the two "titled" assistant directors are helping the chorus do their job. Therefore, it's the chorus that has the assistant directors, not me. With mutual respect for one another we coach the chorus and each other through trouble spots in the music. Each of us has strengths and weaknesses, and the chorus can only benefit from the combined efforts.

This chorus is made up of regular guys, as are most chapters in the Society. We enjoy the social aspects of the evenings but still want to keep growing to learn how to sing better barbershop, to have opportunities to sing for the public, our own families, and friends, yet participate in contests to evaluate the progress we make.

The directors' responsibility is to share the knowledge and skills aiming toward the point where we can step aside and the music will go on because the singers have been encouraged and taught so well that you own the music.

I have made a few rules for myself to try and do a better job:

*(Continued on Page 3)*

**Directions** (From Page 2)

- 1) Get as involved with the music as I have asked you to be.
- 2) Don't compare what's happening with any other performance or contest.
- 3) Remember that I direct people, not songs.
- 4) Remember that we have all chosen to spend this time with each other making music and having fun.
- 5) Remember that you've come to sing, not be lectured or constantly corrected.
- 6) Recognize that as a group there is more creativity and energy than I could ever have.
- 7) Trust that all want to and try to learn the music as best they can.

Seven's a lucky number, I'll stop there—for now.

**Dave Maurer** (From Page 1)

of the S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A.; sang with the Poughkeepsie New Yorkers Chorus and several Barbershop Quartets. His first quartet, The Dutchmasters, won many state and national competitions.

Rose. A step-out quartet sang an ol' chestnut.

To our great surprise the Grand Marshall for this Re-



The quartet: Cramer, Miller, Veltre, Hadigan

lay was our own Newyorker Lew DiStasi, Jr. Lew is a former Chapter president, a Newyorker of the Year, and an original member of the Footlighters quartet. Lew sang all

**Newyorkers Sing at "Relay for Life"**

by Bob Chieffo  
Photos by Barb Troan

On a hot June 9th afternoon, the Newyorkers "suited up" for a benefit performance at the Southern Ulster "Relay For Life" event at the Ulster County Fairgrounds in New Paltz, NY. "Relays For Life" are local fund-raisers for the American Cancer Society. Each "Relay For Life" hon-



The chorus in action



Grand Marshall DiStasi with Bob Chieffo

three harmony parts in the quartet (uh...not at the same time). One of Lew's legal secretaries, Christine Giangrasso, chaired the Relay and asked him to be the Grand Marshall.

I'm told this Relay For Life raised \$35,000. The Newyorkers were happy to contribute our talent to this worthy cause.

**Barbershop Membership**

By Steve Hadigan

Although I missed Bill Florie's fine articles as I trekked to Arizona last fall, their reprise was a welcome breath of fresh air, and I felt moved to react to his Views. I have also wondered over the decades why a large population has yielded so little growth in membership. I sang with two choruses that sang fairly well but new members trickled in all too slowly, and I directed two Society choruses that did not sing very well so one died and the other is severely ailing. This in spite of the doctrine I preached that if you sang well, people would (Continued on Page 4)



**Barbershop Membership** (From Page 3)

come. Yet in the case of three women's choruses that theory did prove partially true, but all the chorus members there shared the responsibility of spreading the news, so the combination of word of mouth and good singing caused steady growth in spite of tiny advertising budgets.

I frequently fear that hiding or disguising "barbershop" brings in youngsters who sing a couple of barbershop songs to win medals so they can then diverge and cut CDs of all manner of song. In Warwick Valley High School in the '70s I exposed some students to a few tags and polecat numbers. Once they rang a few real barbershop chords they were hooked and had to constantly experience more of that wonderful buzz. Many of these guys (and soon, gals) were in other groups—school ensembles, rock 'n' roll bands, etc.—but it was the barbershop sound that captured their imaginations, hearts, and souls. The result was three male quartets, three female quartets, a chorus, and a place in the school curriculum that awarded academic credit toward graduation for barbershop. In Mesa, Arizona, I sing with the Leisure World Barbershop Chorus whose attendance has gone from 12 to 45 in four years with more prospects in the wings. From November to April we sing 13 performances and do one annual show. These "snowbirds" from all over the country don't sing *The Lion King*, *Cats*, or *Fiddler on the Roof*. Songs from these sources are fun and good, but it would be like playing the *William Tell Overture* on the kazoo. While we get big applause from our transplanted Western numbers (*Hello, Mary Lou*, and *Ragtime Cowboy Joe*), we get standing ovations from *Maggie* and *Alexander's Ragtime Band*.

Bill is right; it is the chords and chord progressions as well as the messages that make this genre intoxicating. I think we can and should all help Bill convert our standing ovations into less standing room on the risers. We have the two necessary ingredients: an outstanding sound/entertainment product and leadership to make it happen.

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### On Listening A

From Worcester Chapter's *KeyNotes*,  
Roy E. Hayward, Jr., Editor;  
original source not identified

I've said repeatedly that the key to singing Barbershop is *listening*. A Society coach, Jeremy Reynolds, phrased it like this: "You have two ears and one voice; use them in that same ratio."

### B

By Mark Hale of Masters of Harmony,  
abridged from the Society's web site,  
by way of Worcester Chapter's *KeyNotes*

There are a lot of issues related to ensemble that are the province of the singers. They need to have an ensemble attitude, singing with their ears attuned to the others singing their part. Each part should sound like one voice

and so each singer has the responsibility to be a blended part of that voice.

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## Harmony College Northeast 2007

By Edward L Fritzen  
Vice President of Music and Performance, NED

Barbershoppers of the Northeast District,

I know you have all been awaiting word about this year's edition of Harmony College Northeast. Thank you for your patience while I have been busy learning the ropes as your VP of Music and Performance. My goal for this year's HCNE is to provide something for every barbershopper in the Northeastern District, no matter if you're new barbershopping or an old pro. Highlights for this year's HCNE include the following:

1. Over twenty courses covering all aspects of our hobby. Would you like to learn better vocal techniques or become a better performer? Or maybe you've wondered just how this barbershop harmony singing originated. If you ever wanted to learn how to stage and light your show, or how to arrange a piece of music in the barbershop style, HCNE is the place to learn. We have some outstanding faculty members eager and willing to teach you.

2. Quartet coaching! Here's your chance to spend a weekend with your quartet getting a full weekend of top-notch quartet coaching. Space is somewhat limited, so sign up early to insure your quartet doesn't miss out on this great opportunity.

3. Chorus Coaching!! We have plans to offer 3 hours of coaching for up to three choruses on Saturday morning. This is a great chance for some of our smaller choruses to get some coaching. Come up for the day on Saturday and get coached in the morning, then spend the afternoon taking some courses, singing, and woodshedding. Contact me directly if your chorus is interested in partaking of this opportunity.

4. Our headliner quartet will be the SEP Quartet, from the Rocky Mountain District. This quartet is a perennial International Finalist; you might know them as "Saturday Evening Post." They are great teachers and coaches and put on a fine show. Definitely a quartet you will not want to miss.

5. Singing, Tag Singing, and woodshedding all weekend long. What's a weekend of barbershopping without this?

6. Big Saturday Night Show featuring the SEP Quartet, the HX Chorus, a special joint number of the HX Chorus with all the attendees of HCNE in honor of the 50th Anniversary of the Music Man, and perhaps another surprise or two.

7. Great afterglows!

The dates for HCNE: 10–12 August 2007. The Place: Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg, MA. The cost: Full tuition, \$130.00 (\$140.00 after July 31), double occupancy; commuter tuition, \$95.00 (\$105.00 after July 31).

Complete information, registration forms, course descriptions and course selec- (See "HCNE 2007" on Page 5)

**HCNE 2007** (From Page 4)

tion forms can be found at the NED District Web Page. Go to <http://www.nedistrict.org> and look under the HCNE Banner. You'll find links there to all the information.

Spread the word! It should be a great weekend!! I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in Fitchburg.

Yours in Harmony,  
Edward L Fritzen

35 Button Rd

North Stonington, CT 06359

860 887 6528 (h)

860 686 6896 (w)

860 608 7724 (c)

[elfritzen@comcast.net](mailto:elfritzen@comcast.net)

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## Singing In Tune (Part 5)

By Freddie King, International Coach

In addition to the reasons covered in prior parts, there are other causes of flattening. These are basically self-explanatory.

- Unless releases are precise and intensely vitalized, there will often be a slight drop in pitch.
- Slurring, scooping, or approaching notes from below will result in flattening.
- Repeated notes in a phrase are often wrongly approached from below. This causes each succeeding note to be slightly lower in pitch.
- Faulty diction causes flattening.
- Attacking a singing consonant below the pitch of the following vowel, and then sliding up to it, will produce flattening. The singable consonant must always be sung on the pitch of the following vowel. Particular attention must be paid to L, M, and N.

- Insecurity in voice parts, guessing at notes, and following rather than thinking for oneself will lead to flattening.
- Overlearning a selection (going stale) likewise leads to flattening.
- Having singers in the wrong voice part may cause them to sing out of tune.

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## What If

By Larry Warrick, Assistant Music Director,  
Des Moines Chapter  
From Des Moines Chapter's *Harmony Overtones*,  
Robert Uy, Editor

What if . . .

- each member makes it a goal to bring in one new singing member this year?
- when you see or hear of something that needs to be done, you say, "I'll do that"?
- as soon as you get new music, you start working on it at home?
- when the president or a board member asks for help, you volunteer?
- when standing on the risers, you are only concerned that you are giving your best to the director?
- you quit being concerned about what notes or words others are singing and make sure you are singing the correct notes and words?
- when driving to chapter meetings, you prepare yourself to have a great time?
- each week you shake hands and speak to at least three members who you usually don't talk to?

Do you think this will make the [*Newyorkers Chorus*] better? Hmmm.

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Website for Poughkeepsie Newyorkers: <<http://www.newyorkerschorus.org>>

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