

# The Newyorker Times

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



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Poughkeepsie, New York

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March 2008

## *From the President's Desk*

*By Steve Miller*

Well, we made it through the first two months! For those of you who participated in the Singing Valentines, I want to personally say "Thank you." I know the rest of the chapter also greatly appreciates the effort made on its behalf. So now it's time to move on to the next item on the 2008 agenda, the Yankee Division Contest.

The chorus has been working hard on the contest package, and as of last night, we sound great. A little more polishing in the next couple of weeks will make it that much better. Except for a couple of new members, this contest stuff has become old hat for us. So now it's a matter of staying focused and giving the audience (and judges) our best stuff on March 15.

There is, however, another element to the contest this year. This year the Newyorkers will be the host chapter. Apart from the obvious glamour and prestige that will be thrust upon us, this endeavor requires the chapter to provide the human support to make the contest a success. The chorus will handle many of the set-up and break-down chores before and after the contest proper. However, there are numerous other jobs that need to be manned (or womaned?) on contest day. These include hall monitors, chorus and quartet escorts, door monitors, and sundry other positions.

Because of the timing of the chorus contest, these jobs will need to be handled by people from outside the competing chorus. I am asking for the help of any non-competing chapter members, and any wives, significant others, friends, family, mailmen, etc. to fill these positions. None of these jobs is difficult or labor intensive. Individuals will need to be available from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the day of the contest. Anyone wishing to help the chapter out in this fashion will have my undying gratitude—well, at least my sincere thank you. We need to make a concerted effort to provide this manpower for the contest. Those individuals interested in helping out can contact me directly. As my mother always said, "Many hands make light work".

Unfortunately, time and space prohibit me from providing the nurturing and philo- (See "President" on Page 3)

## *Quartet Corner*

### A "FOUR TO THE POWER OF 1" VALENTINE

*By Bill Florie*

For the second time in three years, 4TP1 spent February 14th serenading lucky valentines all over Dutchess County.

One of the more poignant moments came when we sang for a couple that had been married for 50+ years. We sang for the wife at home in Fishkill, and then sang to the husband at an assisted living facility. They may have been separated physically, but you could tell they were still together in the heart. He loved our singing, and even sang along a little. He explained that he had been a singer in his younger years, but lost his voice from crying over the loss of his son years earlier. That was a tough moment for all of us, but I think we really touched him in a good way. So in the vernacular of the day "It's all good!"

We sang for a bride-to-be at Violet Avenue School, where we were remembered for our exploits two years prior, and we sang for couples that had been married for years. We sang in a bank, a school, a design center, a car dealership, a beauty salon, a college, and many homes, including mine. When we had down time, we just went somewhere and started singing. We handed out an awful lot of cards in the beauty salon to women who wanted to make sure that next year we would be singing just to them!

It is incredible how infectious Singing Valentines can be. We certainly enjoyed it nearly as much as the recipients did, and we got paid! Can't beat that!

And finally, one of the best things about this year was that our tenor is a brand new member, and this was his first time doing singing valentines! Great job, Matthew Kambic! We hope you enjoyed singing with us as much as we enjoyed singing with you, and are already looking forward to 2/14/09.

### "FOUR OF HEARTS" PLUG SVs ON AIR

*By Bob Chieffo  
Photo by Joe Daily*


Early on the morning of 6 February 2008, the "Four of Hearts" quartet performed live on (Continued on Page 3)

**The Newyorker Times**  
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 Chris Schulze  
 Immediate Past President ..... John Hadigan, Jr.  
 Youth Outreach ..... Bill Standish  
 Chorus Director ..... Renée Silverstein  
 Assistant Directors ..... John Hadigan, Steve Hagerdon  
 Chorus Manager ..... Scott Salladin

**Meetings**  
**Wednesdays, 7:30 p.m.**  
**Reformed Church of Poughkeepsie**  
**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



**15 Mar** Newyorkers host Yankee Division Contest at Roy C. Ketcham High School, Wappingers Falls—details TBA  
**17 May** Annual Show, F. D. Roosevelt High School, Hyde Park, 7 p.m.  
**29 Jun-5 Jul** International Convention and Contests, Nashville, TN  
**24-26 Oct** NED Convention and Contests, Lowell, MA

**DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE**  
**26 MARCH**

**Happy Birthdays in March:**

Chris Schulze	17
Jack Tacinelli	30

**No Anniversaries in March**

*Directions*  
 by Renée Silverstein

**SOME THOUGHTS AND TIPS ON PERFORMANCES**  
**—PUBLIC AS WELL AS CONTEST**

Whether we are performing two songs at a contest or ten songs at a performance, how we present ourselves and our music doesn't change.

- Realize that being nervous or just revved up causes shallow breathing, so a deep-cleansing inhalation will calm you. Try not to think only about yourself, but rather visualize yourself as part of the audience who is there to enjoy your performance.
- Carry yourself proudly, rib cage high. Enter the room radiating energy and enthusiasm. Of course, if you are behind a curtain get that attitude going before it opens. Go on stage as if you are going on a hot date, not as if you are donating blood.
- Use those eyes! When you are able to make contact with the audience during the time the director is facing the audience, look from one person to another, as if you were sending a message to that person rather than scanning the audience. This will put sincerity and a sparkle in your eye.



**President** (From Page 1)

sophical commentary you have come to expect from your chapter president. I look forward to future issues when I can elaborate on the joys and fulfillment of barbershop-ping. For now, let's get the work done. Thanks.

**Quartet Corner** (From Page 1)

the Joe Daily Show, Q92.1FM, promoting the Newyorkers' Singing Valentines fund-raising program. Joe is a barber-shop fan and always a great host. Lovely and bubbly radio personality Michelle Taylor was on hand to receive a long-stemmed rose and our Valentine's love songs.



"Four of Hearts" salute Michelle Taylor. L to R: Ralph Harlow (t), Bill Booth (L), Michelle, Dick Schaffer (Bs), and Bob Chieffo (Br)

**FOOTLIGHTERS DELIVER SV TO FAMILY OF ARMED FORCES MEMBER**

By Bob Chieffo

Here is a photo of Footlighters quartet after performing a military family Singing Valentine on 9 February 2008. The recipients were Dawn Dooley of Walden, NY, her three children, and her mom Cindy Henry. This was in honor of Dawn's husband, Sgt. Kevin Dooley, 258th Field Artillery, 10th Mountain Division, currently awaiting deployment to the Middle East.

This military family Singing Valentine was promoted by the Newyorkers and sponsored through the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce for local families of active service personnel.



Pictured (L-R) are Footlighters tenor Ron Pierson, lead Jack Ostmark, Emily Dooley, Dawn Dooley, Jenna

Dooley, bass Bud Fair, and baritone Bob Chieffo. Dawn and Kevin's son Robert Dooley and Cindy Henry were not available for the picture. Photo is courtesy of Kristen Nelson, Jack Ostmark's grand daughter, and used by permission of Dawn Dooley.

**Oldyorker Selected as Barbershopper of the Year by Fairfax Chapter**

By George Trigg,

Based on Correspondence from "Bix" Doughty

Several members of our Chapter will remember F. E. "Bix" Doughty, who was for many years a member of the Poughkeepsie Chapter and, for several of those years, held dual membership here and with the Fairfax Chapter; he eventually dropped membership here, but has remained active in Fairfax. I recently received a message from Bix informing me that he had been selected as the 2007 Barbershopper of the Year by the Fairfax Chapter. It couldn't happen to a more dedicated barbershopper.

**Memories of Ev Burke**

Gathered by Bob Chieffo

FROM DON BUNCH

Sorry to learn of Ev's passing. Although he and I did not always agree, I respected him as I knew he was a hard worker and had the good of the chapter at heart. Our prayers will be with him and Dotty and family.

FROM BUD FAIR

Ev was a great friend of mine for many years. I seldom met anyone more willing to walk the walk as well as talk the talk. He did it for many years with AllState and also for a long time as a great Newyorker. He was full of ideas and almost all of them worked.

I recall we worked on a membership campaign together where we would hold a "class" with prospective new members. Prior to our first planning meeting, Ev asked me to come to that meeting with a theme and an action plan, and he would do the same. Well, a week later we met and put our papers on the table. My theme was "Ya Gotta Hook 'Em on the Music," and the plan was to bring in my quartet, show some International quartets and choruses, and get them singing tags and simple songs as fast as possible. Ev's theme was "Ya Gotta Hook 'Em on the People," and his plan was to bring in our Director Breck Martyn, the section leaders, the President, and some of the top Newyorkers (and we had a bunch of them, very capable) to demonstrate the enthusiasm, the leadership, and the cameraderie in our hobby.

We sat there quietly for a moment and then, almost simultaneously, said "We gotta take BOTH of these approaches!" We did exactly that. Ev did most of the work, and we had a very good mem- (See "Memories" on Page 4)

**Memories** (From Page 3)

bership drive.

When Mark Courtney, Breck Martyn, Jim Zeigler, and I formed a new quartet in 1989, Ev gave us our name, Rave Revue. He was also our booking agent for the first few years. When we won the District Quartet Championship in 1991, I think Ev was as excited as we were.

I remember Ev very fondly and I know we all miss him.

## FROM BOB CHIEFFO

Ev Burke was his own man. He certainly had strong opinions. But he was decisive and made things happen in the Poughkeepsie Chapter.

As Membership VP he established the first New Yorkers recruitment campaign focused on Free Vocal Lessons. This was based on a successful Sweet Adelines International program. Ev's wife Dorothy and daughter Kathy were both Evergreen SAI chapter members, and so he was familiar with how it had worked for them.

As Chorus Manager (and aggressive marketing agent) Ev was a gig-meister. Being an award-winning insurance salesman, Ev brought in lots of high-paying chorus performances. And as you read in the Jan-Feb New Yorker Times issue, Ev was instrumental in recruiting Renee Silverstein as the New Yorkers' director.

Now talk about taking action: We were staging our 1996 Annual Chapter Show "Harmony Rocks." It was a scripted caveman-themed musical. I was the Costume chairman and we needed caveman costumes for the whole chorus. It so happened that a local fabric store was going out of business. The stock was on sale. Ev's wife Dorothy is a wonderful seamstress and Ev told me they were going to the store to buy some material. I asked him to see what kind of jungle/animal print fabric they might have and let me know. Later that night I got a call from Ev. He had taken advantage of the sale and had purchased their remaining animal print stock. All \$600 worth! I was shocked and thankful at the same time. My wife Diane and I measured the chorus and cut paper patterns for tunics and booties. Dot Burke sewed the whole bunch.

We had great costumes and in my opinion, a great, entertaining show. Needless to say, the costume price tag cut into our profits a bit <smile>. But that was Ev being Ev: getting the job done!

**Improving Your Singing**

By Keith Hopkins, a Dapper Dan  
From Sun City Chapter's *Par for the Chorus*,  
Jon Wagner, Editor,  
by way of Jacksonville Big Orange Chapter's  
*The Orange Spiel*, John Alexander, Editor

I believe that how often we use our vocal cords is more important than the choice of exercises. Daily vocalizing leads to rapid, significant results. Less frequent workouts mean slower change.

By "vocalizing," I mean sufficient, careful warmup, followed by intense singing for 20 or 30 minutes.

"Sufficient warmup" depends on how much I've already used my voice that day, and on how long it takes to begin working smoothly. I need more in the morning than after a day of using my voice.

"Careful" means: relax; practice good posture; sing gently; avoid coughing, throat clearing, and energetic attacks; be patient; and increase intensity gradually.

I've improved both stamina and resonance (high/bright/sinus, medium/throat, and low/dark/chest). As a result, my voice is richer/rounder, has more uniform timbre throughout my range, and produces noticeably more sound without additional effort.

In a nutshell, vocalize often—daily if possible.

**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.

**A Memorable Barbershop Moment**

By Terry Silke of the *Sharpshooters* quartet,  
from the Greater Indianapolis Chapter's *The Beat*,  
Jerry Troxel, Editor, by way of  
Lake County Chapter's  
*Overtones*, Al Ries, Editor

I just received my 26-year membership card, so I could almost write a book about memorable moments in my barbershop history. Singing with the *Sharpshooters* Quartet from 1983 to 1992 gave me many such moments, but probably one that stands out most was a spring contest in Evansville in the late '80s. (See "Memorable Moment" on Page 5)

**Memorable Moment** *(From Page 4)*

While the *Sharpshooters* were a wonderfully entertaining quartet, we were never accused of being one of the best contest-oriented, as our motto was, "We never won a contest, but we never lost an audience."

Somehow we made the cut one of those years in the late '80s and, having prepared only two songs, we had to come up with another set for the finals. We decided to sing the "Side by Side" parody as one of our songs, and the

other was "Dangerous Dan McGrew," a very politically incorrect, non-contestable song about a cowboy of questionable gender preference!! Evidently, this type of song had never been done on the contest stage, because the judges threw their pencils in the air, and, after we finished, David Harrington of the *Harrington Brothers* quartet stood up to give us a standing ovation. Others in the audience followed, and there we were, getting a "standing O" on contest stage, just like an international contest quartet. What a moment!

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

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