

# Longmont, Colorado's Barbershop Voice



Join Us Mondays at 7PM at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, 1303 S. Bross Lane

Hurray for lady directors, limited hand moves and restrained baritones....

## Our fifteenth International Competition (almost by accident)

by Dave Waddell

**My** wife **Maryann** and I have attended 15 International Conventions and hadn't given much thought to attending in **Kansas City** this year, but a turn of events occurred that helped make up our minds. The first of these factors was an offer of less expensive tickets that another fellow barbershopper from Ohio couldn't use because of his grandson's wedding. The second factor was that Maryann had just published a book and her cousin in Kansas City set up a time for her to have a book signing for several relatives and friends while we were attending the convention.

Every barbershopper should attend at least one of the Barbershop Harmony Society's International Conventions before they die. *What a thrill it is to see and hear all of the world's best quartets and choruses all in one place!* Especially for most barbershoppers, who only sing in a chorus, it is good to see and listen to the best to get an idea of what is possible with lots of practice and dedication. Another nice thing about these conventions is the fun of running into men that you, in my case, have seen and known for over 30 years. A lot of these guys were district presidents when I was and many of them went on to be Society Presidents.

We sat through four quartet competition sessions, AIC show, and two chorus competition sessions while attending the 2011 International Convention and Contest held at the new Sprint Center in downtown Kansas City, Missouri. This all took place during the week of July 4. What an experience it is to listen to **50** quartets and **30** choruses that are the best in the world. When I say "world" I am talking about quartets and choruses from Sweden, New Zealand, Australia, and England along with groups from the Society's 17 districts (the 17<sup>th</sup> was just added this last year). From all of those groups, there were 1,681 competitors that crossed the stage this year. Three of the choruses were directed by ladies and that is becoming more

## Hey, don't forget ....

August 6 County Fair Singout    August 13 Barbershoppers Family Picnic    August 14 Loveland Singout  
August 28 St. Stephens Singout    Sept 10 Chapter Retreat    October 7-9 Fall Contest

common. The scores posted by the 30 choruses ranged from **94.3** (Masters of Harmony – Santa Fe Springs, CA) to **72.4** (The Vocal Agenda – Batavia, NY) with the latter being posted by a chorus of only **18!** The Longs Peak Chorus' score last year was **72.1**, so that indicates we have lots of room to improve. This also shows that we could compete at International! Wouldn't it be a blast to sing in front of 7,000 to 10,000 screaming and applauding fans?

The quartets are all fun to watch and listen to, but we especially like the chorus competition because of all the choreography and stage props used by some. Most choruses don't use stage props, but just get up there and sing their hearts out, usually with various amounts of "dancing" or synchronized moves. One can certainly tell by watching the synchronized moves that a lot of extra practice goes into their preparation. I was surprised at how few choruses used elaborate props this year. As I recall, only the chorus from Nashville, "Music City Chorus", went all out with an elaborate setup.

The chorus from Wellington, New Zealand, "Vocal FX" placed seventh with a score of **86.4** with only **32** on stage and had a nice looking lady directing them. Towards the end of their performance she was hoisted on the shoulders of some of the men (seemed a little "racy" for barbershoppers, but interesting). The judges must have liked that! The chorus did sing well, though. In some contests the same song is sung over and over by several quartets. This year the song was "One For My Baby and One More For the Road". It was sung by four quartets. Unfortunately, all of those quartets finished from 26<sup>th</sup> to 48<sup>th</sup>. It seems that song selections often go in cycles and the same songs are sung by several quartets in a given year.

There were two things in particular that I noticed while listening and observing the choruses and quartets perform. The first thing very noticeable with the choruses was the discipline used with hand movements. With choruses in size from **18** to **121** men, it was interesting to see a straight line of hands on the front row with only an occasional hand movement that hardly ever went above the waist. It was so nice to watch these choruses where there were no extraneous hand movements that were a distraction to the performance. There were essentially only planned hand moves by all members of the chorus. There was, however, plenty of body movement and shifting of weight by members of all choruses. Any time an individual uses a lot of hand movement that is mainly above the waist it is very noticeable to an audience and draws attention to the one person and not the group as a whole. This is especially noticeable in choruses of 20 to 50 members. In the larger choruses it is not so obvious.

The second thing, not to embarrass our baritones, that was very noticeable in all the singing was the fact that there was no group where you could hear the baritones sticking out unless it was for a swipe or repeat/echo of a phrase. This was especially true of every quartet that crossed the stage. It was truly amazing! You have probably heard it said, "The baritone is to be seen and not heard" and this was very true in Kansas City. You knew they were there to make the chords ring, but were never too loud.

One of the highlights of the 2011 convention was the appearances of the 1961 quartet champions, "Suntones", celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, singing several times on various shows during the convention and at the gospel sing on Thursday. Also honored were the 1986 champions, "**Rural Route 4**", celebrating 25 years. It was good to see and hear these two great quartets again. Jim Bagby, who has often been on the faculty of Rocky Mountain Harmony College, is the baritone in "Rural Route 4".

Over the years you could hear a lot spontaneous singing all around as people mingled in the large crowds. It didn't seem to me that there was much of that this year. Could it be because of our Society membership aging and the old guys don't have the energy to sing as much any more? It is nice, though, to see a lot of younger men singing these days. A couple guys did approach and ask me to sing a tag with them, which I did! I would urge everyone to make an attempt to attend an international convention at some time, especially if they are relatively close in places like Kansas City, Salt Lake City, and Denver. You will be truly impressed by what you see and hear. Next year's convention will be in Portland, Oregon and in 2013 it is in Toronto, Canada.

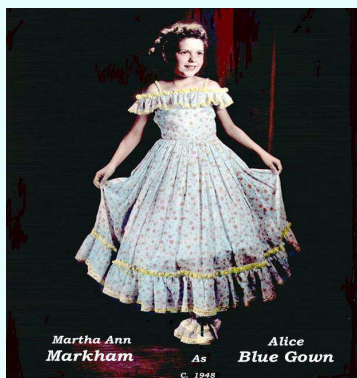
# Ann's special gown

by Ben Long

Tom was enjoying his Sunday visit at the farm with his daughter Ann, her husband and their two children. They were happily married and the parents of his only granddaughter and grandson. He was glad they were doing well. Really, better than well... they were prospering. He had given them his farm several years ago when he retired and moved to a small house in town, a half mile north.

As Tom watched Ann preparing dinner, he reflected back to a time in the mid-thirties when she had been a teenager. It wasn't easy being a farmer in the Midwest in 1935. Times were harder than Tom had ever experienced. As if the depression and the drought weren't enough to deal with, he was trying to raise his teenaged daughter alone. His wife had been gone almost two years by then, and they missed her greatly.

Ann was in the eleventh grade, a junior in High School. She was a lovely child, just at that cusp between childhood and adulthood. She was beginning to look more like her mother, and she often reminded Tom of his wife when she was young. Sometimes when Tom looked at her he saw the woman she was becoming, but most of the time he saw his sweet, innocent child. Ann worked very hard helping him with farm chores and keeping house, but also excelled in her studies. He knew she needed a dress for the Junior Prom. Although he didn't know how he was going to come up with the cash to pay for it, he was determined to have her look her best. She deserved nothing less.



He visited Millie's Dress Shop in town to see if his friend Millie could help him. He explained that he wanted something nice, yet affordable for Ann. Millie was very understanding. She told him she had an "almost new" dress which a very well-to-do customer had exchanged for another. She thought it was about the right size for Ann. She said it was simple and dainty, yet classically elegant. She retrieved it from a rack to show it to Tom. The gown was light blue with a hint of gray. Millie said the color was the fashionable "Alice Blue", which had been named after President Teddy Roosevelt's high-spirited daughter Alice. It matched the color of her eyes and was Alice's favorite color. Tom said: "I recognize the color; it was my wife's favorite also."

The gown was petite and very attractive with little "forget-me-not" flowers embroidered around the silk top. Tom was almost afraid to ask the price, and when he did, it was higher than he had hoped. He told Millie he didn't think he could afford it. She said "Tom, since you are a good friend and I know farming is tough right now, I'll reduce the price for you. I know you want Ann to have a nice dress, and you can make a down payment and pay the rest later as you can afford to." Tom gratefully agreed. Millie told him to come in with Ann to make sure she liked the gown, and if she did, Millie would fit it to her.

When he brought Ann in, she was very taken with the gown. She couldn't wait to try it on. When she saw herself in it, in the mirror, she just glowed. She said it was so beautiful she felt she could walk on air. Tom said "The dress is pretty, and I just adore the way you look in it." Millie agreed, noted the minor alterations needed, and said she would have it ready in a week. The next week Ann returned to pick up the gown. Millie had her try it on again, and it fit perfectly. Ann loved wearing it so much she decided to wear it home. Her pride and self-image just blossomed. As she walked down the streets, she studied her reflection in the shop and store windows as she walked by. She noticed other people watching her as well. At first this made her a little shy, but she was so proud of the gown she overcame her shyness. Ann paused often to primp and admire her appearance. She made the same sophisticated, semi-frowning facial expression she had seen on fashion models in the women's magazines. But inside, she was smiling and felt like the whole world was smiling with her.

Tom recalled that Ann loved the gown so much she not only wore it to the Junior Prom, but to numerous special occasions afterwards... It saw many church and school social events, including Senior Prom, graduation and the festivities of that day. It was well-made and lasted many years. Ann did not stop wearing it until it became threadbare from use.

As Ann and his granddaughter set the table, the clattering of dishes brought Tom back to the present. Then Tom asked Ann "Do you remember that Alice Blue gown you had in High School?" "Of course, Dad", she replied, looking for just a moment like she was sixteen again. "It was the best present I ever received in my whole life."

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*The song is very pretty but the story doesn't "grab me" emotionally the way many ballads do.) So, I developed this short story to help get more emotionally involved with the story of the song. If we feel the emotion of the story the song tells, we put that emotion into the song and convey it to the audience.*



Very first time many of us had the pleasure of singing with a lady director, in this case the very talented Priscilla Shaw. Longmont had 39 guys in the Mass Chorus, putting us in first place. We sang several songs from our western show and had a fun time doing it. What a great group of quartets and choruses sang for the people of Boulder.



# Chautauqua

## Two very different chapters

# Snowbird BBSer likes nomadic life

by Jerry Brumm

For the past four and a half years, I have enjoyed singing with the Longs Peak Chorus during the summer and fall months. In the winter and spring months, I sing with the Martin/St. Lucie Mariners in Stuart, Florida. When I am in Florida, I am Winter President of the Mariners Chapter.

The Mariners Chorus has around 50 members; however, attendance drops significantly in the summer months when the snowbirds go back up north. Attendance is between 35 and 40 in the winter and between 10 and 15 in the summer. The chapter usually has an annual show in March when the maximum number of members is in town. The chapter and its quartets also give numerous performances throughout the year for community events and for private parties.

The Mariners' chapter meetings are significantly different from the Longmont chapter meetings. The Mariners do not emphasize perfection but instead, try to optimize enjoyment of barbershop singing. The meetings tend to include a variety of singing activities with an emphasis on quartet singing.

The structure of the Mariners meetings is based on a workshop called "Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meetings". I believe a number of people from the Longs Peak Chorus have attended the workshop. See <http://www.21stn7th.com/workshops.html>. A few of the specific methods from the workshop which we use in our chapter meetings include:

- Scripted Meetings (meeting plans e-mailed to every member in advance of meeting).
- Members act as listeners and watchers during rehearsals.
- Four-step song learning method (Listening Step, Doo-doo-doo Step, Muscle Memory Step, Full Singing Step).
- Participation by members as directors, scripters, coaches, etc.

The Chuck Greene methods have proved to be very effective in attracting and retaining new members.

How is being a Mariner different? Being a Mariner is meeting new and old friends at the beginning of each new season. Our strength and excitement comes from the influx of snowbirds from the north each fall and winter. Being a Mariner is warming up in the practice room, singing chords, and hearing an "Overtone" -- that ethereal high note that no one is singing but seems to come right out of the ceiling. Being a Mariner is singing in a pickup quartet with any other three guys in the chorus. Everyone in the Mariners sings in quartets.

Being a Mariner is singing a song and blowing the pitch pipe at the end of the song and finding that you were exactly in tune. Well - not always. Being a Mariner is going to the American Legion after meetings, eating popcorn, drinking beer, and singing tags -- over and over again because it sounds so good. Being a Mariner is Woodshedding at meetings with everyone making up their own parts. Being a Mariner is going to monthly picnics at Sand Sprit Park and singing Polecats while watching the boats go in and out of Manatee Pocket.

Being a Mariner [like being a member of the Longs Peak Chorus] is being in a family - a special family in the fellowship of barbershop. If you ever find yourself near Stuart, Florida on a Tuesday evening, be sure to drop by and sing with the Mariners.



# Board Meeting

condensed from secretary Keith Watson's minutes

The July 12 board meeting was called to order by president **Jim Hopper**. Also present were **Jack Gibbs, Bob Reed, Dave Waddell, Jim Schoemer, Gene Melick and Bob Plass**. Absent were **Mike Hemphill, Dick Kitchener, Gerry Swank and Keith Watson**. A quorum was present. The secretary's and treasurer's report were reviewed and accepted.

Treasurer Bob Reed indicated that annual show net revenues were trending down, Singing Valentines were trending down and the Christmas show was trending up. At the next meeting Reed will present a more detailed report on the last three years for these programs. Reed was asked to report next month on his projection of year end income and expenses to budget.

Jim Schoemer reported that he and Gerry Swank have asked Benny Long to redesign the front panel and develop an updated left panel for the promotional CD packet. He also reported that he and Gerry had reviewed the annual show DVD, and scaled it back in a few areas to use to respond to additional information requested by the Broomfield arts director regarding her preliminary approval of LPC concert in the summer of 2012. Paul West is preparing that DVD.

The developing e-mail program will be evaluated and modified as needed by Jack Gibbs.

Jim Schoemer volunteered to schedule a meeting with Merle Moore, John Hoover and Gerry Swank to get the grants program moving.

Membership. Bob Plass reported that 12 "we miss you" cards had gone out last month and summarized the recent visitors to the chorus. Bob will follow up to appoint a new Sunshine Chairman to replace Bob Grigsby.

Jim Hopper will follow up with Dick Kitchener on

matters related to the picnic.

2012 Annual Show. The board expressed appreciation for Ed Fitzgerald, show chair, getting an early start on the next show. The board will ask Ed to get his show committee appointed as soon as possible; Jim Hopper will communicate with Ed on that. Dave Waddell volunteered to send Ed the show committee positions and functions.

The board unanimously approved the appointment of Jim Hopper and Jim Schoemer as the nominating committee for 2012. As part of the three step process the slate of officers should be first presented to the chapter in mid September.

The meeting was then adjourned .



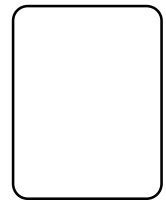
**Bratwurst dinner and tag singing in the shelter before the Chautauqua show.**



**Cindy Hansen brought her plans for the two “girl” songs we’re doing at RMD fall contest. Cindy has been here several times in the past, each time with some wild dance moves for us to do. This time facial expressions, emotions and body English were to convey two extraordinary stories in a subtle yet powerful manner.**



high notes  
 c/o Gil Norris  
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**It's Great to be a  
 Longmont Barbershopper**

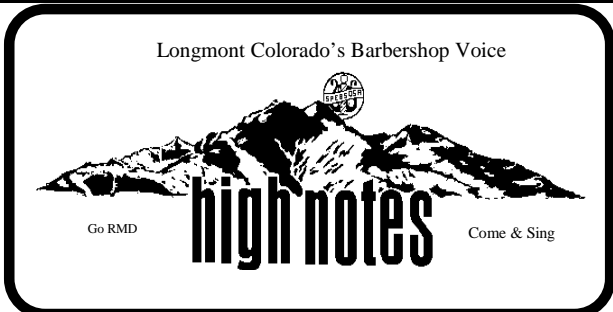
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Our mission: "We provide each member with enjoyable experiences through continuous improvement in our singing, performing, and entertaining in the barbershop style."

**Longmont, Colorado Officers & Staff for 2011**

- President ..... Jim Hopper
- Executive Vice President..... Jack Gibbs
- VP of Music & Performance .....Mike Hemphill
- VP of Membership & Development ..... Bob Plass
- VP of Marketing ..... Dave Waddell
- Program VPs ..... Dick Kitchener
- Secretary ..... Keith Watson
- Treasurer ..... Bob Reed
- Members at Large. Jim Schoemer & Gene Melick
- Service Project & Bonus Bux..... Gene Melick
- Bulletin Editor ..... Gil Norris
- Chorus Director ..... Chris Vaughn
- Asst. Directors ..... Jim Cole & Duane Bosveld
- Tenor Section Leader. ....Mike Hemphill
- Lead Section Leader. .... Jack Gibbs
- Baritone Section Leader ..... Jim Cole
- Bass Section Leader. .... James Curts
- Chorus Manager ..... Dave Waddell
- Music Librarian ..... Luke Lorenz
- Uniform Manager ..... Harry Hoffman
- Sunshine Chairman ..... Bob Grigsby
- Webmaster [www.harmonize.com/longmont](http://www.harmonize.com/longmont) ..... Paul West
- Show Chairman ..... Gerry Swank
- YMIH Chairman ..... Ed Fitzgerald
- Singing Valentines Chairman ..... Bob Reed



The High Notes is published monthly for the enjoyment of Longmont's barbershoppers and its content may be shared by fellow Barbershop Harmony Society (used to be SPEBSQSA) members. Please send your comments, material for inclusion and other chapter bulletins to the editor:

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