

Longmont, Colorado's Barbershop Voice



Longs Peak Chorus
Barbershop Harmony Society

May, 2011

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

Singing cowboys invade Longmont

by Jim Hopper

Another Opening, Another Show! It's so exciting when the curtain opens and I see the crowd. On that special Saturday in May, I so look forward to the whole process of getting ready for the show, arriving at Vance Brand Auditorium to see all you guys, running through the show rehearsal, going to dinner before the show with good friends, coming back and practicing in the band room.....and then *we're on.*

I am always amazed how these shows come off so well. There are so many people who just do their jobs every year (I'll name half of them if I'm lucky) that it just seems automatic. But I know it isn't. To Dan Chaikin for managing the advertising again and Gene Melick for selling so many (I think 25) ads. Got to thank Bob Reed again for the program. That is another amazing thing that just comes together as if by magic

Ben Long created our show flyers. Dave Waddell did our radio and newspaper advertising, as well as getting tickets out there. Thank you wives for collecting tickets, handing out programs and doing all those things that make the show happen.

To Ed Fitzgerald, Bill Sachs, JR Homan and everyone who helped on the staging. They picked



"Hey, little buddy. Have you been reading what they're saying about the Longmont chapter in the RMD Vocal Expressions news-magazine online? Editor Steve Jackson always has news and pictures of all the events and chapters. Download the latest edition at RMDsing.org."

Hey, don't forget

July 6-9 International Convention July 30 Chautauqua
August 13 Barbershoppers Family Picnic Sept 10 Chapter Retreat October 7-9 Fall Contest

up the ball late and really ran with it. To Paul West for the videos. To Gerry Swank for ramrodding the whole thing, and some very professional emceeing. James Curts did that too. To Jack Kinney and Dick Kitchener for arranging the afterglow and cast dinner.

To Chris Vaughn (ably assisted by Jim Cole and Duane Bosveld), who had us performers at our very peak of readiness. Jim did the script too. I guess my biggest thanks goes out to Chris who is so cool and positive during the rehearsal and is such a great director he can give us those little clues during each song and has the great hands and I really don't see how he remembers everything especially with his new responsibilities taking over more of the directing in Denver.

How about that VLQ and those super chapter quartets, No Vacancy, Better Than Ever (*where'd they get such hilarious costuming?*), Four Keeps, Classic Knights, Coconuts, and Less Than Perfect. Our headliner quartet Ignition brought the house down, as did our western balladeer, Richie Law. Who knew that high school boys can sing with all that power and heart?

Thanks to every one of you for mastering your part in the show and letting each of us share the fun of being a quality musical group!



Jim Hopper, RMD and BHS officers, meet, trim the budget

Longmont president Jim Hopper attended to House of Delegates meeting at the RMD spring convention and has provided us with the minutes. Beside RMD president Lee Taylor, 26 other officers and delegates were present.

State of the Rocky Mountain District

Lee reported that the state of the Rocky Mountain District is strong. The fact that a RMD quartet (Storm Front) won gold last year helped put us on the map. Furthermore, the district benefits from a very strong and active operations team.

The Board's success reflects the success of the district overall. Rocky Mountain Harmony College continues to be a success each year, despite the ebb and flow of the economy. We need to continue to promote this event to our chapters. We held two successful leadership academies again this year; they are brief, painless, and exceedingly important. Again, we need to promote these with our chapters. The two annual district conventions (spring and fall) entail competition, but they are more important for their other aspects: reconnecting with old friends, and singing outside of the competition mode.

This year the Society will be conducting "wellness surveys"; these are intended to take the pulse of every chapter through personal visits by district officers. The Society has provided a standardized questionnaire to ensure that a consistent approach is maintained. Members of the District Operations Team will conduct the visits and interviews. We will try to ascertain each chapter's vision, its view on competition, and its educational goals. What can the Society and District do to help the chapter? What does a prospective new member experience when he walks in for the first time? Is the visit followed up with personal contact through phone call or other means?

International Board Delegate Don Fuson

Don indicated that there is a focus this year by the society in the success of local chapters. He stated that the three main goals of the society are to:

- grow membership
- grow chapters
- get better known in the a cappella world

These three are inter-related. If we make ourselves known at the local level, by singing out in churches, retirement homes, malls, we will attract members and the local chapter will thrive. As far as new chapter formation is concerned, most new chapters are formed when an existing member relocates to an area where no chapter exists, and starts the process of selling the style to local men. Exposing the style to high schools by sending a quartet to perform on a high school show is another way to plant the seed. The best resource is the man sitting next to you. If we show a continued interest in visitors and new members, beyond the initial visit or guest night, the chances of retaining them go way up. Presently, 37% of new members do not renew after the first year, and within three years, 50% of new members have left.

There are three major funding sources for the Society:

- Dues
- Conventions (and shows at the local level)
- Harmony Marketplace

Membership, and therefore the level of dues income, is still declining. We have slowed the rate of decline, but have not turned the corner. Convention attendance is down from previous highs. We anticipate between 6,200 and 6,500 at Kansas City. This parallels the decline in attendance at chapter meetings. On the brighter side, the youth chorus competition has revitalized our midwinter conventions. Chapter governance should reflect the fact that each chapter is a small business. We are the leaders. The empty chairs in this room indicate people who should be here. Call them when you get home.

Treasurer Dave Myers

Dave called our attention to the bottom line of the 2010 actual expenditures, indicating an operating loss of \$7,859.82.

Dave indicated a major expenditure that we should be addressing is line 2646, printing costs for the Vocal Expressions newsletter. We spend over \$5,000 per year to print and mail paper copies of 2 editions of the newsletter, which are also available online.

Dave asked the group if there would be any problems at the chapter level if we ceased the printing and mailing of these two editions. There were no concerns raised. John Elving gave some background on the issue. Presently, we are limiting the size of the printed editions to 20 pages, down from over 60 pages at some times. We had kept on printing 2 editions per year mainly for the availability of registration forms for events such as conventions and Rocky Mountain Harmony College. Options at this point include having someone at the chapter level print

copies for those who do not have the capability to download their own copy electronically, raising district dues to cover these costs, or charging a subscription rate for those who want, and are willing to pay for, mailed hard copies. The general emphasis in bulletins has been changing to more of a historical nature; the things people need to see and react to immediately are typically done via e-mail. The need for printing paper registration forms for events has also been negated, through the availability of interactive PDF forms.

The following motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously:

That the District cease printing any editions of the Vocal Expressions newsletter, and have it available only online; and that chapter presidents be notified when a new Vocal Expressions is available online.

Convention Costs

Dave then addressed our other big money loser, spring conventions. We briefly discussed the reasons for this, including quartet and chorus contests and qualification timeframes, and the need to attract small choruses to attend for coaching and fellowship. Dave asked that we think of ways to change the current convention setup. It was brought up from the floor that chapters need convention information earlier, to allow them to plan their participation. We agreed that this needs to be done.

Secretary Dick Stark

Dick gave a brief background of the District's required chapter reporting policy, which dates from two years ago. As a condition of show licensing, chapters must be up-to-date in their IRS income tax filings, registration with the Secretary of State as a non-profit entity, and annual review of the chapter financial status. Regarding the reporting that was due to be done in 2010 for CY 2009, Dick circulated a summary that showed very good progress had been made from the previous year. The good news was that no chapter application for license had to be denied for failure in the reporting arena. Regarding reporting that is due this spring, we have several chapters that have already filed with the IRS and completed the chapter financial review. Renewal of the registration with the Secretary of State can be due any month, depending on when the chapter was first registered; so this will necessarily be accomplished through the course of the year.

Brett Foster, VP of Chapter Support & Leadership Training

Chapter Activity Recognition Awards. Brett prefaced his presentation with a brief explanation of the awards, which are designed to measure, and help chapters plan for, activities such as shows, singouts, leadership, and convention participation. Plateau winners are awarded with free tuition to the leadership academies each fall. Brett expressed concern that only six of our chapters had participated this year, and none in Plateau I. We agreed that this should be an item for discussion in the wellness surveys later this year.

The winners were:

Plateau II (41 – 75 members)	Salt Lake City	2,933 points
Plateau III (26 – 40 members)	Montrose	2,722
Plateau IV (1 - 25 members)	Utah Valley	3,660

Executive VP Kevin Pape

Kevin reviewed the situation with RMD spring conventions, and stated that our goal in the spring is to lose less than \$5,000. This obviously is an indication that something needs to change. On the national basis, The Society Events Committee has raised the possibility of allowing districts to go to a single qualifying event each year. The Contest and Judging committee has indicated that it has no problem with that, and suggested that spring would be the preferred timeframe, because there are more available weekends that time of year.

We are considering options, including the idea of having six regional (geographically distinct areas) qualifying contests, in which quartets and choruses could travel to the closest one for them. The idea has also been floated of having no RMD spring convention, and allowing (and encouraging) all quartets to qualify out-of-district.

Kevin introduced the subject by stating that one of our chapters had experienced a situation in which a contracted guest quartet had pulled out of its show commitment at the last minute, and had left the chapter (Grand Junction) in a bad situation. Roger McClelland, Grand Junction Chapter President, gave additional details of the situation, and added that an RMD quartet, The Elements, saved the day by agreeing on short notice to sing on the show, and did an excellent job. Roger proposed a sounding board of some type, where comments on chapters' experiences with quartets could be posted and accessed by other chapters. Bill Biffle suggested that it could be made via an e-mail group, with chapter show chairmen perhaps being the core of the group. It was also pointed out that the staff in Nashville should be used to provide these kinds of services to chapters. Most big-name quartets have websites, and it should be possible to learn from their calendars where their most recent contracted shows have been; then it would be possible to contact those chapters to find out how satisfied they were, and if any problems were encountered.

While Roger had the floor, he extended an offer on behalf of the Grand Junction Chapter to host this fall's Leadership Academy. He indicated the chapter would like to put together a show to complement the academy portion of the weekend, but he needs dates soon to begin the planning. Lee indicated that he and Brett Foster will consider the proposal.

Tony Pranaitis, VP of Financial and Membership Services

Tony announced that he now has the capability to get mailing lists from eBiz, the Society's business database, for just the new members in the District. This will enable getting information out to these men that will be pertinent to welcoming and educating them on district activities, and should help with retention. Bob Fox from the Denver chapter added that the chapter is putting together a manual for their recruiting program, called "Ready, Set, Sing." It will be posted on the website when ready. It has been used successfully the last two years.

Tony also summarized recent new member activity, indicating that the district gets a new member on the average of every three days. Retention, however, continues to be a concern. The Denver Mile High Chapter was featured in a cover story in the Harmonizer this spring, focusing on their new member program. Tony announced that Denver Mile High has registered 12 new members, followed by the Colby chapter with 4, Los Alamos with 3, and several chapters with 2 each.

John Elving, VP of Marketing and Public Relations

John announced that the Rapid City Chapter will be hosting Chuck Greene on May 21, presenting his "Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meeting" program. The cost is \$75 per attendee, of which \$20 will be refunded by the Society if the member turns in an evaluation. Details can be found at the Rapid City chapter website: www.shrineofdemocracychorus.org. John indicated that some of Chuck's ideas have been a bit controversial, but that they are reflective of societal differences between today and the way things were when we joined years ago. Among other things, every member should be actively involved in each meeting, having a specific responsibility that requires his being there every week. Sean Devine added that this concept works well with the Masters of Harmony Chorus in California.

John reminded the group of the upcoming Harmony Happening in the Hills event, to be held the weekend of August 19 in the Rapid City area. This year's clinician will be Jim Henry, director of the Ambassadors of Harmony chorus in St. Charles, Missouri.

Immediate Past President Woody Woods

Woody briefly summarized his proposal to replace the spring convention with several mini-conventions or festivals within the district, on a regional basis rather than specified divisions. This idea is related to our need to do something to alter the current spring convention format that has been losing money on a regular basis. Woody asked the delegates what kind of support we could expect from the chapters if the regional meetings were held in our three largest cities: Albuquerque, Salt Lake City, and Denver. In response to a question, Woody indicated that one of these would be designated the Spring Prelims for quartet qualification for International contest.

We are interested in having these be one-day events, which would negate the need for members to incur lodging costs. We also would like to find venues that would be free or essentially free. Registration would be minimal, perhaps \$25. In the discussion that followed, we addressed the idea of joint conventions with other districts. The recent experience of sharing a spring convention in Las Vegas, Nevada with the Far West District was discussed; although the Rocky Mountain District lost \$7,600 on that event, we concluded that this was a result of poor event management, and would not preclude similar attempts in the future. The possibility of a joint 2012 spring convention in Omaha with the Central States District was also presented. Dave Myers stressed that Woody's proposal was only a framework; we need more ideas to flesh it out.

A comment from the floor (Rod Sgrignoli) indicated two potential challenges related to the proposal: The chapter delegates will need more time to consider the proposal and existing RMD policy requires that our conventions be in one of the three major RMD cities; approval of the House of Delegates is required to hold a convention elsewhere.

A motion was then made, seconded, and passed unanimously:

That the Board of Directors be granted the authority to decide on behalf of the HOD that we hold the 2012 spring convention conjunction with the Central States District in Omaha. Feedback is necessary by June 1, to enable board action on the next scheduled teleconference (June 5).

Discussion centered on the fact that both districts have scheduled their spring conventions for the weekend of April 20 – 22, 2012. The possibility exists that, if a high number of quartets is registered, there may be a need for a triple panel of judges, which would be an added expense.

Bob Fox, VP of Chorus Director Development

Directors College Scholarships. Bob announced that five Director scholarships have been granted by the Society to RMD applicants:

Peggy Cabrinha	Colby, KS
Adam Haggart	Utah Valley UT
Adri Pehrson	Pocatello ID
Raisha Quinn	Grand Junction CO
Kenneth Wisner	Wasatch Front UT

Additionally, two directors will be attending on District scholarships:

Olyn Carlson	Grand Junction CO
Priscilla Shaw	Denver MountainAires CO

Chorus Director Workshops Intensive

Bob announced that two sessions of the CDWI workshop are planned, one in Grand Junction, and one in Denver. So far, he has gotten expressions of interest from five directors. These typically are one-day sessions; the morning is a moderated group discussion among the attendees. In the afternoon, the directors are given the chance to direct a chorus of volunteers and be evaluated on their direction by a qualified moderator.

Sean Devine, Harmony Foundation Presentation

Sean started by reiterating that the national Society staff exists to serve the membership. All their respective titles are preceded by the phrase "Membership Services." The role of the Harmony Foundation (HF) is to help the society deal with the financial issues that have become critical in this era of declining membership, and, therefore, reduced dues income. Some positive signs we have been witnessing recently include that participation in Harmony University is up, and that the average age of participants is down. The HF now grants Harmony University scholarships to one out of every eight chapters.

At the most recent midwinter convention in Las Vegas, the Rocky Mountain District sent three youth choruses (out of the total of nineteen); the HF supported this event to the extent of \$250 per participant, for about 600 youth singers. The great thing about the midwinter setting is that it not only allows the youth chorus members to meet and sing with one another, but it exposes them to the Seniors' Quartet Competition, giving them an indication that this can be a lifelong hobby.

The RMD currently has 20 President's Council members (donors of \$1,000 per year), putting it ninth among the Districts; and 108 Ambassadors of Song (donors of at least \$10 per month), placing it second. In each case, the donor can designate that up to 30% of the donation be directed back to the local chapter or district. In 2010, the RMD was the beneficiary of \$760 in the first half of the year, and \$704 the second half, for a total of \$1,465.

Sean then awarded certificates to RMD chapters for giving in 2010:

Bronze Level:	Salt Lake City Chapter	\$16 per member
	Grand Junction	21
	Loveland	22
Silver Level:	Pikes Peak	36
	Denver Mile High	45
	Denver MountainAires	58
Gold Level:	Albuquerque	64
	Scottsbluff	80
	Bernalillo County	91
	Colorado Springs Metro	99
	Sterling	227
	Wasatch Front	381

Sean indicated that presently, 8% of the BHS membership gives at some level. We need to raise that level of participation to be able to attract donations from outside; potential donors typically expect to see member giving levels in the area of 15 to 20 percent as a condition of their participation.

Lee adjourned the meeting at 1:45 pm.

Minutes recorded by Dick Stark



HEY.....THIS WESTERN SINGIN' IS FUN STUFF.

Board Meeting

Condensed from secretary Keith Watson's minutes

President **Jim Hopper** called the April 12, 2011 meeting to order. Also present were **Jack Gibbs, Dick Kitchener, Gerry Swank, Jim Schoemer, Bob Reed** and **Keith Watson**. The secretary's report and the treasurer's report were read and approved.

Show committee report:

Swank reported that we have a signed contract with Ignition.

Reed reported that about 12 ½ advertising pages are sold so far.

Reed needs pictures and write-ups from the quartets by 4/18.

Waddell has provided show information to a variety of places, has bought newspaper ads, has given tickets to the Times-Call for sale, and 1,406 large postcards are to be mailed by April 14.

Schoemer reported that Broomfield has expressed interest in the chorus doing a show. We would need to purchase speakers to use at the venue for about \$500, and there was general consensus that proceeds from this show would be used to purchase them.

Swank reported that an e-mail program has been purchased. E-mail for the show will be mailed this week.

The music committee met to discuss re-organizing the music library, culling out old songs that we will not be doing again in the foreseeable future and getting the guest books up to date with current music.

Dick Kitchener is taking over as PVP for Larry Jones from now until the end of August. He will initiate having the business meeting right before break at rehearsals. He also wants to initiate some occasional "fun nights", and will coordinate this with the music committee.

Watson confirmed that we have a contract for the use of Flanders Park for our August 13 picnic.

Hopper informed us that the women's group is promoting the sale of plastic ducks for the Rhythms on the River duck race. We can buy ducks for \$1 and sell them for \$5. Motion m/s/c that the chorus will buy 100 ducks and will promote their sale at our May show and among our members.

The board recommends April 13 and 14 for the Longmont 2012 show.

John Hoover has volunteered to work on grants for the chorus as this is his line of work. Swank will talk with Merle Moore to see if he and Hoover can work on this together.

After some discussion it was m/s/c that we pursue the purchase of a trailer from Sunnywood Collection (Chris Vaughn's employer). Any purchase is contingent on our finding a storage place.

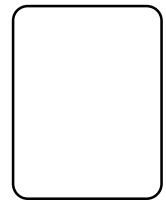


Waddell reported that the Fair Board does want us to sing on August 6 and will pay the chorus \$300. They asked for either 1 pm or 6 pm. Board prefers the 6 pm slot.

We agreed to provide the ladies who work the show with complimentary tickets.

The meeting was then adjourned.

high notes
 c/o Gil Norris
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 Lafayette, CO 80026



**It's Great to be a
 Longmont Barbershopper**

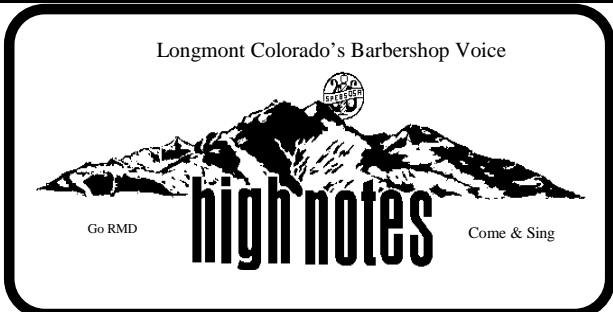
Please deliver to:



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

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- President Jim Hopper
- Executive Vice President..... Jack Gibbs
- VP of Music & PerformanceMike Hemphill
- VP of Membership & Development Bob Plass
- VP of Marketing Dave Waddell
- Program VPs Dick Kitchener
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- Service Project & Bonus Bux..... Gene Melick
- Bulletin Editor Gil Norris
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- Show Chairman Gerry Swank
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- 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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