

Longmont, Colorado's Barbershop Voice



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

Entourage leads quartets, Mile High tops choruses, Longmont fourth

by Bill Sachs

Friday morning, October 7, accompanied by bass JR and Norma Homan, Kay and I drove down to Colorado Springs for the Rocky Mountain District fall convention and contest, always a fun journey for the four of us. Shortly after our arrival, Jane and Gene Melick, apparently made of much harder stock, zoomed up on their motorcycles. We were enjoying fish and chips in the Antler's Pub and looking out the window when the dauntless pair arrived in their leather outfits and helmets, broke themselves free of their seats, and shook the ice off.

Chris Vaughn was kind of the "Road Runner" of the contest with a "beep-beep" here and a "beep-beep" there...now you see him, now you don't... one minute dressed as a judge...the next dressed as the director of the Festival Chorus...the next dressed as the director of the Longs Peak Chorus...the next dressed as a director of Sound of the Rockies Chorus. At one point Kay and I found ourselves plunging ahead leaning at forty-five degree angles into a blizzard-infested head-wind and encouraging each other with the affectionate words of "mush you husky" so as to get to the next venue on time. Suddenly, Chris Vaughn overtook us, then whizzed past like a fading blur. "Beep-beep" we seemed to hear his signature sound as he passed, and then heard his farewell parting "Hello, Sachs" as he disappeared into the sleeting snow. This brief encounter of a strange kind was a fond memory. What a man!

Getting around to the quartet contest: Ignition but mostly Mcfly seemed to flutter, to fly apart, and then to come back together as two reconfigured quartets, now called Entourage and The Orange Pineapples. Then, just when I thought I couldn't absorb any more absurdity, The Orange Pineapples showed up on stage with neon-orange shoes and orange hair. Nevertheless, these two re-shuffled quartets performed well enough to garner first and third place. The youngsters, **Entourage**, took first. **The Orange Pineapples**, with two aging (but ageless) fathers singing the baritone and the bass took third. **The Crew** took second; but they lost to Entourage by one percentage point. Talk about a close and exciting contest! I felt that Entourage had won, but I was rooting for the Crew because the lead, like me, had a majestic bald head that

Hey, don't forget

Nov 12 - Leadership training in Denver (go - no cost) Dec 16-17 Christmas Concerts

glistened proudly under the stage lights.

The chorus competition seemed to be a rerun of the last few contests. **Longs Peak Chorus** still won our Plateau II trophy. Hurrah for us! But we were superceded by our rivals; namely the first-place **Sound of The Rockies**, the second-place **Saltaires**, and the third-place **Duke City Sound**.

I am thinking, while writing this article, that we are going to need a substantial increase in individual commitment to musical excellence to break up the monotony of our perpetual fourth-place finish over the last six years. Otherwise, good work, men, maintaining our standard. *What a fabulous weekend!*

Crank up the visual appeal

Thanks to our chapter historian, Ben Long, we can compare our contest results in some detail. Particularly on a contest number that we've done three times, in 2006, 2007 and this year. Check out the trends which are popping up, especially in the detail columns not included here, but in his e-mail.

What are the trends showing? Our music scores are going up - a lot. Our singing is going up - not quite as much. Our presentation scores are heading down - seriously down.

When it comes to setting goals for 2012 and beyond, better presentation skills as a chorus has got to be toward the top of the list.

Quick summary of A&R session

At the A&R (Analysis and Recommendations) session after chorus competition it can be fun or stressful, depending on how all the scoring went. It's a time when each of three category judges spends some time with the chorus and explains what he thinks are the things we're doing well and what needs work.

The **singing judge** had this to say: "You sang Alice Blue Gown very delicately and it really gave a matching message to the music. I can recall only one bad chord. But it is hard to expand your chords when you're singing quietly all the time. "You need to have more contrast. Your chorus will be singing B+ until then. There was generally good unit sound among the singers of each part and the basses did best in Longmont. I noted some noisy breathing during quiet phrases. In this second song you seemed to be tired. When you got loud, there was harshness in some voices. But you seem to stay too soft at times. If would fill out some of the chords if more baritone was added. There were a few cases of chord worshipping where I waited for something to happen and it never did."

The **music judge** said "You used quiet singing effectively, but you have to cut the chorus loose more often. There were some good swipes, some terrible ones. You need to improve the director to chorus communication. That was a great arrangement on your second song, the medley. As a chorus you are much better in decrescendoing than in going the other direction. You didn't do quite so well when the music swelled."

The **presentation judge** said "You guys are singing from the heart. You've been working on fundamentals and the results are kicking in. I love you guys as a chorus. And you have great pitch-pipe technique. At certain places the faces were great, as when you visualized the girl in front of you. But in general you needed to use facial reactions much more.

"The second song, the medley, was very one dimensional. You need to work to bring up your visual level to the levels of the other two categories. There was even sadness on a few faces that shouldn't have been there. You need to add a variety or color to the song. There should have been real joy on your faces when you sang 'I will smile...' at the end."

	Music	Pres'n	Singing	AVERAGE	Rank	Plat2	Rank
2006 - LAYTON	69.0	70.5	70.5	70.0	4	3	
Alice Blue Gown	67.5	71.0	70.5	69.7			
Sunny Side Up	70.5	70.0	70.5	70.3			
2007 - ALBUQUERQUE	70.5	73.3	70.8	71.5	4	3	
Alice Blue Gown	71.5	73.0	71.0	71.8			
Side By Side	69.5	73.5	70.5	71.2			
2008 - COLO SPRINGS	68.8	73.8	74.3	72.3	4	3	
Tell Me Your Dream	68.5	73.0	74.5	72.0			
Side By Side	69.0	74.5	74.0	72.5			
2009 - CHEYENNE	75.0	72.8	74.8	74.2	2	1	
Sweet Sixteen	75.0	73.5	75.0	74.5			
B & O Line	75.0	72.0	74.5	73.8			
2010 - LAYTON	74.8	69.0	72.5	72.1	4	1	
Sweet Sixteen	76.0	68.5	74.0	72.8			
When You're in Dixie	73.5	69.5	71.0	71.3			
<i>2011 - COLO SPRINGS</i>	<i>74.0</i>	<i>68.8</i>	<i>73.0</i>	<i>71.9</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	
<i>Alice Blue Gown</i>	<i>74.5</i>	<i>68.5</i>	<i>74.0</i>	<i>72.3</i>			
<i>Old Fashd Girl/Sweet</i>	<i>73.5</i>	<i>69.0</i>	<i>72.0</i>	<i>71.5</i>			
2011 Vs. 2006-2010 Average	2.4	-3.1	0.4	-0.1			

Longmont's Contest History

from Ben Long's data sheet

Board Meeting

condensed from secretary Keith Watson's minutes

The September 13 board meeting was called to order. Present were Jack Gibbs, Gerry Swank, Bob Reed, Dave Waddell, Bob Plass, Ed Fitzgerald, Gene Melick, Dick Kitchener, Dean Farrier, and Keith Watson. Bruce Grauberger was a guest.

The secretary's and treasurer's report were reviewed and accepted.

Advertising CDs – Swank reported that he and Schoemer are still working on it – he is not satisfied with it as it stands.

Sunshine Chair – Harry Hoffman will take over this position from Bob Grigsby.

Trifold advertising brochure – Farrier suggests more brevity; and he would like to see a clip and save Valentine's coupon for the brochure. The board affirms that Farrier will be responsible for securing paid performance engagements.

E-mail program. Gibbs looked into a new e-mail program; the \$139 program will automatically update incorrect addresses. Gibbs will look further into program Group Mail V. M/S/C to authorize "resident computer experts" to get whatever program that will get the job done.

Grants – No progress but Waddell reminded us that several grant deadlines are approaching.

Program VP – Kitchener reported that we will go to Old Chicago for the after convention dinner on October 10. He will promote a tag contest for October 31. Waddell will lead a couple workshops on woodshedding probably in November. Some discussion about Pole Cat program with no decision.

2012 Show. Bruce Grauberger was on hand to present his ideas that had several aspects: (1) a theme show, (2) familiar songs, and (3) audience

participation. He suggested an Irish Show theme that could include clog dancers to lead off the second part of the show. Could possibly involve drama students to build the set for extra class credit. The board expressed approval. Gibbs and Grauberger will talk with Hemphill on Monday.

Uniform Chair. Norm Wingard has volunteered for the position. Harry Hoffman will give him some instruction and turn over uniforms to him.

Nominations committee. Nominations from the committee will be presented to the chapter members on September 19, with further nominations that can come from the membership on September 26, and a vote taken on October 3.

New Business

Membership – Plass reported that the chapter has 16 inactive members. We are running at about 80% attendance, which is pretty good. Board discussed ways of doing a better job of welcoming visitors. Plass has been working on a buddy system – we each need to be responsible for welcoming guests.

Waddell suggested that we need to look into getting a back rail for our risers.

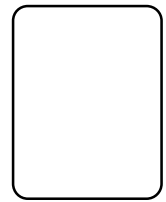
Fitzgerald suggested that Young Men in Harmony chair should be elected on a school year basis rather than January to December. Home school kids could be another source of recruiting young men.

The meeting was then adjourned.



Grauberger tries out for lead part in "Irish Show"

high notes
c/o Gil Norris
3813 Stoney Drive
Lafayette, CO 80026

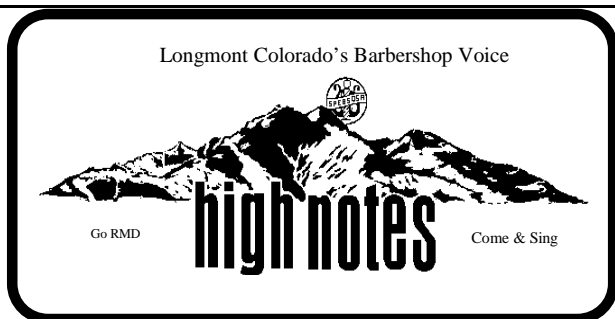


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Our mission: "We provide each member with enjoyable experiences through continuous improvement in our singing, performing, and entertaining in the barbershop style."



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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