



PROBE
BARBERSHOP

"The most influential communications fraternity in the Society"

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www.harmonize.com/probe

PROBEmeter

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PROBE HALL OF HONOR NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Top directors and medalist quartet members justifiably receive high praise. But there are many other members who work behind the scenes in non-singing tasks to support our Society and the musical accomplishments. They are the marketing, public relations and bulletin volunteers who help communicate our message and our music, both within the Society and to other music lovers.

PROBE wants to recognize the top practitioners among them. And you can help—by nominating them for the prestigious PROBE Hall of Honor award established in 1989.

Nominations are open for persons who will be considered for recognition at each summer's international convention.

A nominee, living or deceased, must have been a PROBE member for at least 10 years, and must have made contributions to PROBE and its purposes beyond the normal duties of performing PROBE-related functions for a chapter or district.

Any current PROBE member may make a nomination. If you're not a member, join now or pass your nomination on through a member. The nomination must be in writing, specifically describing the nominee's services and contributions. Include supporting evidence if available. You also may include letters of support from other persons who know the nominee.

Your nomination need not be extremely sophisticated or professionally prepared. The selection is not based on the presentation, but on the nominee's merits. Further, this is not a competition, but recognition. **The deadline is April 30th of each year.** Send your nominations now, before the deadline, to the award committee chairman (yet to be determined), thanks!

Join PROBE - membership \$10.00 yearly!

PROBE HALL OF HONOR

Bruce Anderson, Ray Barrett, Herb Bayles, Grant Carson, Jerry Coltharp, Dick Cote, Lloyd Davis, Wade Dexter, Mel Edwards, John Elving, Leo Fobart, Jim Fulks, Harry Gault, Dick Girvin, Ray Heller, Bob Hockenbrough, Paul Izdepski, Steve Jackson, Terry Jordan, Grady Kerr, Art Lane, Deac Martin, Bob McDermott, William Moreland, John Morris, Roger Morris, Buddy Myers, Dee Paris, John Petterson, Waldo Redekop, Craig Rigg, Jerry Roland, Lowell Shank, Wilbur Sparks, Stan "Stasch" Sperl, Dick Stuart, Jim Styer, John Sugg, Staff Taylor, Dick Teeters, Arnold Wade, Charlie Wilcox

Photos still needed



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Bulletin Exchange

Bulletin Exchange Program

Managed by Alexander Edwards

Does your chapter publish and distribute a bulletin, even if only a weekly one-page? The chapter bulletin is one of the chapter's, if not its best, PR instruments as well as probably the most effective communication tool between board and membership. Ideally, every chapter should be exchanging bulletins with every other chapter—*hard copy, not just on-line*. Each chapter has its unique characteristics, reflecting the specific needs and interest of its membership, but shares a common bond with brother chapters and experiences similar problems. Exchanging bulletins is a very effective and efficient way for chapters to share with each other not only news about activities such as chapter shows, special performances and participation in inter-chapter, division, district and Society functions, but also how they've handled problems that challenge most chapters such as recruiting and retaining members.

We need the hard-copy bulletin and we need to be able to distribute and/or mail it to our supporters, friends, members (former, inactive, active and prospective), District and Society officers, and our brother chapters. We also need more bulletin editors, more members in most chapters who are both able and willing to assist in editing, preparing and distributing. In the real world, the cost of printing and mailing bulletins today is prohibitive for many chapters, even if restricting mailing bulletins to known friends and those chapters close by and distributing copies to active members by hand. A few have weekly news-sheets to keep members informed of chapter activities - published/mailed bi-monthly or quarterly. Many chapters have gone to on-line bulletins only, some available on their website, others e-mailing copies to those expressing an interest. However, not every barbershopper owns a computer or is computer-literate. As any computer user knows, there are times when either the computer or the printer is out of order, not working, or unavailable. What's the answer? If we all put our thinking caps on and discuss it with each other, surely we'll come up with one.

"It's great to be a barbershop editor!"

Alexander Edwards
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Current "editor swap list" on page 16

**The colorized cartoons in this issue
courtesy of resident PROBE artist
Paul White, editor of the
Concho Capers, El Paso, TX**

Web VP

Lyle Southam



SPAM and Junk Mail Coming to Your Chapter?

Both on your chapter web sites and in your on-line bulletins, make sure you hide email addresses from spam-bots. All too often, a chapter will list email addresses for chapter contacts or the membership guy or the show ticket guy; and in many cases, will use their personal email address. For example, I use Lyle@AHSOW.org for woodshedding email, but that address was harvested by a spam-bot on someone's web site and now I get lots of spam. I have a good spam filter but I still have to process the mail and occasionally check in my spam box for real emails to me.

There are many ways to publish an email address to avoid getting spam.

- Use a picture rather than text to show the email address.
- If linking to an email address, use a script to cloak email address
- Use a web form – also allows for sending an email from a location other than home.
- Use a captcha to challenge the visitor – are you human?
- Use a disposable email address like TicketsChristmas2012@iChorus.org (that address can be dropped after the show is finished).

There are other ways, and you can search these easily. Try "anti-spam methods for web pages." For avoiding email spam on bulletins, most of the same methods will work. If you publish your bulletin in Acrobat (PDF), you can make your links active, but you cannot easily incorporate anti-spam methods in PDF, but it can be done. So, for all your chapter email addresses, adopt an anti-spam policy – your chapter members will appreciate it. If you need some guidance on this, please contact

Lyle Southam, PROBE V.P. Web
Email – use [Contact Page](http://www.harmonize.com/probe/Web/index.htm#Contact)
1-800-611-8830

**WELCOME,
GENTLEMEN!**

**WE'RE THRILLED TO HAVE
YOU SINGING WITH US!**

President

John Elving



Apathy is a four letter word!

Gentlemen, ladies (and others), I'll get right to the point. PROBE, and me personally, is looking for committed people who want to see this organization grow and thrive. Let me explain.

A month or so ago I wrote an article for my local chapter newsletter in which I talked about an insidious six-letter word—apathy. It seems as though that same word has crept into our beloved fraternity. **PROBE** seems to have become *probe*, a rather insignificant word. It doesn't mean much to the barber-shopping world, or even to us members anymore.

Who will step up and work....to market the Society?

We need to look at what we are about and re-invent ourselves to be the viable organization we should be. I'm confident we can and will. We must establish ourselves as much more than a group of bulletin editors who judge each other's printed bulletins. Unfortunately, this is how many throughout the Society view us. We have become a former shadow of ourselves.

We have been given an opportunity to help **Melanie Chapman** in the marketing and public relations department of the Society. The job of marketing the Society is a huge one and much more than one person can or should handle. We need some people who will step up and work with her to market the Society in creative new ways. Isn't that what we are about, or at least should be?

I also would like to have people come forward who aren't officers, but would like to work with the current officers in bringing PROBE back to the forefront. We're not talking about the old "tried and true" methods. We don't want people who say, "We've never done it that way before." (The seven last words of any group.) I'm looking for people who are interested in creating a new PROBE that fits within the 21st century and beyond.

Dee Paris and others had a vision when they started the predecessor to PROBE in the mid 20th century. That vision worked and worked well for a time. The problem is that many of us still hold to that vision working in a whole new world. There are businesses all over the world that have gone away because of not wanting to adopt and adapt new visions for themselves. Will we be like them?

PROBE is a great organization, but it needs to change to remain a great organization. Let's grow together as we once again become the most influential fraternity in the new Barbershop Harmony Society.



This was originally written for the **RMD Vocal Expressions** by our Marketing & PR VP John Elving — it's a timely piece with Singing Valentines fast approaching

What are some things that many of us never consider when we think of marketing our chapter and/or chorus to the public? I'm sure there are many, but with Singing Valentines coming up shortly, let's take a look at some things your chapter can do to market itself successfully in your community.

Check with one of your billboard companies. With the advent of the electronic billboard, has come a new opportunity for letting people know about the Singing Valentines your chapter is going to be delivering. Your community may have done something like mine in that to put up those electronic billboards, they were required to "give" advertising space to non-profits for a reasonably small set up fee. These are usually placed in very high traffic areas of the city and rotate messages with many other ads. However, they do attract attention.

One of the things our chapter did last year was to hang a banner across one of the busiest main streets of our city. The cost seemed high, but to our surprise the income generated more than covered the cost. All the banner needs to say is "Singing Valentines" along with a phone number to call.

Make an 8 ½ X 11 flyer with tear off tabs at the bottom and place them in the men's room right at eye level over the urinal. You would be surprised at how many guys read those. I know one of our home improvement stores places their sale ads up in the restroom. It generates quite a few impulse buys. Same thing can happen with your Singing Valentine flyers.

Deliver a Singing Valentine to a TV personality or newscaster while they are on the air. (Of course, make arrangements with the right people in advance.) Also make sure this is done by your best quartet. Sometimes it means singing at 6:30 in the morning, but it does generate business if done well.

Check with your local movie theaters to see about getting an ad, for production costs only, on the screen with all the other pre-move ads. Again, use your best quartet.

Have a quartet (need I say it?) sing for marketing your Singing Valentines on either the morning show, or the drive time show on as many radio stations as possible. Although many stations aren't who you would think of as "your" demographic clientele, you never know who wants to have a unique valentine delivered by your group.

Like I said, there are many things we could mention as to ideas for marketing your Singing Valentines. Now it's your turn to get the creative juices flowing. See how many other ideas you can come up with. Don't just go for the tried and true. Be creative!



Web VP

Lyle Southam



2011 Website of the Year Contest

Enter your chapter in the 2011 Website of the Year contest.

- Provide your name, chapter title and contact info
- Provide your Chapter name and Chorus name
- Provide the URL of your current web site
- Provide all the names/titles of chapter members who contribute to the web site
- Provide a list of chapter events promoted on your web site
- Provide the direct results of your web site as measured by:
 - New prospects as potential members
 - Number of show tickets sold by your site
 - Number of gigs sold by your site (including non-paid gigs)
- Provide the number of email addresses used at your domain (e.g.: Tickets@iChorus.org)
- Provide the type of information that is provided by your members-only section if you have one.
- Provide methods used to collect info from site visitors (email subscription, social media connections, etc.)

Our assessment of each entry will look at the following criteria:

There are potentially over 800 chapter web sites - and the best ones will be concise and to the point and produce results that speak for themselves. The best websites will have a balance of:

- Page layout – overall attractiveness and most or all above the fold
- Quality images & graphics that relate to the topics presented
- Good use of bandwidth – total page size and download times
- If providing media samples, following copyright laws.
- Accurate and timely information and overall, an accurate portrayal of the chapter life.

A public chapter site should introduce information and educate its audience quickly. Any site has an extremely limited time (20 seconds or less) to capture the visitor's attention on the page subject. Always use the site as a stepping stone to get guests to the chapter, bums in the seats or places for your chapter or quartet to sing. Once the visitor to the site contacts you, that is the conversation you are looking for. From there, personal attention takes over and your chapter members can all get involved in continuing the process that was started by the web site.

From there, that personal contact that started as 10 seconds on a web site can now last for the rest of his life. In many cases, the chapter site will also support these activities after they have started. That will allow for a members-only section which is a support function to the chapter operations. For each chapter function (treasurer, marketing, membership, music...) there should be input to the web site. As well, these functions should expect results from the web site (sales, promotions, guests, singers using resources to get off paper).

So, if your chapter has a web site, please enter it into the Chapter Web Site Contest. Even if you have a new site just starting, an evaluation will help you improve no matter where you stand in the contest.

If you are not yet ready to enter the contest but want some guidance, we have a number of mentors who will assist you to get there. I encourage every chapter to enter the 2011 Website of the Year contest.



Lyle Southam, PROBE V.P. Web

Email – use [Contact Page](#) or call: 1-800-611-8830

Website Of The Year PROBE, BHS





“IN TUNE”
EDITORS
CALLS IT A DAY!
 By Rusty Williams
 co-editor



Linda (Williams) and I advised the chapter board (Hunterdon, New Jersey) in August that we'd not be able to continue with editing and publishing the *“In Tune”* after December. That time has arrived. This decision was made with regret, since it has been a real pleasure to be a face and voice of this wonderful chapter for 12 years.

In October 1999, Linda took on the task of editing the *Hunterdon Harmonizers’* newsletter. It was a two-page bulletin at that time, growing to three pages in January 2000, five pages by May, etc. (do you get the picture?). Contributions from our leaders enabled the *“In Tune”* to continue growing as a reporting, educational, motivational, and fun part of our chapter.

There was Society resistance to accepting a lady as an “official” bulletin editor, but cooler and wiser heads prevailed. The acceptance and recognition of her work was confirmed when **Linda Williams** was named the Mid-Atlantic Bulletin Editor of the Year in 2006, and the International Bulletin Editor of the Year in 2008. During this period, she also did a four-year stint as the editor of the District newsletter, the *“Mid-I Antics.”*

Because of increasing family and work commitments, it was necessary to drop the *“Mid-I Antics”* job last year, and now it is also necessary to pass on the *“In Tune”* editorial/publication responsibility to a worthy successor (yet to be named).

It has been a great honor to be of service to the *Hunterdon Harmonizers*, and Linda and I offer our thanks to all of the Harmonizers who have made this a wonderful and fulfilling part of our lives.



PROTY
Year-Long Activity
Bob Hall
Rogue Valley, OR



Bob Hall was educated at Reed College and Stanford University. He retired in 2009 from a productive 50 year career in technical business where he specialized in innovative projects. He remains a director of BioMed diagnostics, Inc, a company that provides simple, low cost devices for disease identification. In the non-profit charitable arena, he founded the Institute For the Study of Human Knowledge (ISHK) in 1969 as a forward looking cross cultural center to promote human understanding. Among ISHK projects is the distribution of teaching materials in Afghanistan.

Bob also founded the Cupertino Educational Foundation (CEEF) in 1984 which is believed to be the first instance of a private non-profit foundation whose mission is the support of a public school district. Both are thriving institutions today and are continuing their missions with success. Mr. Hall served as a trustee on the elected board of the Cupertino School District for eight years and was elected president by the other trustees three times in that period. You may consult Google for additional information on these institutions if interested.

He sang for fifteen years with the San Jose Symphonic Choir in California. In 2004, he joined the *Rogue Valley Harmonizers* chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. After retiring from active employment, he began to address some of the issues of the chapter. In the March-April 2011 issue of the *Harmonizer* magazine, he published an article based on a portion of what he has studied. He has been Chorus Manager and Marketing Vice President and now President of the Chapter.

An Irishman named O’Leary, who loved to sing as he worked, bought a mule to farm his garden. The mule worked well, but was almost totally deaf. So, when his owner yelled “Whoa!” the animal often continued plowing. Asked how the mule was working out, O’Leary shook his head. “There was a time,” he said, “when all my neighbors could hear was me singing my lilting melodies. Lately, I’m afraid, all they’ve heard are my riled Irish whoas.”



Steve Jackson

PROBEemoter editor

Kudos to President **John Elving** for designing and sending out the following survey to all PROBE members. Thought I'd share with our members (and readers) my perspective **(these are only my observations, please)**

ANALYZING PROBLEMS

I'm sure we all realize that PROBE is in a downward spiral. As officers it is our duty to do what we can to bring it back into the spotlight, so to speak, and make it a viable part of the BHS.

- **WHAT EXACTLY IS THE PROBLEM?**
 - *The recognition of PROBE as a working vital unit of BHS*
- **OUR PURPOSE IN ADDRESSING THE PROBLEM IS...**
 - *The education, motivation, and mentoring of BHS and associate members to join PROBE to assist us to educate and motivate the communicators of BHS*
- **OUR POINT OF VIEW IS AS FOLLOWS...**
 - *We want to build our membership for a stronger volunteer pool to better educate and motivate editors, webmasters, VPs, coordinators, etc.*
- **THE MISSING INFORMATION MOST RELEVANT TO THE QUESTION IS...**
 - *The right forum to educate and motivate*
- **SOME IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS WE ARE USING IN OUR THINKING ARE...**
 - *Everyone cares about PROBE*
- **HOW IMPORTANT IS THE PROBLEM?**
 - *VERY – goes to the core of our continual existence*
- **DO WE HAVE OUR LEADERSHIP'S AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE?**
 - *Mostly PROBE leadership, Society leadership seems indifferent, for the most part*
- **DO WE HAVE OUR MEMBERS' AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE?**
 - *PROBE, yes, BHS, we're working on it*
- **WHAT PRIORITY ARE WE WILLING TO GIVE IT IN TERMS OF TIME?**
 - *From PROBE's perspective, it should be "whatever it takes!"*
- **DO WE HAVE OUR LEADERSHIP'S AGREEMENT ON THE PRIORITY?**
 - *I sure hope so; 85% sure we do.*

- **DO WE HAVE OUR MEMBERS' AGREEMENT ON THE PRIORITY?**
 - *Better question! Survey says.....we're still waiting to hear from everyone!*
- **WHAT PRIORITY ARE WE (PROBE?) WILLING TO GIVE IT IN TERMS OF RESOURCES?**
 - *Should be number one mission*
- **DO WE HAVE OUR LEADERSHIP'S AGREEMENT ON THE RESOURCES?**
 - *WEBSITE, CONTESTS, MENTORING*
- **DO WE HAVE OUR MEMBERS' AGREEMENT ON THE RESOURCES?**
 - *That's another part of the problem, letting our editors and webmasters know that there IS help when they need it.*
- **IF WE SOLVE THIS PROBLEM, SOME IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS ARE...**
 - *The survival of PROBE*
- **IF WE FAIL TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM, SOME IMPORTANT IMPLICATIONS ARE...**
 - *Strangely enough, same answer, the SURVIVAL OF PROBE*
- **IF MANY PEOPLE WERE TO REASON THROUGH THIS PROBLEM, SOME IMPLICATIONS WOULD BE...**
 - *No more contests and no more PROBE (in it's current form). In my opinion, a revamped PROBE could focus upon all phases of mentoring editors and webmasters and developing our own faculty for all District Leadership Academies; establish a working relationship with all DBE's (District Bulletin Editors); have several seats on the International Marketing and Public Relations Committee; have a regular spot in both Livewire AND the HARMONIZER.*
- **AFTER REASONING THROUGH ALL OF THE ABOVE, THE BEST CONCLUSION WE HAVE REACHED IS...**
 - *Using FACEBOOK, Blogs, keeping the PROBE website current, using HARMONIZER and LIVEWIRE, etc., to keep BHS 'IN THE LOOP' about PROBE, our contests, and our mentoring programs*
- **THE KEY QUESTIONS THAT EMERGE FROM THE PROBLEM ARE ...**

What are we doing now that is working?

PROBEemoter seems to get good response

What are we doing now that is not working?

Building membership

What are we not doing now that could be working?

Teaching classes at the District level

What should we be doing more of?

Working with Harmonizer and Livewire — educating all barbershoppers about PROBE

What should we be doing less of?

Patting ourselves on the back for being "good ol' boys" and join the communication revolution

If we could change just one thing right now, what would it be?

Recognition of PROBE as vital Society resource

What keeps any of this from happening?

No follow through from the appropriate people

What do we do about it?

Keep a strong leadership team in place and lead by example; keep website current and promote all contests better in all Districts.

HOW TO PUBLISH A NEWSLETTER ONLINE

Jerry Daiker, Bulletin Editor Vice President



Technology has changed the way we do a lot of things in our lives. My chapter decided to go "high-tech" by publishing the newsletter online. Except for about two percent of the membership, this works fine. For those two percent I make hardcopy available. My goal with this missive is to help bulletin editors decide if they want to take their chapter to electronic publishing. I will explain how I publish the *Thoroughbred Chorus*, Louisville #1 chapter, newsletter, "**The Starting Gate.**"

Why? To save the chapter money. Other than the cost of the website, and, possibly the cost of some software, the newsletter, or bulletin, if you prefer, is free. And it takes less time because you don't need to print it, stuff envelopes, and paste postage. The web site is almost mandatory, today, if you want to attract new members. Anyone under 50 looks to the web to find anything. So you should already have a way to publish the newsletter electronically.

I don't just post a newsletter. I try to make it easy for the members and guests to access the newsletters. I have over two years of newsletters posted. So I created an index, news.htm, to access the documents and I created a month by month listing of what is available including "hot links." What's a "hot link?" It is a place in a document that, when the reader clicks on it, opens the link. You can open any newsletter by clicking on its title. Try it! Then click on a month of interest. The link text is a different color so you can tell it is a link. I also convert the newsletter to pdf, a document read using Adobe Reader (free). How to convert a document is VERY easy if you have most word processors. See #1 below.

The *Thoroughbreds* chose to install "Groupanizer" on the website. This makes the process of informing members that a newsletter is ready very easy. I just use my email software to send a message to:

members@thoroughbredchorus.groupanizer.com



I also include PROBE in my send-to list). My message to the members says something like:

The January 2012 of the award-winning "**The Starting Gate,**" the online newsletter of the Louisville#1 Chapter, **Thoroughbred Chorus**, is posted. Go to www.thoroughbredchorus.com website and select "News & Events," then "Newsletter," or click here: <http://www.thoroughbredchorus.com/news.htm>

Jerry Daiker
Editor-in-chief

If you click on either link above, you should get the latest **Thoroughbred** newsletter. If you don't have "Goupanizer" then just create a mailing list in your email program. If you don't know how, "Google It!"

I use free "CoffeeCup" software (CoffeeCup.com) for editing the .htm file and for transferring the files to the website. If you don't want to tackle that job, ask the guy that maintains the web site. The **Thoroughbred** chorus website has pull-down menus to select various pages. Our "News & Events" pull-down has "Newsletter" as a choice. So I must edit the news.html file to include the latest newsletter. This can be done in many different, simple ways. But this is what we chose to do. Then I use CoffeeCup FTP (File Transfer Protocol) to transfer the newsletter, the menu file, and the summary file to the website. If you have linked photos or other information in file form, then transfer them too. The webmaster will have a special I.D. and password to enter into your FTP program. That's it! If you want more details, see below!

The dirty details:

1. Create the new newsletter and convert to pdf. This is done using the same file name and revision of the .doc file for the .pdf file name. NOTE: With **WORD 2010** save file with "SAVE AS" and select ".pdf" extension.
2. Open CoffeeCup FTP and connect to website.
3. Drag & drop "news.html" (or click "Download") to the current month's folder on the local drive from \public_html folder
4. Disconnect from CoffeeCup FTP server connection (leave software open).
5. Open CoffeeCup HTML Editor
6. Open file transferred above.
7. Edit as required including copying of last month's HTML code. Edit the Title (month) and edit file name (month number) per final revision number.



Stephen Rafe is a former member of the Society's International Marketing Committee and a chapter bulletin editor. He has contributed articles to PROBEmotor in the past and has also taught numerous courses in Marketing & PR for COTS. In addition, he has served as the head of the Society's Leadership Task Force, was a member of the Society's Service Study Committee, and delivered a keynote address for the Society's Leadership Conference. More recently, he has conducted classes for Marketing & PR officers as well as Presidents at the Mid-Atlantic District's Leadership Academy. He teaches marketing, advertising, business writing, research, leadership and other courses at the college and university level.



Guerrilla Marketing — Easy and inexpensive strategies for making big profits

By Stephen Rafe

I recently discovered a wonderful book that is full of wonderful ideas for our chapters to consider. The book is ***Guerrilla Marketing—Easy and inexpensive strategies for making big profits from your small business*** by Jay Conrad Levinson. If you haven't seen or read a copy of this book, you need to. Even though it is pointed to the small business owner, there is much we can take away for use with our non-profit chapters.

Just to give you a small sample of what is there, I will refer to something I found toward the end of the book in a chapter entitled Guerrilla Company Attributes. The author starts out by stating, "You might be a marketing guerrilla through and through, but if your company lacks certain attributes, all your good efforts might go for naught." He then goes on to explain with several points, which I will alter somewhat to fit our barbershop world.



"You're going to have to back off when you sing those tags. You're losing too many fillings."

Name

Does your name break the rules?

In a cluttered marketing environment, names that simply fit in with the rest are lost and very easy to ignore. Your chorus name must stand apart from the competition.

Will your name cause your competitors to grimace?

Your chorus name must be powerful enough to make them wince every time they see or hear it. It must explain who you are and why your chorus is the one to have sing for them.

Does the name make a promise or tell a story?

The right name can be the cornerstone of a lasting relationship. It is an ultra-powerful marketing weapon.

Does the name describe or suggest a feature or benefit?

Great names suggest the most compelling benefit your prospects will need. There is no confusion about what you offer.

Does the name make you feel a bit uncomfortable? Great names provoke people, attract attention, take chances. They don't simply fit right in.

Branding

You must develop your chorus "Brand Name" which will differentiate you from all the other entertainment groups out there. Branding is one of the most important things you can do. Many people have purchased products or services simply because they were familiar with the name. When someone wanted to hire a product or service, how many times have they said it was, "Because I heard of it." That answer is synonymous with brand name awareness.

So how does your chorus achieve brand name awareness? By constant repetition of its name. This repetition can come from frequent marketing, continual awareness to a sign, repeated stories in the media, or a combination of all these.

Positioning

What's the first thing that should enter the minds of your prospects when they read or hear your name? That happens to be your niche, or positioning. You are in charge of the answer to that question, so give it careful thought.

Do you want to be known as the least expensive, the friendliest, the most expert, the one that entertains at retirement homes, the one that people turn to for their convention entertainment, the one that sings all the old songs, the most entertaining? There are many niches from which you can choose. Your choice can determine the fate of your chorus. Whatever positioning you select, be sure that it's able to be clearly communicated to your target market.

You can differentiate from your competition in at least ten ways: place, price, promotion, people, product, service, selection, quality, convenience and speed. The area in which you decide to differentiate is your market position.

It should come shining through in all your marketing. It must be easy as pie to communicate in even a thirty-second, even a ten-second, elevator pitch. It must be simple to say, to show, to prove.

Quality

There are two crucial things to learn about quality right from the get-go. The first is that quality is the number-two reason that people want your services, ranking just behind confidence in your organization. The second thing to know is that quality is not what you put into your product, but what your customers (patrons) get out of it.

Wow!

Cont. next page

These days, quality refers to both your product (singing) and the way you serve people. They're going to equate every aspect of your chorus to quality, so it's a good idea for you to do the same. People will assume that you have quality when you market yourself and are quick to recognize any lack of it.

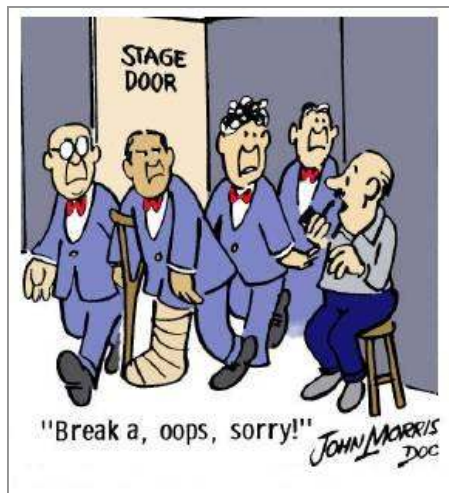
Guerrilla marketing does sell you services. But it only sells them once. It's the high quality you offer that will bring in the repeats and referrals.

Value

Let's cut right to the chase. *Value is far more crucial than price. And perceived value is far more crucial than value.* People will pay higher prices for your services when they know you deliver more quality for the buck. Let me repeat that. They'll pay higher prices for your services that they believe deliver more quality for the buck.

In my own business I have found that the people who are looking for the cheapest price for my services end up being customer I really don't want. I have also found that in raising the prices I charge to be near the top in the field, I actually get more customers because they have heard or experienced the fact that for that price they get better service and consequently are happier customers.

Bottom line, think about the value to your customer and the quality they are getting. Whatever you do, do it with excellence. It will make the marketing of your chorus, and by virtue of that, bring in more opportunities to sing for people and make some money for your coffers. That's what I call a win-win situation



Marketing and PR VP

Eric Herr
 ewh14@comcast.net



Movin' Forward

Happy New Year to one and all! I hope all of you had a truly wonderful holiday season! The New Year is always a great time to wipe the slate clean and start anew with some fresh ideas to get our barbershop harmony message out to the community, jump start membership and create new incentives to keep our existing membership engaged and coming back for more.

For sure, these are some lofty goals, but challenges that us Marketing and PR guys should all be ready to handle...right? That said, here are just a few key suggestions to help keep us all on track!

First, "Operation Harold Hill" is building up a strong head of steam and pulling out of the station full speed ahead. The goal for 2012 is to increase BHS membership by at least 25-percent over the previous five year average for the first six months of the year.

For those who may be unfamiliar with this program, named after Professor Harold (The Music Man) Hill, from the famed Oscar winning 1962 movie classic, is an outreach effort designed to help boost both awareness of our hobby and membership. The beauty is that this initiative allows each chapter to create it's own unique campaign through specific chapter goals, needs and wants. A wealth of ideas are available by visiting:

www.operationharoldhill.com

While "Operation Harold Hill" is clearly about developing and perpetuating membership, it is and should be an integral part of your chapters overall marketing and public relations master plan as well! Meet with your other officers and get a coordinated game plan together.

All Aboard!

Another way to fine tune (pardon the pun) our efforts for 2012, is to be sure you know the media players in your area and the means by which your target audience gets their daily dose of news and other information. Questions may arise such as what are the newspapers, radio stations, TV stations in your area? What are the names of people in charge of the Arts and Entertainment categories? What are their e-mails, phone numbers and other contact information?

So too, are questions concerning editorial and submission guidelines. Don't miss out on getting your event publicized because you didn't get the information to the right person and on time!

Along those lines, be sure your media list is current. People in the media business often get shuffled around within the same organization or change jobs altogether. A word to the wise...update your lists at least every six months or sooner.

Also, in this age of instant information, texting and being constantly "plugged in" 24/7, it's easy to be complacent and just depend on a quick e-mail or text to get your messaging job done. There are times, more often than not, when editors or reporters never receive or simply overlook messages. Remember, Murphy's Law strikes when you least expect it!

The fact is, as great as all of this state of the art technology is, there are times when you absolutely need to pick up the phone to follow up and make that personal connection with your media contacts. Get to know them and give them the opportunity to know you!

Trust me, if you want to separate yourselves from the rest of the pack, there is no substitute for a one on one conversation. Whether it's by phone or an in person visit, when push comes to shove and you want and need that extra coverage, the personal touch clearly gives you the added advantage...hands down!

Finally, money to fund various efforts always seems to always pose challenges, especially now, with a less than certain economic outlook.

Now is the time to build bridges and form strategic alliances with every organization that you can think of. Swap mailing lists, do joint performances and don't forget to keep tabs on who is doing the big bucks advertising in your area. Chances are, if a company is doing some heavy duty advertising, they just might be able to underwrite one or more initiatives that your chapter has planned. Keep up your great work, always keep your eye out for great opportunities and keep movin' forward!



Together, we can make 2012 the best year ever!

Operation HAROLD HILL
 WWW.OPERATIONHAROLDHILL.COM

Public Relations! Carrying the Ball But Just So Far

By Bob Heim
*A public relations practitioner
for close to 60 years*

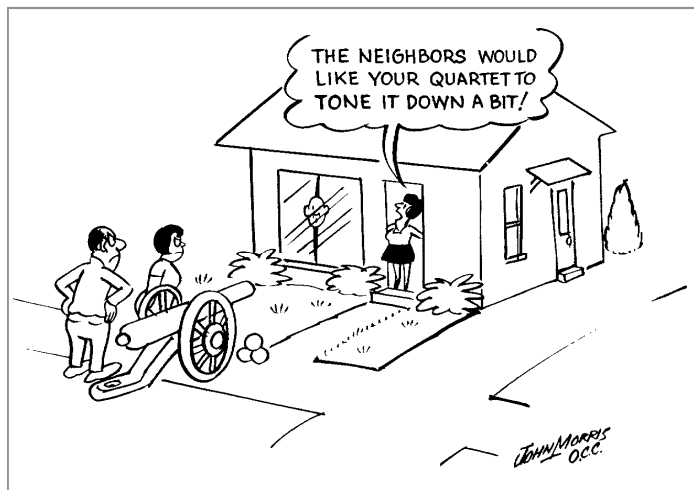


I've been asked one question over the years time and time again, it's this one. What's the difference between advertising and public relations? Folks very often use one term when they actually are thinking of the other.

The most simplistic answer in terms of media relations is linked to "control"- what way, in what form, by what method, and exactly how the message" (whatever it is, paid or unpaid for) is expected to be seen or heard. In advertising, the conduit for the message, or in some instances, several avenues to send it (newspapers, television, place mats in restaurants, electronic signage, and so on) is selected, and specifics in its exposure are guaranteed. No ifs, ands or buts. A billboard on the corner of 57th and Lexington, with whatever specified text, for the month of May; on the back inside cover of Sports Illustrated, with pre-determined text, artwork, color, size and so forth. No deviations at all.

In public relations, on the other hand, efforts in supplying material to the media generally offer no such assurances. Just because an editor gets the material there is no guarantee it will be selected for use; no certainty it will be used in its entirety. The factors that come into play are many. Space (in print media) limitations, skills of the writer, timeliness of the story, competition by others for the same exposure, creativeness of the idea. Lots more. The path to victory is filled with minefields. It might be a great story, but a five-alarm fire might put it straight into the wastebasket. A great deal can go wrong before that ultimate success.

The daily "in box" of any editor is truly staggering. Because PR is so "iffy," the odds of achieving desired results are much better if all the positive elements are in place. And, should the submitted story appear with some of its text eliminated; if the accompanying photo is not used with it, it is a triumph nonetheless. The message sent and used.



The Barbershop Lead Creed

from www.singingbarbershop.com

1. We will not flaunt in front of others the fact that we have the best voice in the group (unless the music calls for it, which, come to think of it, it usually does).
2. We will do our best to stay in tune, but not too much, since the other guys have to follow us anyway.
3. As consummate gentlemen, we will continue to let the basses feel like they're the most important part of the group, even though without the melody they would have nothing to harmonize.
4. As we focus on shaping and caressing the song, if we forget a word (or all of them), we won't worry too much since the other guys have to follow us anyway.
5. We will never allow a baritone to sing louder than us, even when we're on the seventh. The melody must be heard!
6. We will be sensitive to the tenor's need to feel special. We won't overdo it, though.
7. In a chorus, although we will do our best to follow the director, we realize that we have to take advantage of all of the opportunities in a song to show off our wonderful lead voices. After all, that's what the audience has come to hear, right?
8. We will do our best to cover the fact that the baritone has a weak, emaciated instrument; otherwise he'd be singing lead.
9. When in doubt, pitch it up!
10. When a coach/director advises us that we were under pitch, or too loud, we will always nod appreciatively, all the while knowing that we were just doing what the composer/arranger intended (even if the coach/director IS the composer/arranger).



What's in a Song

"I'll Fly Away"

Compiled by David Wolfe

Written in 1929 by Albert E. Brumley, then published in 1932 by the Hartford Music Company, *I'll Fly Away* quickly became a classic hymn among Baptists, Pentecostals, Nazarenes, Churches of Christ, and many Methodists. It also became a standard among bluegrass and gospel singers and is often performed at funerals.

Brumley, considered the "pre-eminent gospel songwriter" of the 20th century published more than 600 songs. Some of his other popular titles include *Turn Your Radio On*, *I'll Meet You In the Morning*, and *The World Is Not My Home*. Brumley came up with the idea for *I'll Fly Away* while picking cotton on his father's farm in Rock Island, Oklahoma. He says he was humming an old ballad that had the line "If I had the wings of an angel, over these prison walls I would fly." Then, he realized it could be the plot for a gospel song. Three years went by before Brumley worked out the remaining lines of the song, with the "prison" becoming an analogy for earthly life. Brumley also stated he "had no idea it would become so popular."

The website allmusic.com (All Music Guide) lists more than 1,000 recorded versions, the earliest known recording being from the Selah Jubilee Singers in 1941. The group was founded in 1927 and probably performed *I'll Fly Away* publicly before recording it. The Chuck Wagon Gang's recording in 1948 sold over one million copies and ranks among the best-selling gospel recordings of all time, and as one of the best-selling songs of the 1940s. Many other artists including The Stanley Brothers, George Jones, Charley Pride, Randy Travis, Jars of Clay, Aretha Franklin, Brenda Lee, and even Kanye West all recorded versions.

Puff Daddy and Faith Evans lifted one line from *I'll Fly Away* ("One glad morning when this life is o'er...") for their Grammy Award winning 1997 rap song *I'll Be Missing You*.

In 2000, Albert E. Brumley & Sons, Inc. settled a copyright infringement suit filed against Arista Records and the production companies involved with *I'll Be Missing You*. In the settlement, the defendants agreed Albert E. Brumley & Sons, Inc. were the rightful owners and settled for an undisclosed amount.

There have been many movies and TV shows using *I'll Fly Away*. Some of these productions have a religious theme like *The Apostle* (performed by Gary Chapman and Wynona Judd), and the final episode of *7th Heaven* (performed by Alison Krauss and Gillian Welch). Other movies include "O Brother Where Art Thou," Spike Lee's "When The Levees Broke," and "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button." The song was also used in an episode of *The Waltons* where Jason sang the hymn several times.

—from wikipedia.com and allmusic.com

While browsing through old Harmonizers and District bulletin archives, I ran across several photos of former PROBE members that may be of interest to old and new members alike.



Dick Stuart (at left), was this year's only living recipient of PROBE's Hall of Honor award. Dee Paris (center) made the announcement as PROBE President Bob Arthur looked on.

For bonus points, what year was Dick inducted?

1990 Bob McDermott
Detroit/Oakland, MI Gentlemen's Songster



PROBE President Bob Arthur (left) presented Bob McDermott with his trophy as winner of the International Bulletin Contest.

Photo courtesy of Dick Stuart, JAD (Cider Press)



THINK
"NEW MEMBERS!"

RENEW YOUR PROBE
MEMBERSHIP



J-School

By Tom Pearce
past editor, PROBE Moter

Content: Getting copy can be a piece of cake

Most people would rather listen than talk, rather read than write, and rather talk than write. It's a good thing we barbershop bulletin editors like to write! And it's good that we understand that most of our chapter members really don't like to write. That knowledge helps us do our job more intelligently and effectively for the chapter we try to serve.

We have a lot of topics to cover in our bulletins, lots of events to preview and review, calendars to publish, news to report, officer's ideas to relate, editorials of our own to write, and more.

If you sometimes find yourself staring at a blank paper or empty computer screen, wishing someone would send you something to put in your bulletin, here are some ideas for generating copy easily.

Messages from chapter officers

You've asked your chapter's elected officers to write a piece for you each month. Some do it automatically and dutifully, seeing the wisdom in appearing in print regularly. Others don't. Instead of gnashing your teeth and thinking up pejorative descriptors for those deadbeats, you realize that these fellas just don't like to write, and don't do it very well. So you call them on the phone, chat for 10 or 15 minutes about the chapter or what's happening in that officer's purview, ask permission to write about the conversation, offer to send a copy for editing by the officer, and bingo! There's the column. You may attribute the piece to the officer, put the column in the form of an interview with your byline, or share a byline. You'll never worry about an officer or other columnist missing a byline, and you'll write the column much better than a non-writing officer could. Sometimes I've called a chapter officer, or the chorus director, and just said I need a juicy quote for my story on something or other, and we're off and running. As long as they don't have to write, most people will give you lots of material, far more, in fact, than you can use. Let 'em talk!

Craft articles

Not every chapter member or wife wants to read about barbershop craft, but a surprisingly number of them really like this topic. Besides, if you're planning to enter your bulletin in the PROBE bulletin contest, you'll need some craft pieces. But you're not a professional musician, so writing them from your own knowledge may not do the trick. What to do? The Society website is an excellent source (so is the PROBE website — editor) of advice and information about every aspect of barbershop singing, quartet and choral. This information is for you, Mr. Editor. Go get it. Lengthen it, shorten it, summarize it, sculpt it to fit your space, attribute it, and bingo! You have published something about barbershop craft. It's that easy. Of course, your chapter's chorus director is also a source for craft information. Don't hesitate to call him on the phone and chat about some aspect of singing. Ask permission to publish, offer to send a preview copy to him, etc., attribute the article, and you're all set. You may find some great material in other chapter bulletins, too, and you can use it as long as you attribute it properly, citing author and bulletin — it's good practice to name the bulletin's editor, too!

Society and chapter history

You can spend a lifetime sifting through, and borrowing, material from Society history published in Heritage of Harmony (1988) by the Society. Other history books are available, too, as are the recollections of members of your chapter who are Society veterans. You can write a short account of one quartet, a district event, etc. It's as easy as reading a few things or making a call.

Features

How would you like to publish an exclusive interview with legendary barbershop arrangers Tom Gentry, Don Gray, Burt Szabo, Ed Waesche, or others? You can! All you have to do is contact these men by phone or email. They'll be delighted to communicate with you about their own barbershop histories, how they arrange music, and anything else about which you care to ask. And you'll be the only editor to do this — or at least the first. Other editors will pick up your story and use it, properly attributed to you, of course, in their own bulletins.

Song histories

Your PROBE contest judges very much want you to publish a short history of some songs, too. This is pretty easy and lots of fun. Your research will probably take you to your local library. If you can't find good sources there, ask the librarian to help you arrange an inter-library loan (it's free) and soon you'll be staying up late at night because you're learning so much about songs you've sung! And of course the Heritage of Harmony Song Book, edited by Burt Szabo and published by the Society in 1988, is a fine source for some very brief song histories.

The Internet

From the Harmonet to an incredible array of websites you can glean huge amounts of material to use in your bulletin. You just have to go get it. I've quoted many notes from the Harmonet (with permission). They make great filler, features, craft pieces, and some funny stories. Use 'em!

PROBE Moter, July-Sept 2004



It isn't his singing, it's playing his part on that darn piano that bugs me!"

Music of Your Life Barbershop Style

Harmony Time

Hosted by Tyler Smith





EVERY SATURDAY AT 9AM

1220AM (Stillwater, MN) or Webcast at www.klbbradio.com



"Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid."

Albert Einstein



PLEASE HELP ME LOCATE PHOTOS NEEDED FOR THE PROBE WEBSITE
(in black and blue)

PROBE HALL OF HONOR

Bruce Anderson, Ray Barrett, Herb Bayles, Grant Carson, Jerry Coltharp, Dick Cote, Lloyd Davis, Wade Dexter, Mel Edwards, John Elving, Leo Fobart, Jim Fulks, Harry Gault, Dick Girvin, Ray Heller, Bob Hockenbrough, Paul Izdepski, Steve Jackson, Terry Jordan, Grady Kerr, Art Lane, Deac Martin, Bob McDermott, William Moreland, John Morris, Roger Morris, Buddy Myers, Dee Paris, John Petterson, Waldo Redekop, Craig Rigg, Jerry Roland, Lowell Shank, Wilbur Sparks, Stan "Stasch" Sperl, Dick Stuart, Jim Styer, John Sugg, Staff Taylor, Dick Teeters, Arnold Wade, Charlie Wilcox

could use a better quality photo

Ray Barrett from Durham, North Carolina, **MAD**; **John Morris** (famous Society cartoonist) from Detroit/Oakland County, Michigan, **PIO**; **Roger Morris** from Detroit/Oakland County, **PIO** and originally from Barboursville, WV, and **Stan "Stasch" Sperl** (famous cartoonist), from Waukesha County, Wisconsin, **LOL**

Mel Edwards from San Diego, California, **FWD**

Leo Fobart from Kenosha, Wisconsin, **LOL** **Harmonizer** editor

Jim Fulks from Louisville, Kentucky, **CAR**, editor **Starting Gate**

Ray Heller from EVG, **Harmonizer** and **PROBEmoter** editor

Bob McDermott from Detroit/Oakland County, Michigan, editor, **Gentlemen's Songster**

Charlie Wilcox, Illinois

Bulletin Exchange List (13)

December 2011

Editor; last date received; address; bulletin; ^ bulletin emailed; hc: hardcopy; ol: hardcopy; xxxx: chapter

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Clare McCreary 10550 Village Drive N #204B Seminole Florida 33772-4879 cmccrear@tampabay.rr.com	7-8/11 ol/hc	Dick Cote 2008 Calle Candela Fullerton, California 92833-1541 <i>Barbershop Clippin's</i> dicknkay1@aol.com	9-10/11 hc/ol
Linda Williams 24 Toad Lane Ringoes New Jersey 08551 In Tune^ lindaw23@comcast.net	11-12/11 Hunterdon hc/ol	Larry Litchfield Las Vegas Nevada <i>The New Showbill (bi-monthly)</i> Larry-GALVpr@cox.net	06/11 ol
Jim Yasinow 5316 Golfway Lane Lyndhurst Ohio 44124-3738 The Suburbanaire mmyjmy@aol.com	11-12/11 Cleveland-East hc	Peter Hensley* 1899 Fox Bridge Court Fallbrook, California 92028 hc Pacific Coast Harmony Limelight^ La Jolla (Ca) phensley34@roadrunner.com	09/09 ol
Charles F. Bell 67 Laurel Avenue Sea Cliff New York 11579-1915 Toosday Toons Nassau-Mid-Island chizbell@optonline.net	11/11 ol	Steve Jackson 215 Cheyenne, Lot 18 Golden Colorado 80403 PROBEmotor editor <i>Vocal Expressions</i> [RMD] <i>Mountain Talk</i> Denver sjbullead@comcast.net <i>(note correction of email address)</i>	 ol
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PROBE NEEDS YOU!
Volunteer to give something back
IT FEELS GOOD!

