



*International Medalist*  
**GREAT NORTHERN UNION**  
**CHORUS**



HILLTOP CHAPTER • SPEBSQSA

10,000 LAKES DIVISION – LAND O' LAKES DISTRICT

Volume 10 # 1

**GNUsNews**

January 2005

## Another Great Annual Show at Bethel University

The **Great Northern Union** did it again with a wonderful show at Bethel on Saturday January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Two of our chapter quartets, **Nouveau** and **After Midnight**, performed as well as the International medalist quartet from California, **Metropolis** (pictured at right). All three quartets also made an appearance at the afterglow.

We also debuted our newest recording **Bound for Glory**, a gospel CD with the **GNU** chorus along with **Happiness Emporium** and **Four Voices** quartets. It is sure to be a great addition to our collection of 4 recordings we have done over the years.



**CHAPTER LEADERS**

President	Bill Lydecker	507-934-1822(H)
Immediate Past President	Jim Higgins	952-848-0831(H)
Secretary	Dan Vander Ploeg	612-339-2596(H)
Treasurer	John Babbs	952-474-9404(H)
Performance VP	Marty Monson Erik Dove	651-330-7587(H) 651-905-1605(H)
Marketing VP	Loring Harrop	952-942-0845(H)
Membership VP	Don Knecht	612-926-3868(H)
Fund Development Vice President	Harvey Berwin	651-698-3515(H)
Mem. At Large	Art VanDeWater	715-425-6787(H)
Mem. At Large	Tom Semple	952-403-9643(H)
Mem at Large	Chuck McKown	952-469-2575(H)
Chorus Mgr. VP	Kent Erlandson	952-944-9934(H)
Presentation	Roger Stanfield	952-440-3678(H)
Librarian	Art VanDeWater	715-425-6787(H)
Sunshine	Keith Fransen	651-438-1342(H)
Uniforms		

**DIRECTOR**

Pete Benson 701-642-2484(H)

**ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

Scott Kvigne 952-431-0596(H)

**SECTION LEADERS**

Tenor	Tom Matchinsky	612-743-9345(H)
Lead	David Bailey-Aldrich	612-379-2622(H)
Bari	Jim Emery	612-824-7464(H)
Bass	Mark Jurgensen	507-534-6543(H)

**BULLETIN EDITORS**

Roger and Theresa Meyer 763-476-7382(H)  
Email: roger.theresa@meyer.net

Steve Anderson 612-866-1856(H)  
Email: sander1159@aol.com

Each GNU's NEWS issue is an official publication of the Hilltop Chapter, 10,000 Lakes Division, LOL District, of SPEBSQSA, Inc. Bulletin material may be contributed by chapter members, copied from Society publications, or may be borrowed from other chapter bulletins. All articles will be credited to the author. Articles not carrying a by-line have been written by the editor, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the officers of this chapter.



Greetings from the Benson Boy factory. We are now well on our way to the Benson Brothers Quartet. Our new baby Luke was born on January 10<sup>th</sup>. So far all he does is eat, sleep, poop, and make funny sounds. We're pretty sure he'll be the baritone!

Rachelle and I would like to thank everyone for the well wishes and gifts. The chorus sent some very nice flowers and balloons to the hospital as well as some GNU shirts for Luke and me!

Congratulations on a show well done. It is encouraging to see that our level of musicianship continues to rise with each performance. Of course it was also exciting to be able to debut some new music along with releasing our brand new recording, "Bound for Glory." Do you have your copy yet? It's fantastic!



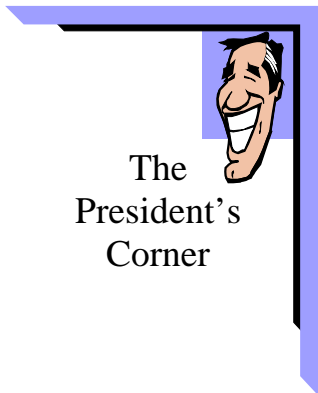
Aside from just feeling very good about the show, I couldn't help but notice of a couple areas in need of improvement. (That's my job, right?) The first is that I am not seeing a total sense of visual commitment from every man. Choreography is one issue, but I see it mostly in facial expression or lack there of. Our Presentation Team works very hard but they can only go so far. We are in need of, and working on, a more effective method of evaluation in that area.

The second issue is in the area of chorus size. If we are serious about doing some damage in Salt Lake City we need to be adding about 30 more men to our active roster. I have entrusted a committee to help make this happen but I am sure that your help is needed. One great singer from each of you is all it would take. Time is short!

Pete



If I counted correctly, 10 members of Hilltop attended the COTS (Chapter Officer Training Seminar) at UW-Stout on January 15-16 (I apologize if I omit someone.) **John Kleiber** is the new Vice President for the 10,000 Lakes Division. **Doug Miller** was there as Director of Contests and Judging. **Judd Orff** taught one of the classes. **Ken Slinde** attended the Conventions and Contest class. And six of the current board members attended classes related to their office and/or responsibilities, **Bill Lydecker, Don Knecht, Loring Harrop, Eric Dove, Art Van DeWater, and Tom Semple**. All-in-all, we were well represented. Ask any of the above about what the classes were like.



"Man-of-Note" total, my impression is that I had to ask as many as 10 men to get one to come as a guest, and that the result was 1 new member for each 5-10 guests. Do the math - I may have invited 40+ men to attend for each new member on my list. I don't give up and quit asking because the last 10 have said "No". As a matter of fact, depending on how well I know the prospect, I may not quit asking him because he turned me down the first time. The next one I ask may be the next new member. We do have a challenge in recruiting new members - such as the cost, especially considering the trip to international each year, and the quality of our performance, which I suspect many potential members find intimidating. Are you up to the challenge?

Bill Lydecker  
President of the GNU



A topic that has involved continued discussion by the board is how to increase the number of men on the risers at contests and performances, especially since we are essentially holding our own or slipping slightly in chorus singers. It seems to me that there are two ways to achieve this goal.

First, like most barbershop chapters, we have a number of men who renew their membership each year, but are not active members of the chapter and chorus. Some of these men have been inactive members for a number of years. One possibility is to find out why they are inactive, and see what we can do to attract some of them back to the risers. I suspect that this strategy will be of limited success.

Second, we can work to increase our membership by recruiting new singers. That approach will work only if we all participate. Information collected several times by headquarters reveals that most members, perhaps as many as 80+%, attended their first barbershop chapter meeting because they were invited and brought to the meeting by someone who was already an active member. In reaching my



The GNU was proud to have the 2003 LOL District Champions, **Nouveau** (above) and 2004 LOL District 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers, **After Midnight** as two of our featured quartets on the January show.





### From the Judges Pit

***The Great Northern Union is very fortunate to count 9 judges among our members. Through this column, we will get advice from these experts on how to improve our individual performance.***

I had a little idle time today and was thinking ahead to Salt Lake City, so I looked at the GNU international contest scores over the past eight years. I thought I would share a few statistical observations and then pose a question to each of us. Since we can't affect the scores of other choruses, I focused on our scores instead of our rank in each contest.



The GNU's highest total scores at international contests correlate pretty well with chorus size. The table below shows the year, the number of men on the risers, and the score average.

Year	Men	Score
2000	86	89.4
1997	88	88.1
2001	85	87.9
1999	84	86.6
2002	65	85.5
2004	62	85.1
1998	69	84.7
2003	68	84.4

So when Mark Hale and Pete lobby for a larger chorus, there is some logic behind that lobbying. It's pretty clear that we score higher when our total singers is in the 80's than when it's in the 60's. But if you look at the choruses that have beaten us recently, there are some notable exceptions to the size correlation. Toronto Northern Lights has consistently outscored the GNU (and

medaled) over the past four years with an average of 47 men. The Alliance has outscored the GNU (and medaled) the past two years with an average of 52 men. So it is not impossible to get international medals with a smaller chorus. With that in mind, I thought it might be interesting to see how many points/man (score average / # of men) we've achieved over this same period. The table below shows the year, number of men on the risers, and the points per man for that contest.

Year	Men	Points/man
2004	62	1.4
2002	65	1.3
2003	68	1.2
1998	69	1.2
2000	86	1.0
2001	85	1.0
1999	84	1.0
1997	88	1.0

What's encouraging to me about this table is that we're getting more points out of fewer men the last three years than ever before. Obviously Scott and now Pete have done some good things with the men we have, and the trend is up.

So what's the point? I would suggest that there are two ways to an international medal:

- 1: Better quality per man
2. More quality men

Each of us can take the Toronto approach and raise our individual contribution level. (Toronto averages about 2.0 points per man!) Or we can bring in more quality singers. That's the Ambassadors and Northbrook approach. (The Vocal Majority and Masters of Harmony do both!)

So, ask yourself which camp you're in. Can you realistically raise your performance level from 1.4 (GNU's 2004 international average) to something higher? If enough men do that, we WILL get a medal. Or can you bring in more quality singers to raise our total score? If enough men do that, we WILL get a medal. There's certainly nothing wrong with doing both. But doing neither means your contribution is static. If enough men do that, we WILL NOT get a medal. So just how many points are you worth? :-)

P.S. All of the above logic applies just as well to non-contest activities, too!

Jim Emery  
Singing Judge Hilltop, MN  
Great Northern Union chorus  
After Midnight quartet



### Meet Ken Slinde

Ken Slinde is one of our newer basses, providing more of the coveted foundation for the fuller GNU sound. He lives in Bloomington with his "first wife" Mary, to whom he has been married 37 years. Mary is an associate principal in the Hopkins school system.

There are three grown kids with whom Ken speaks with pride: the oldest daughter lives in Zimbabwe, Africa with her husband (who works for Catholic Relief Services) and their own two little sons. The next daughter lives in Colorado with her husband and little baby; their son lives in Minneapolis with his wife and baby. Although Ken is now working in Metro Mobility, he has been in electrical sales most of his life.

Musically, he has a rich background: he sang with the Gustavus choir all four years in St. Peter. He is also a long time member of Mt Olivet church choir. But he gave that up to join GNU, since they rehearse on the same night.



To paraphrase Ken, he sings because he just loves the sound during every rehearsal. Competing in Louisville, he says it was a thrill; and he further says, "we are both looking forward to Salt Lake City".

As for other contributions in his short career with GNU, he says that he agreed, in a weak moment, to help Jim Higgins in the spring convention, since he was told it would be "a snap"... "he lied" ... "but I know it will be OK with the help of Judd, Tyler, and the rest of the GNUers."

### Meet Sam Sather

Sam Sather, singing lead with us for only a few months, is one of our newest members. He lives at Chaska, where he has lived for most of his life. Newly graduated from Laurence University in Appelton, Wisconsin, he is currently teaching general music at Jonathon Elementary. Our January show was his first with GNU, and he was all smiles throughout the entire day. Music runs in the family. His mother is a piano teacher, both at her home studio, as well as at Crown College. His sister



is finishing a music degree at Luther College. He sings in the Chaska community; plays trombone in the Chaska jazz band, teaches and plays violin, and he has sung in a few college quartets. He is currently with Wally and Miles, and a bass from his old quartet. Having still some spare time, he is starting a new quartet with Jim Barloon! Now he can add membership in the prestigious Great Northern Union Men's chorus to his impressive resume.

Sam says, "I just love singing with the GNU. In my short time with you "I really enjoyed singing at the Vikings game; and now I have sung at the big show! "

Sam, tell us you have about a dozen clones! What a wealth of experience you bring with you. Welcome aboard!



## Calendar of "Special" Events

Feb 14....Singing Valentines

Feb 26...Mark Hale Coaching Session

March 12...GNU/Luther Norsemen Show

March 19...10,000 Lakes Division Contest

April 3... Mt. Olivet Lutheran Church

## BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

For those or you who haven't heard or it just hasn't sunk in yet, The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, (SPEBSQSA) has developed a new, more user friendly name. Our organization is now referred to as the Barbershop Harmony Society or "BHS".

## GNU Judges will be busy this Spring!

With Spring judging assignments out, I thought you guys might be interested in what the Hilltop judging community is doing this Spring. All of our Spring assignments are listed below:

### David Bowen, CA

LOL Southwest Division - Faribault, MN  
EVG Division I - Mission, BC

### Don Challman, PRS

EVG Division II - Monroe, WA  
FWD Ariz/SoNev Division - Phoenix, AZ

### Barry Clapper, PRS

FWD Ariz/SoNev Division - Phoenix, AZ  
EVG International Prelims - Bend, OR

### Jim Emery, SNG

ILL International Prelims - Peoria, IL  
LOL Red Carpet Division - Grand Forks, ND

### Tom Matchinsky, SNG

EVG Division II - Monroe, WA  
FWD Ariz/SoNev Division - Phoenix, AZ

### Roger Meyer, CA

LOL 10,000 Lakes Division - Sillwater, MN  
LOL International Prelims - Wausau, WI

### Doug Miller, PRS

MAD South Division - Reston, VA  
LOL Red Carpet Division - Grand Forks, ND

### Judd Orff, PRS

JAD International Prelims - Columbus, OH  
FWD NorCal East/Nor Nev - Modesto, CA

### Roger Stanfield, PRS

EVG Division I - Mission, BC  
LOL Division I - Pewaukee, WI

There are 18 judging assignments this Spring in six districts in 10 states and one Canadian province just to your friends from the GNU! Four Spring contests (three outside of LOL) have more than one GNU on the panel. Those poor Halvorsons will have three GNU judges on their panel in Phoenix!

By the way, it's got to be some sort of record that a single chapter has three judges on an out of district Division contest. It looks like we could almost charter a plane to Phoenix! Don, Barry, and Tom only need one more voice on that panel for a GNU quartet!

Good luck to all of the GNU judges with their assignments this spring and to all of the competitors who may be judged by them.

Jim Emery  
Singing Judge  
Hilltop, MN  
Great Northern Union chorus  
After Midnight quartet

As a side note, Roger Meyer will also be judging a Harmony Inc. contest in Rhode Island this spring

Hello Gentlemen of the GNU,

I'm so pleased to announce to you all that our friend and brother in harmony, **Jim Emery**, has been named to the **Singing Category Board of Review** by our esteemed **Category Specialist, Russ Young**. The Board of Review is the Category Specialists "right hand men" and consists of three of the best singing judges in the Society. Jim will be helping shape the Singing Category through advising Russ and mentoring judges and judge candidates.

Please join me in congratulating Jim. He's going to be a wonderful addition to the Singing Board of Review!

Tom Matchinsky  
SNG Judge



## Guys, the time is NOW and the word is SALES.

And it's not really so much for the MONEY as it is for the hobby. Every gig we do spreads our message of the importance of performing and a cappella harmony. Every phrase and every nuance reminds people how much it uplifts the spirit of the buyer, the recipient, the quartet, and all those that have the opportunity to observe that special delivery.

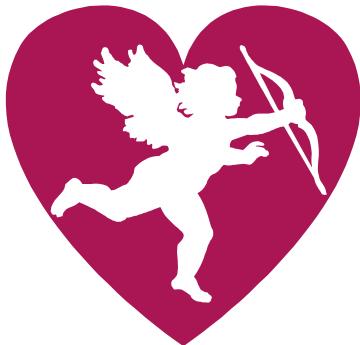
Based on prior experience, we expect to have as many as 30 quartets on the go Monday, February 14th. Are you going to be in one of them? We will have the capacity to handle 400 gigs or more. We need the gigs, and we need the gigs now. How can we possibly get those gigs? By getting our message out. Can you volunteer to spend a few hours canvassing the areas where you live, work, or play? Or maybe going to an area you don't normally venture in to? I have flyers available at every rehearsal. Please take a handful and post them for the benefit of the GNU.

Not sure that flyers are the best item for you to use? If you want different materials, I can make them available. You simply need to let me know. Would business cards be better? I can provide them. Magnetic bumper stickers? Can do. Magnetic signs for your car? It can happen. Table tents for a public area? Ditto. Whatever you need, I will work to provide.

We can also get these gigs by you simply asking those you converse with "Are you doing anything for Valentines Day this year?". Odds are the answer will be something like "I'm not sure". If so, here's your opportunity. But remember, you are sharing a priceless experience, cheap at twice the price. That's all I've got for now. Why are you still reading this? Get out there and SELL a Singing Valentine NOW!

Thanks

Tom Semple, Singing Valentine's Coordinator



## THANK YOU, MARILYN!

Once again, GNU widow Marilyn Setzler has remembered Great Northern Union with a generous monetary gift. Her husband, Ron Setzler, died of cancer nearly 9 years ago at a very early age. His contributions to barbershopping while he was alive were many and varied, including district officer, chorus office, bass and baritone singing both in choruses as well as quartets. His handlebar mustache and quiet demeanor was with us for an all too short life.



Marilyn, now retired from teaching, decided a few years ago to return to her home in Carroll, Iowa; and now enjoys a new and full life in that hometown community as a local author and historical museum curator. She returns occasionally to Minneapolis, and we sincerely hope that she will grace us with her presence from time to time.

Members,  
Please pass this information to your lady.

Membership VP, Don Knecht, has asked for help from **six** ladies (or other interested relatives and friends) to greet guests on rehearsal nights at the church. This is a **fun** and easy job and you get only **smiles** & thanks from all; and the bonus is listening to some **great singing!** Although, it might be nice to have a partner to man the welcome desk with you. we really only need one person at a time, so you will only need to sign up **once every 6 weeks**. You would be especially needed from **6:30-8:00 PM**. Please contact Don with questions or to sign up.

Thanks. Theresa Mever

## A SHAKY CHALLENGE

Most of you have no doubt noticed my bouncing right hand. Since 1993 I have known that I have Parkinson's Disease, a neurological disorder which produces diminished functioning. With the help of my neurologist and a mix of medications, the progression of the disease is at a very slow rate, and that probably will not change. But the presence of some of the symptoms of the Parkinson's has presented me with a significant set of challenges as a participant in GNU.



My performance is challenged by these five symptoms:

- w An 'at-rest' tremor. It appears only in my right arm. When my muscles are relaxed, my right hand bounces uncontrollably. As long as I am using the hand in gesture or movement, no problem.
- w A facial mask. All my muscles are stiffened to some extent, and that is most obvious in the face, where I may look disinterested unless I consciously and with considerable effort, put on a face appropriate to the mood of the song we are singing.
- w Less control of moves. There is sometimes a short interval between the time my brain gives a message to my muscles and their response. So getting up and moving about is sometimes slowed. I have to anticipate moves even more than most of you.
- w Dropping the voice at the end of phrases. It requires constant effort to complete each phrase and energize into the next.
- w Deterioration of the voice – a tremolo, accompanied with other reduction of quality in sound and volume. It's hard work staying in the model and being sure I have proper support.

The intentional work on facial expression, vocal technique and movement is actually beneficial, even a therapeutic discipline for me. However, because the standard of excellence of the GNU and our ability to be competitive are important to me, I have an understanding with Pete, Roger and Scott that when my participation is more detrimental than helpful, any of the four of us needs to say it's time to sit down.

Meanwhile, singing with the men of this great and talented group continues to be a privilege, a delight, a joy and good medicine for me.

Dan Vanderploeg



**Award of Harmony** recipient, Bea Hasselmann along with Steve Labissioner, Bill Lydecker and Dan Vanderploeg who initiated the award last year.

The Great Northern Union established the **Award of Harmony** in 2004 in recognition of persons known by the chorus members who exemplify the meaning of HARMONY. Steve Labissioner nominated **Bea Hasselmann**, and we were pleased to present her with the second annual AWARD OF HARMONY.

A teacher in the Minneapolis school system for many years, Bea directed choral music in the high school setting.

In 1971, she founded the **Metropolitan Boys Choir**. The group of young singers, aged five to eighteen, has grown into an organization totaling some 400 voices. According to their mission statement, each boy benefits from a "unique program of musical excellence and personal growth." The boys perform regularly in the Twin Cities area and have performed with the Minnesota Orchestra, Robert Shaw, and the Minnesota Opera. They have traveled extensively in 40 of the 50 states, 16 European countries.

Congratulations, Bea Hasselmann on your fine work promoting harmony with our youth.





It's Show Time! The Great Northern Union at it's best!





A big thanks to Bob and Rosemary Calderone (pictured upper right) for helping us add more choreography to our show package.





The **Great Northern Union**, under the direction of **Scott Kvigne**, performed the Star Spangled Banner with several friends from the **Midwest Vocal Express** on Christmas Eve, 2004 when the Vikings fought the Green Bay Packers for the Division Title.



OK, so maybe the Vikings didn't win, but today was a pretty big score for the GNU.

First off, thanks to all who were in attendance. Your dedication and sacrifice on what is an important holiday for many of our families was greatly appreciated. Not only that, you sang exceptionally well. For those who may not know all the details, here's the post-game wrap-up.

GNU, along with 20 or so guests (including 14 MVE members and a couple of potential new GNU'ers), sang the National Anthem, as well as performing at a church service in the Dome.

Rumor has it that the anthem was televised, at least somewhere. As I mentioned before, we sang, at the request of the Vikings' owner, for a church service prior to the game and a group of guys went to sing for the general manager of WCCO during halftime.

All in all, it was a great day for singing, fellowship, and furthering the GNU name and reputation. A thousand thanks to **Loring Harrop** for coordinating the whole event, maximizing our coverage, and providing me with up-to-date information so that we were ready for whatever happened.

MVE guys--at least those who spoke with me--were thrilled to be there, regardless of where they were sitting or what they had to wear. They proved themselves a first-class organization, and no slouches where singing is concerned. So if you have a chance, thank our guests, MVE guys and others, for contributing to an exceptional performance.

**Scott Kvigne**,  
Assistant Director  
Great Northern Union

**After Midnight**  
A Barbershop Quartet

Contact:  
Tom Matchinsky  
952-931-9715  
tom\_bbshop@hotmail.com

Got Music?  
Have a  
**Nouveau**  
Experience  
with  
**Dave Tony Jim**  
**Duane**

A Barbershop Quartet

Contact: Jim Olson  
14466 Everest Avenue  
Apple Valley, MN 55124  
Phone: 952-431-3110  
email: olsoncrew@aol.com

Ellis Jones, Tenor Bruce Gray, Lead

**MAGIC**  
Barbershop Harmony & Sleight of Hand

507-934-2372  
bgray@gustavus.edu

Don Miller, Baritone Bill Lydecker, Bass

**PRISM**  
A SPECTRUM OF SOUND

STEVE - CLEON - DARREN - ALAN  
2404 McNair Dr., Golden Valley, MN 55422  
prism\_gnu@hotmail.com  
612.281.5609

—ROD JOHNSON - Lead— JIM FOY - Bass—  
—RICK ANDERSON - Bari— BOB DOWNHA - Tenor—

**HAPPINESS  
EMPORIUM**  
BARBERSHOP  
QUARTET

www.HappinessEmporium.com  
CONTACT: Rod Johnson  
1308 Blue Phlox Court  
Northfield, Minnesota 55057  
507.645.5750

E-mail: dougmtr@aol.com Tax I.D. #41-1903683

*Special Alliance*

GLENN, DAVE, LANCE & DOUG (Barbershop Quartet)

Contactman: DOUG MILLER 4822 Rutledge St.  
612-447-8265 Prior Lake, MN 55372

Support  
these  
GNU  
quartets!

**Quest**  
BARBERSHOP  
QUARTET

JAY  
MIKE  
BRENT  
TIM

Tim Milbrandt  
833 Balsam Ct. NE  
Pine Island, MN 55963  
507-356-2993  
tkjm@earthlink.net

MIKE MARTY DAN DAVE

**BRAVO!**  
A  
BARBERSHOP  
QUARTET

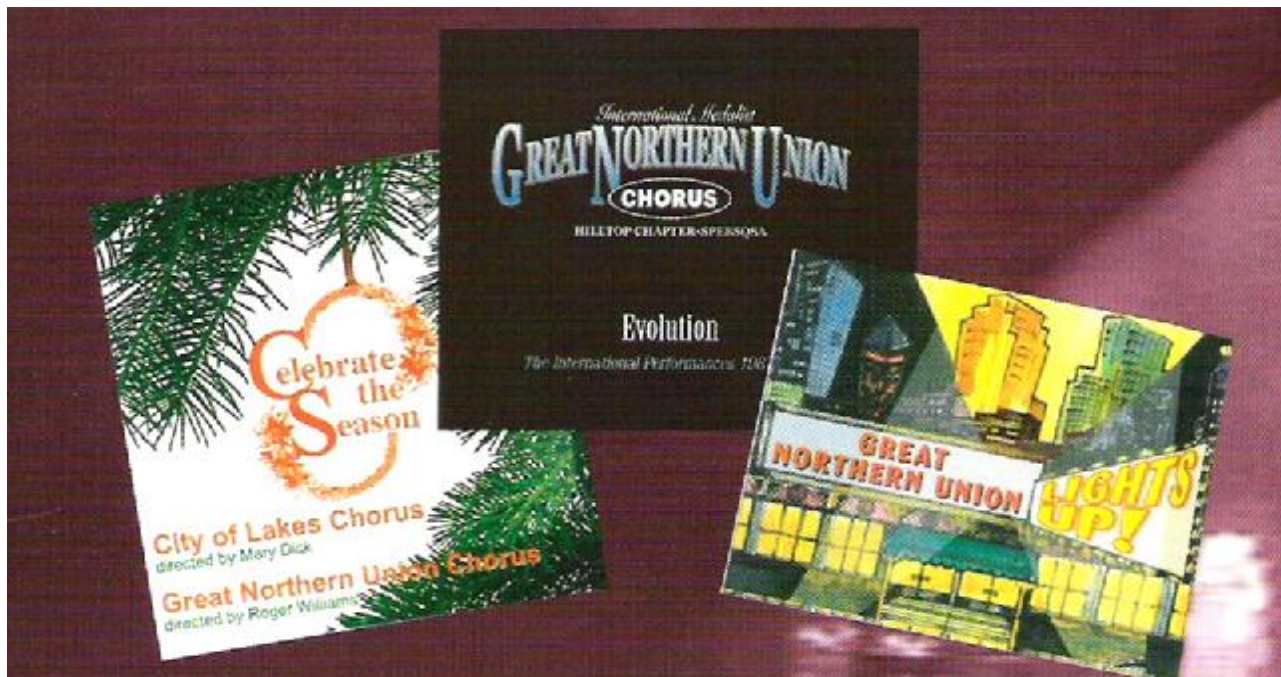
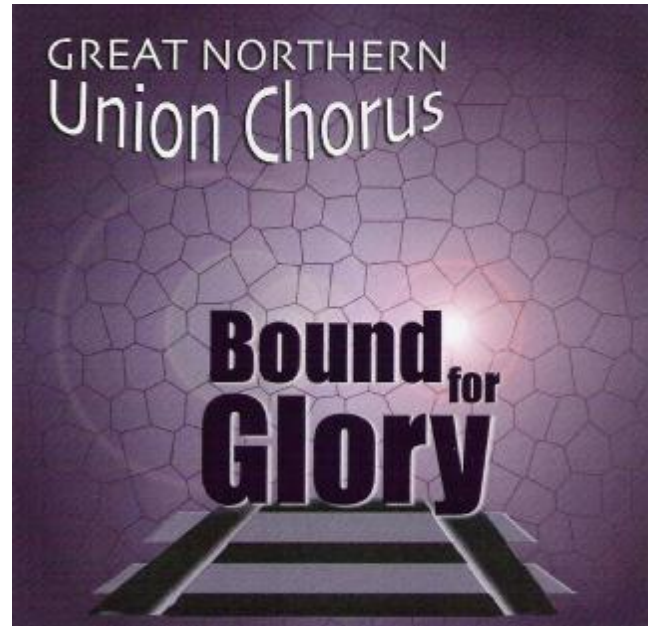
DAN SCHROEDER  
10133 299TH AVE NW  
PRINCETON, MN 55371  
(B)763-633-5280  
(W)763-441-0572  
dschrades@msn.com

## Bound for Glory

The **Great Northern Union's** newest recording. A collection of sacred works sung by the chorus along with **Happiness Emporium** and **Four Voices** quartets.

The GNU boasts 3 more recordings including a collection of international contest performances on our "**Evolution**" CD, a Christmas concert with the City of Lakes Sweet Adelines on our "**Celebrate the Season**" CD and great "show stoppers" on our "**Lights Up!**" CD.

Get yours today at [www.gnunion.com](http://www.gnunion.com)



The Great Northern Union Chorus meets every Thursday from 7:00pm to 10:00pm, at the United Methodist Church of Peace, 6345 Xerxes Ave S, Richfield MN 55423

"Early-Bird" rehearsals are held at 6:00pm for practicing choreography. Members are urged to call the GNU Hotline at 763-476-7383 weekly for the latest word on rehearsals, performances, and other pertinent information. Also find us on the web at [www.gnunion.com](http://www.gnunion.com)