

Volume 11 #1

GNUsNews

February 2006

Awards Banquet caps off a wonderful GNU year





The Officers' Club at Fort Snelling was the site of the annual Awards Banquet for our chorus. It was a lovely buffet dinner arranged by Chorus Manager, Kent Erlandson. The program was MC'd by Roger Meyer (top left)who also had the honor of introducing the new GNU **Barbershopper of the Year**, most deserving Director **Pete Benson**, (pictured top right) with his wife, Rochelle. To round out the evening, Pete directed "That Lonesome Road" for all the singing members in attendance.

More about the banquet on page 3



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763-476-7382(H)

New website to kick off 2006

I just completed the conversion to the new web site!

A couple of things are left to do, but we wanted to get the new site up and running ASAP because it includes many usability upgrades for customers as they buy tickets for our 2006 season – The Website is **www.gnunion.com**-



Thanks to everyone who has helped make this new web site a reality: The Board, Pete Benson, Tom Semple, Loring Harrop, Wally Brink, Roger Meyer, Jan Beahen – Our web designer, and Bill Hodena – Our database and application developer

As soon as things are stable will begin working on Phase 2.

with this release, we will begin working on Phase 2. The highlight of this next release will be a new, secure Member-Portal. Over time, this will become our onestop-shop for members to interact with each other and the chapter. Items on the development roadmap are:

Member Database – Online roster, each member maintains their own data, search functionality for contact info

- Learning Material Download
- On-line sign-up for events
- Chapter document repository
- Discussion Forums

And much, much more.

If you have ideas for ways we can utilize the web site to better support our members and our fans, send them to me for inclusion on our wish list.

Happy Surfing!

Jeff Aldrich



Awards Banquet continued from page 1

John Kleiber presented the Spark Plug Award, which went to Jim Lutz, for uncounted years of service, performing many tasks for the good of the chorus. Some of these were trailer acquisition and maintenance, lodging and food arrangements for the annual spring retreat. Due to illness, Jim had to miss the festivities, but a small delegation presented it to him personally soon thereafter.

Immediate Past President, Bill Lydecker then took the podium to verbally recognize the contributions of many individuals who receive little appreciation during the year.

Presentation Judge, Stanfield Roger presented the "BIF" award (Best Improved Michael Face) to Franzen, (pictured at right with Kathy Litchfied) who has worked hard to "emote" with each performance!



Our long time ticket chairman, Bob Cannella, announced the top ten annual show ticket salesmen. They were Mark Sathe: 66, Bob Dowma: 63, Norm DeCarlo: 54, Jim Higgins: 44, Mike Brama: 40, Jeff Aldrich: 38, Judd Orff: 31, Ken Gilmore: 29, Tony Blackwood: 26, and Bob Griffith: 26.

Always gracious, Judd Orff presented the **"Star Award"** to a deserving non-member who contributes to our successes. This year it was our loyal fan Barb Parks who received it in absentia due to a winter trip to Hawaii.

2006 Membership VP Ken Slinde and 2005 Membership VP Don Knecht (together with the able calculations of Bruce Watson and record-keeping diligence of Steve LaBissoniere) presented the commitment/attendance awards for 2005. There were many, but the top of the list was **Bob Cannella** with 98.4% attendance over nine years!

Roger Stanfield, acting for choreographer Scott Kvigne, presented the **Happy Feet Award** to a surprised, deserving and grateful **Larry Walsh**.

Don Knecht, 2005 Membership VP, presented the "**New GNU**" **Award** to **Ricky Chaddock**, who not only sings up a storm, but also has graciously and capably stepped into the Secretary position on the 2006 GNU Board of Directors.

Scattered among the award presentations, Kent Erlandson presided over name drawing for door prizes.

These included gift certificates for special treats like chocolates, coffee, bath products, etc. Winners included: Kathy Litchfield, Jimmie Little, Kelly Stewart, Tona Dove, Rochelle Benson, Amy Monson and Mary Slinde.

Finally, 2004 Barbershopper of the Year, Roger Meyer, kept the audience in suspense, while introducing 2005 Barbershopper of the Year, Pete Benson. He and his wife, Rochelle, came forward to a standing ovation for the official presentation.

Thanks to all who came. It was a wonderful evening for lots of socializing and good food. Those of you who didn't make it were missed; we hope you can arrange your calendars for next year!

Spark Plug Award new this year



Steve Labissoniere, Bruce Watson and I visited **Jim Lutz** (pictured above) on Saturday, February 4th. For those who don't know (and I don't know the exact details), Jim's lungs are deteriorating for a somewhat unknown reason. He was involved with drag racing for many years and perhaps it was the various fumes and smokes he inhaled over the years that contributed to this malady.

Jim is at home with hospice coming to him several times a week to give care to Jim and also to provide some relief to his bride, Sarah. Jim was in lots better shape than I anticipated. In fact, he was going on an outing to a car show after we left.

I gave Jim the **2006 GNU Spark Plug Award** which was announced at the awards banquet on Jan. 28. He was most appreciative that we thought of him so highly.

Feel free to give Jim a call - he likes that as the cabin fever is growing. Visits are welcome too - just call ahead so he's ready for you.

John Kleiber

Awards Banquet conitnued from page 3



Above: Several of the past Barbershoppers of the Year were at the awards banquet. Here is a list of all the GNU BOTYs and the year that they won that honor. Roger Williams: 1986, Kirk Lindberg: 1987, Dean Haagenson: 1988, Craig Anderson: 1989, Jeff Sjoberg: 1990, Dave Nyberg: 1991, Mark Jurgenson: 1993, Bob Cannella: 1994, Kevin Lynch: 1995, Bob Dowma: 1996, Jim Emery: 1997, Roger Stanfield: 1998, Judd Orff: 1999, Scott Kvigne: 2000, Kent Erlandson: 2001, John Babbs: 2003, Roger Meyer: 2004, and Pete Benson: 2005.

As you can see by the pictures taken by Don Russell, every one had a great time at the affair.









Quarteting - See what it gets you?

As many of you know, one of the finest experiences of barbershop singing is singing in a quartet. While choruses can excite both audiences and participants, there's no thrill like hearing your own voice fill a critical 25% of the barbershop sound all by itself and ringing

chords with just three other guys.

Quarteting can be fun at any level of seriousness. Some love to get into quartets and push themselves to their competitive best. The GNU has had its share of those with 6 of the last 7 LOL District champion quartets coming from the GNU ranks.



But it can also be fun to sing in a quartet that doesn't compete but does shows. Shows are the real fun of quarteting, as you get all the fun of entertaining people without all the competitive pressure.

Even if you don't care to make a permanent commitment to a particular foursome, there are still opportunities to quartet. Participating in a Singing Valentines quartet is a great example. You get the opportunity to sing with three other guys, entertain lots of folks, and then go back to your regular life the next week.

Tag singing after a GNU rehearsal is another great way to quartet without having to commit to another regular rehearsal night per week. Tags are like eating the frosting on the cake without having to bake the cake. And there are always some guys hanging around after a GNU rehearsal that would love to include you if you're interested.

If you're thinking about starting a regular quartet, there's nothing better than Singing Valentines or after-GNU tag singing to see how your voice and personality might fit with three other guys. Who knows? If you keep at it, you might even get to sing for a doll like KARE-11's Belinda Jensen!

So give quarteting a try. Once you do, you may find it's an even greater way to have fun in this great barbershopping hobby.

Jim Emery Singing Judge Hilltop, MN Great Northern Union chorus After Midnight quartet On Monday, February 6th, AARPs-a-chord, fresh from International Senior Quartet competition in Sacramento, California, appeared on the KARE 11 Today Show between 10 and 11 AM. Substitute bari, Jim Erickson, sat in for traveling Bob Griffith.

On Saturday, February 11th, 2005 LOL Quartet Champion, After Midnight, appeared on the KARE 11 News Saturday show.

The Twin Cities Singing Valentines program is a coordinated effort of the Bloomington, Hilltop, Minneapolis, Minnetonka and St. Paul men's chapters, and the City of Lakes Sweet Adelines chapter.

Thanks to these two quartets for unselfishly giving of their time to benefit their chapters.

On behalf of Wayne Ramussen, TCSV Chair and the TCSV Committee,

Jim Lee



After Midnight with Care 11's Belinda Jensen and LOL marketing VP Jim Lee





Nouveau: Jim Olson, Tony Blackwood, Duane Rygg, Dave Boyd

Aarps-a-Chords: Mark Conlon, Gary Jacobson , <stand in from Mpls for Bob Griffith>, Lance Johnson

After Midnight: Tom Matchinsky, David Bailey-Aldrich, Jim Emery, Steve McDonald

Presto, ?, ?, Ricky Chaddock, ?

The St Vs 4: Wally Brink, Miles McDonald, Loring Harrop, Bob Dowma

Four Ever Young: John Babbs, John Kleiber, Harvey Berwin, Bob Cannella

Gang of Four: Chuck McKown, Bruce Watson, Don Russell, Ken Slinde

Gold Rush: Steve Nolte, Cleon Wahlin, Steve Hardy, Darren Hoehne (standing in for Steve Anderson)

Serenade: Roger Meyer, Gary Little, Darrell Egertson, Don Knecht

Four of these quartets were formed just for this event. It is not too early to start thinking about next years Singing Valentine's and with whom you might like to sing.

A big thanks to our friends in the Bloomington Chapter for all of their effort and for again supplying the place where we attempted to turn chaos into harmony as we gathered the 200 gigs into manageable quartet packets.

Tom Semple

The "Gang of Four" consisting of Bruce Watson, Ken Slinde, Don Russell and Chuck McKown were feeling pretty good based on the complements we got from most everyone; from the Hopkins high school female quartet (who was one of many small groups of music students doing singing Valentines for other students throughout the school), to the lunch crowd and staff at the TGIFridays where we had lunch. Ken had sold most of our gigs himself. Thanks, Ken! After our paid gigs, we decided to see what we could do at the Mount Olivet nursing home. The activities director took us to several areas to sing a couple of songs at each. The last one had both the elderly residents and preschool kids.

Chuck McKown

"Serenade", Darrell Egertson, Gary Little, Don Knecht and Roger Meyer, (pictured below) were touched to see this lovely valentine recipient with a tear in her as they sang to her. And they were double touched as she said, "I should be kissing my husband, but..", and gave each man a gentle kiss on the cheek.





The Gang of Four (above) and a female quartet from Minnetonka high school (below).



Gold Rush (with Darren Hoehne Singing filling in for Bass, Steve Anderson) Valentines delivered 7 Singing Valentines this year. 2006 Most engagements this year specifically requested Gold Rush and were booked by Cleon Wahlin or Steve Nolte. Many of these were repeats from previous years with PRISM.

One special repeat Singing Valentine was from Corey to Erin (see photo). Two years ago, PRISM sang to Erin at the Mall of America, while her boyfriend Corey was stationed in Afganistan. This was the longest distance booking PRISM could imagine and Erin was COMPLETELY surprised and became very emotional.

"Last year Corey was back and he was now ENGAGED to Erin!! So, he booked PRISM to again sing for her and was able to be there to witness the event.

Corey enjoyed the experience, watching Erin respond to the musical gift and hearing PRISM for the first time.

For the 3rd year in a row, Corey contacted Cleon to again request a Singing Valentine this time to his wife, Erin. Again Corey was able to be with us as Gold Rush wowed Erin with a beautiful arrangement of "Moonlight becomes you".

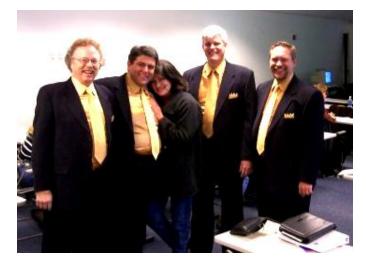
It has been a special treat for Gold Rush/PRISM to play a role in the growing relationship of Erin and Corey. Corey has already indicated his desire to surprise Erin next year. We look forward to helping Corey with what has become their special annual tradition.



Gold Rush (Steve Hardy, Darren Hoehne, Cleon Wahlin, Steve Nolte) with Erin and Corey.

Gold Rush had many other great experiences delivering Singing Valentines this year. One SV was to the wife of a Minnetonka High School music teacher. After singing to her, Gold Rush sang for the boys' chorus, which included 3 boys playing members of the barbershop quartet in "The Music Man" production later this spring. We brought another special greeting to Darren's fiance, Kim. Gold Rush also sang to Cleon's daughter, Karla's class in White Bear Lake, another annual SV tradition.

For our last delivery, Kevin Lynch (pictured below) stepped in as Bass to deliver a special message to his sweetheart, Leslie Wilson, who was taking a class at the MN/DOT training center. The highway patrolman teaching the class watched impatiently with his arms crossed, until the brief, romantic intrusion to his class ended!



Delivering Singing Valentines is a completely different experience than singing on stage with the GNU or a quartet. It is a very uplifting to see the effects of singing a love song to that special person one on one. Something that is hard to experience onstage. It is very rewarding and the members of Gold Rush encourage everyone to give it a try!

Steve Nolte



WOW what a rehearsal last night! I'm late in getting my letter to our but sometimes editors, things happen for a reason. After missing two weeks of rehearsals due to work travel, what a great opportunity to jump right in and sing with the best Men's Choral organization in the Twin Cities!! As we continue to focus on all five Ms (Music, Mystique,



Marketing, Membership and Money), Membership has certainly hit a positive momentum swing the first two months of 2006. Kudos goes to our Membership Team (which includes ALL of you) for exposing local and distant male performers to our rehearsals Thursday nights...keep it up! I don't know about you, but I REALLY enjoy being on the risers when there are 60, 70, 80 or more men on the risers every week. It takes time and dedication, but we are getting there!



for Now the encouragement about Money. haven't Т mentioned our progress recently with regards to our Concert Season Ticket approach, but we are doing pretty well considering our first year target is 250 season ticket holders. However, we could really use a big push here before our first concert. How do we do that? It's pretty

simple...for \$50 they receive a ticket to all four concerts (featuring guest artists Luther Norsemen, Metropolitan Boys Choir, SAI, BHS and Cantus) that normally would cost them \$80 this year. In addition, they get an Orchestra level seat to our Grand Finale concert (afternoon or evening) featuring guest artist Vocal Spectrum. I've sold seven season tickets so far just to my immediate family...two for my wife and daughter who would much prefer sitting up close at Bethel than on the sides or in the back. (I was a little slow in my Bethel purchases last year)

What does this do for the chorus? It helps us with our cash flow, and builds a revenue foundation to help in our future growth plans as well. It also makes it easier for you when you are selling to your patrons...approach them once a year instead of four times a year. You heard from Kevin Lynch this Saturday on some exciting opportunities as it relates to our fundraising efforts as well. Thank you for the continued focus on Membership and Money. It will really help the GNU expand into new frontiers.

Regards,

Marty Monson GNU President

PS. have you checked out our new website? Kudos goes to Jeff Aldrich and Tom Semple for getting that completed...well done!



Pursuant to the request of our new President, Marty Monson, we are providing summary reports of this year's Board meetings. The first edition follows.

> The first meeting of 2006 was held on January 3rd. Present were: Monson, Dove, Slinde, Lynch, Chaddock, Dowma, Kvigne, Brink, Semple.

Absent were: Erlandson, Harrop. Benson, and Lydecker. A guest at this meeting was Roger Meyer.

A summary of items discussed follows:

1. The updated chapter web site continues in development. Please watch for exciting developments in the next several months.

2. Plans were reviewed for immediate and long range fund development.

3. The leadership has adopted some priority key ideas called the "5 M's": Mystic, Marketing, Music, Membership. & Money.

4. The financial impact of marketing the GNU name as a premier brand of a Cappella music was discussed.

5. Effective April, the chapter portion of our dues will increase to \$78. This is consistent with other chapters in the Society.

6. A potential Vienna Choir Boys performance as well as the potential for GNU participation in the International Championship of Collegiate a Cappella was presented by Marty.



Members: Get to know "em Rapids.

I am a born again Christian. We love worship God to with music and Though I praise. have never been a member of а church congregation large enough to have a choir, if you picture

a small one room country church filled with simple devoted folk that love the Lord and



like to enjoy life you'll have a pretty good idea of the kind of harmony I grew up with.

My profession is computer software. I come from several generations of hard working mechanics. I was raised with a great love for music. I have many fond memories of family reunions and New Year's parties -playing games and singing all through the night with accordions, pianos, guitars, and fiddles. I have enjoyed playing and singing all my life.

My wife, Lori, and I have been married for almost 20 vears. We have three children. Jennifer, 18, attends community college and plays the trumpet. Jonathan, 16, plays the clarinet. Alex, 14, plays the alto sax. They performed for several years together as members of the Maple Grove Home-School Concert Band.

I am the first from my family clan to join the Barbershop Harmony Society. My father is an accomplished guitar player from whom I learned to play guitar in the Chet Atkins style. I have two brothers living in South Carolina. One was a professional band musician for many years and now runs a sound studio. The other is a piano tuner with aspirations of someday becoming a full time musician.

Meet Ricky Chaddock

I was born in Sacramento, California in 1960's where I lived for over 30 years. In the mid 90's I moved to the heart of Georgia for a short time, which is where I joined the Barbershop Harmony Society (SPEBSQSA). For the past ten years I have lived in a northern suburb of the Twin Cities known as Coon

I am a member of two registered barbershop quartets -singing baritone with "Presto!", the 2005 10,000 Lakes Division Novice Quartet Champion, and singing lead with "Top Secret" that has performed in the North Star Chorus annual show. I have a dual chorus membership singing baritone with The Great Northern Union and The North Star Chorus. I was the North Star Chorus baritone section lead for several years, and I am currently secretary of the GNU board.

One of the things that attracted me to GNU is their passion for excellence in harmony and performance. It was a great thrill for me to perform with them in my very first international competition in 2005. This next year I would like to try to form a new guartet with other GNU members interested in competing at the district level of quartet competition. As a new member of GNU, I have been made to feel most welcome and valued by the director and other members of the chorus. It is such an honor for me to actually sing with many of the musical heroes I have admired for years at a distance. Now each week I look forward to the privilege of standing next to the best singers in the society and joining them in song. For me there are few joys that compare to ringing a chord.



"Following a great reception at their Minnesota Wild debut on October 29th, 2005, Land-O-Lakes District Champion quartet, After Midnight, was asked for a return visit to sing the national anthem for Minnesota's professional hockey team at the Wild/LA Kings game on February 7. Singing in front of a packed house of over 18,000 fans, After Midnight's performance was once again greeted by thunderous applause and even high 5's from audience members as they left the ice. Now the guartet is hoping for a third engagement, this time against a Canadian team so they can sing "O! Canada" as well. (By the way, the home team is 2-0 so far when After Midnight sings.)"



We can all be proud of the three LOL quartets that competed against strong competition in the International Seniors Contest in Sacramento. They all did a wonderful job and finished as follows (26 quartets competing):

Easy Days finished 11th scoring an average of 66.6 % **AARPs-a-Chord** (pictured below) finished 13th scoring 66.3 %

Perfect Timing finished 15th - averaging 65.2 %



The winner by two points was **Antique Gold** from Vancouver, BC, featuring Charlie Metzger and his brother, George. Charlie is the father of Tom and Mark, the bass and bari, respectively, of 2005 International Quartet champs, **Realtime**. There's a future trivia question in there somewhere.

The other medallists are as follows: 2nd - Vintage Gold - San Francisco area 3rd - Chicago Times – Illinois 4th - Silver Chords - Bellevue, WA 5th - Talismen – Illinois

Jim Lee LOL VP Marketing **The Great Northern Union is proud** to have one of our recordings nominated as one of the best a cappella recordings of the year. The nominations are as follows: **Religious Album**: Bound for Glory – Great Northern Union and **Religious Song**: If Ye Love Me – Bound for Glory -Great Northern Union from Bound for Glory



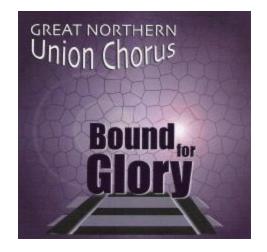
Here is the explanation of the awards per the CASA website:

The annual Contemporary A cappella Recording Awards recognize the best recorded a cappella and aim to support this burgeoning culture of instrumentless enthusiasts. We are the only truly global a cappella recording awards. Every year since 1992 hundreds of albums are considered in this celebration of the best a cappella recorded around the planet.

An article has been posted to www.casa.org titled "CARAs and ACAs and Cars, Oh My!" by CASA president Deke Sharon. The article walks you through the nomination and award process (for instance, there are two rounds of judges- one for the nominations and a separate round for finalists) and judges names are kept confidential, to prevent lobbying efforts.

Read more at the CASA site if you're curious about this other competition where we're running head-to-head with the VM. Learn more about CASA and the CARA program at <u>www.casa.org</u>

Congratulations to all those who submitted CDs for consideration. Winners are to be announced on April 1, 2006.







Six Quartets took advantage of the LOL quartet school arranged by Judd Orff and held in Stillwater. 4 of the quartets had GNU members. One of the quartets was our college visitors from U-W River Falls, Beyond Cadence (pictured bottom right). The coaches were Jim Emery, Bob Dowma and Doug Miller (pictured top right with Judd Orff). For \$50 per quartet, we got coached by each of the 3 coaches and lunch was provided. What a deal! PS, thanks to Judd Orff for the pictures!

Coaches help to get the new uptune, "Good Bye Dixie Good Bye", on track for Indianapolis.

Mark Hale (right) came up from California to coach the chorus and several quartets Saturday Feb 11th. Mark is a society singing judge, lead of International Quartet Champion, Michigan Jake and director of the current International Champion chorus, Masters of Harmony. His focus this trip was to sing with accent and stay in the "model"



Saturday, February 25th, the chorus met

with the Calderones of Texas, for another 6 hour session to create the performance package for International. Being on the dock in Dixie is our theme, and telling the entertaining story throughout the song is our fun task. There is lots of activity, lots of excitement conveyed not only by excellent music but also excellent acting.

Our esteemed coaches have created the best ever scenario for our presentation. We are looking forward to making them, and ourselves, proud on the International stage in July.. Our work is cut out for us as we put this together. Each of us is committed to doing something daily on our own time, then polishing it during regular rehearsals with Pete and the rest of the performance team members.











GNU Concert Season

Collegiate Concert (Norsemen & Metropolitan Boys Choir) March 18, 7PM at St. Andrew's in Mahtomedi (pictured at right) \$15 at the door, \$12 in advance

On To Fame (Int'l quartet and chorus competitors) June 24, 7PM at the E.P.Performing Arts Center in Eden Prairie \$15 at the door, \$12 in advance

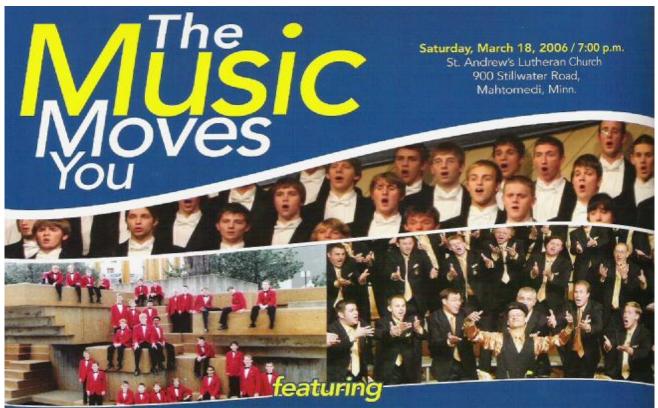
Classic A Cappella (Cantus) September 16, 7:30PM at St. Olaf Catholic Church in Mpls \$20 at the door, \$16 in advance

Season Finale (Vocal Spectrum) November 18, 1PM & 7PM at BGH, Bethel U in St. Paul Reserved Seating (\$10 - \$30,... 20% discount for advance purchase)

So what's the deal on Season Passes? It's *really* good: \$50 buys a ticket for each show, including a seat in the \$30 section of the 7PM concert in November. So, basically, buying a Season Pass is like getting into two concerts free. The catch is that this won't be available after March 18th.







Metropolitan Boys Choir

Luther College Norsemen

Great Northern Union Chorus



March 17th - Division Quartet Contest

March 18th - Collegiate Performance with Luther Norsemen and Metropolitan Boys Choir

March 19th - National Anthem at the Timberwolves Game

May 20 & 21 - Duluth Coaching Weekend

February 2006

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Before we go.....

The **Great Northern Union** celebrating 20 years on the contest stage remembers it's 1st District contest winning chorus.

1986 LOL District Champions



Row 1 - Jim Halvorson, John Moksnes, Larry Halvorson, Al Hoppe, Scott Hagen, Roger Williams, John Korby, Roger Stanfield, Dave Roesler, Dave Nyberg

Row 2 - Bill Wigg, Jim Higgins, Larry Castriotta, John Thure, Steve Haagenson, Mark Jurgenson, John Mostrom, Bob Klecker, Rolf Kragseth, Phil Wilson

Row 3 - Roger Meyer, Kirk Lindberg, Dean Haagenson, Jeff Hanel, Tom Mau, Ed Ricklick, Jerry Torrison, Vaughn Kettleson, Ron Lundquist, Jim Emery

Row 4 - Jeff Sjoberg, Mike Miller, Gary Cooper, Jim Weins, Rod Johnson, Ron Nelson, Clyde Eisenbeis, Paul Fagerberg, Craig Anderson, Pete Bliss, Dave Slack

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