



10,000 LAKES DIVISION - LAND O' LAKES DISTRICT

Volume 12 #1 **GNUsNews** March 2007

Great Concert at St. Michael's



Our 3rd annual collegiate concert was held March 3rd at St Michael's Lutheran Church in Bloomington. It featured not only the Great Northern Union but also the 100 man strong Iowa Statesmen Chorus from Iowa State University and the Limestones, another male a cappella group. St Michael's was a great venue and we look forward to singing there again October 6th of this year in the 3rd performance of our concert season. Next up in the concert season will be a joint concert with Cantus on June 9th at St Olaf Catholic Church in downtown Minneapolis.

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If GNU has lacked anything in the past, it is not talent or skill, but simply the ability to concentrate and focus real attainable goals. The fact that the chorus has been a consistent top 10 and frequent medalist chorus for 20 years demonstrates that we do lots of things right. But, there are certain things that have kept us from moving to the "next level."

Long-Term Thinking. We have been conditioned to think from contest to contest, chasing our tail, if you will, hoping that if we keep doing the same things over and over we would eventually win. I am guilty of shortsightedness as well. The 3-year plan is a real stretch for me. Lots of questions came to my mind. How will we stay motivated without a contest every 6 months? Will people quit without the short-term contest goal? What if, after 3 years, we're still in the same position we are in now?

The key to staying motivated is to know our long-term goals and measure them along the way. Let's look at just a few of our goals and see how we're doing?



Goal 1: 100 men on the risers consistently by Oct. 08. (Qualifying District for Anaheim)

Progress:

- We have added 8 guest nights to our yearly calendar.
- Since Jan. over 50 guests have come to visit GNU rehearsals!!
- Jan 07 – 65 Men on the risers (start of the season)
- Mar. 07 (today) – 73 Men on the risers (several more are close)
 - Projections: June-79 men, Sept.-85, Dec.-91

Goal 2: Concert Season Increase/Repertoire Increase

Progress:

- Successfully Added a 4th concert and Madison Mini-tour
- Have a plan for 10 new songs in 07
 - Debuted two new songs on Collegiate Show in March
 - Will debut two more on the Madison Show in April

Director's Cut continued from page 2

Goal 3: Compete for the GOLD!

Progress:

- Making preparations for contest songs to be introduced this summer
- Securing coaching sessions
- Goal 3 is contingent on Goal 1!! This is the biggest piece of the puzzle right now.


Keep in mind that in about a year from now, we'll be in the contest cycle again with our first division. And that's the contest EVERYONE will be watching. No pressure! I have a lot of confidence that we can obtain our goals, but one man or one committee won't make it happen. It depends on YOU!

Pete Benson
Director



The Limestones (pictured above) were the opening act for the March 3rd performance at St Michael's.

We are roughly four months into our three year plan and so far we are seeing some great results. Here is how we are doing on the 5 M's.



The
President's
Corner

Music: How about our 3rd Annual Collegiate Concert. If you missed this performance at St Michaels, you missed a great concert. SO many highlights to list here, but I believe Dr Rodde's comment about Loch Lomond speaks for it self, "very artistic, well conceived and sung." Nice comment from a man who is very well known in the Collegiate Men's Chorus circles.



Money: The final numbers are still being tabulated, but given our late start with selling Season Tickets, we've sold over 80 Season Passes. Not bad, slightly down from last year, but we are committed to get these started much earlier next year. Our "Raise The Roof" campaign will be between April and May...we look to continue our high

participation percentages of our active members.

Marketing: The marketing team is doing a great job getting information out about our Concert Season. If you can afford some "volunteer" time to help out, please contact Jared Hoke. There is always more marketing opportunities than there will ever be volunteers to do the work. Audience and Market awareness of GNU is an important driver to our three year plan and the ability for GNU to sustain itself for years to come.

Mystique: This is a work in progress. All of us have our own opinions of the GNU Mystique, but for me it's the quality of singing we have when ALL of us are on the risers together. Let's strive to make this happen more often.

Membership: WOW...we've had a great surge of new members and guests visiting GNU on Thursday nights. Keep them coming. Pete and the Membership Team, GREAT work!!

Marty Monson
GNU President

In Memorandum.....

Theresa Meyer, age 67, wife of founding GNU member, Roger Meyer, passed away on March 29 after a 10-year battle with cancer. She died peacefully with her husband at her side.

She was an avid supporter of Roger's hobby: barbershop singing. She enjoyed many travels with the Great Northern Union and was the official photographer for many years. She also traveled extensively with Roger (pictured below) when he judged at barbershop singing contests across North America.



"Theresa was a wonderful inspiration to me and I know to many of the GNU. I will always remember her as the one who inspired me to always 'perform' even during a rehearsal...you never knew when she might snap a picture. But more importantly, was the amount of time she took out of her day to support Roger, the GNU and the Barbershop Harmony Society...I will be forever grateful".



'May God hold you in the palm of His hand'

Marty Monson
GNU President

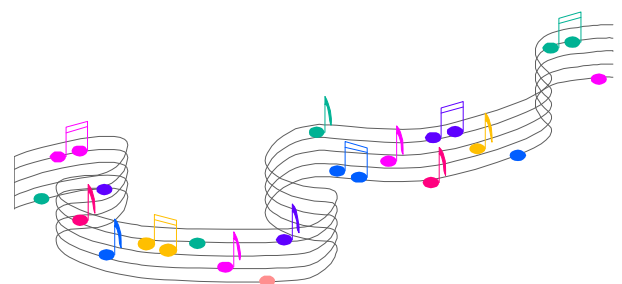
The Great Northern Union Chorus meets every Thursday from 7:00pm to 10:00pm, at the United Methodist Church of Peace, 6345 Xerxes Ave S, Richfield MN 55423

"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



"Live Wire" performed at Guest night held March 15th. The GNU is having guest nights after each of our 4 major performances in our effort to fill the risers with quality singers. The goal is 100 singers by the end of the year.

Below is "Espresso", a Sweet Adelines quartet that came to sing for us on March 29th.





The 10,000 Lakes Division Quartet Competition was held in conjunction with the Southwest Division on March 23rd in Stillwater, MN. 6 of the 14 competing quartets had GNU members in them. They included, pictured clockwise starting above, Bandwagon, Gold Rush, Snap!, Master Blend, Take Two and Aarps-a-Chord. All these quartets qualified to move on to the next level of competition. Bandwagon was our Division Champion and Snap! was the Division Novice Champ.



In addition to the competing GNU members, we had several members who participated in the running of the contest. David Bowen was one of the Contest Administrators, Barry Clapper was a Presentation Judge, John Babbs was the MC for the chorus contest on Saturday and Ken Slinde (pictured at right) was the MC of the quartet competition. More about the contest on page 6.



March 23rd was the combined 10,000 Lakes and Southwest Division quartet contests in Stillwater, and what great contests they were!



It's really hard to imagine our GNU quartets doing much better than they did. Here are the details:

10,000 Lakes Division Champion: Bandwagon (Keith Olson, Sam Sather, Jim Larson, Jim Barloon) - Jim Barloon did an amazing job while on crutches with a broken ankle!



10,000 Lakes Division 2nd place: Gold Rush (Steve Nolte, Cleon Wahlin, Steve Hardy, Steve Anderson) - A very solid performance, breaking into the 70's scores for the first time!

10,000 Lakes Division Novice Champion: Snap! (Jeff Aldrich, Phil Jensen, Heath Walker, Darren Hoehne) - An impressive performance for this quartet in their first contest, especially for Phil and Heath, in their first quartet contest in any quartet!

10,000 Lakes Division Seniors Champion: Master Blend (Doug Miller) - I don't know if they actually award a division seniors champion, but if they did these guys won with a masterful performance.

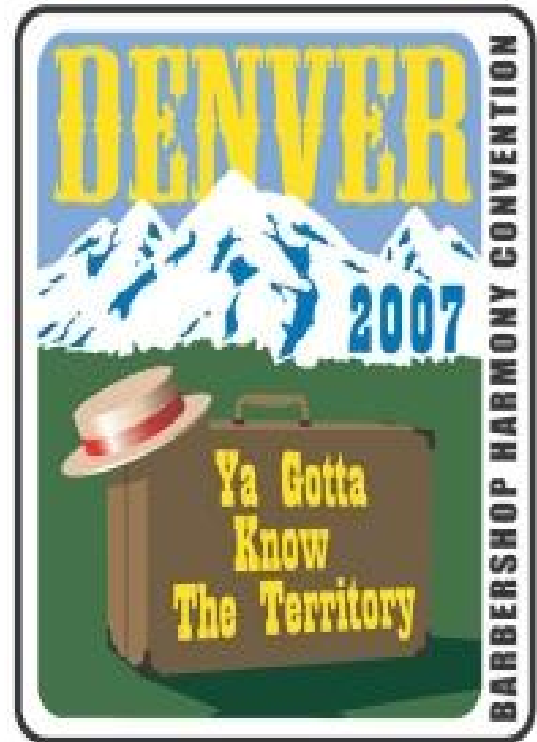
10,000 Lakes Division Seniors 2nd place: Aarps-a-Chord (Gary Jacobson, Bob Griffith, Lance Johnson) - Another fine performance with some really fun material.

Southwest Division 2nd place: Take Two (Doug Peterson) - A very musical performance for this quartet's first contest.

And along with all of the above accomplishments, all of these GNU quartets achieved the qualifying scores to sing at the Land-O-Lakes District quartet contest next October.

Great job, guys! The GNU is proud of each of you.

Jim Emery





On Friday, February 23rd, **After Midnight** (pictured at right) and three other local performers took the stage for the first annual fund raiser for the Pilgrim Point scholarship fund.

Quartet News

Pilgrim Point is a camp owned and operated by the United Church of Christ denomination, and located on a point in Lake Ida, near Alexandria, MN. David was fortunate enough to attend Pilgrim Point with his family for a week in the summer 13 different times, and he and his family still have very strong ties with other families they met over those years. In 2006, David and Angela took Emma and Max to Pilgrim Point for the first time for a week in August.

The idea for the concert came during a discussion near the end of the week between David and Kris Potter, Mayflower Director of Ministries to Children & Families. After brainstorming about what the concert might look like, they decided to have **After Midnight** join with other Mayflower performers, and to direct all of the proceeds from the door donations to the new Pilgrim Point "Campership" fund.

Although the threatening weather (remember the warnings about the 8-12" we were hearing?) kept the crowd relatively small, over 50 people braved the elements, and made for a very energetic audience. Based on their reactions during each of our three sets, and the comments we heard afterwards, we felt like the concert was a real success. A few days after the concert we received the following note of thanks from Kris Potter:

Dear **After Midnight**,

I'm writing to thank you for your wonderful gift of song that you shared with us at Mayflower Friday night. Everyone I have talked with agrees that it was an unforgettable evening of music -- one of those concerts you never forget! We were able to raise \$500+ for our "Campership" fund, with more coming in each day from those unable to attend.

Thank you again for your generous & joy-filled gift of music!

Kris Potter
 Director of Ministries to Children & Families
 Mayflower UCC

What an honor it was for **After Midnight** to be part of such a successful fundraising effort for such a good cause.

David Bailey-Aldrich
 Lead – **After Midnight**



2007 Land-O-Lakes District Quartet Top Gun School

--Jim Emery--

January 12-14 was a cold blustery weekend in Menomonie, Wisconsin, but the LOL District's top quartets turned all that around with some extraordinarily hot singing. In addition to the district Chapter Officers Training School (COTS) that weekend, the LOL District and the LOL Association of District Champions co-sponsored the LOL Quartet Top Gun School.



The Top Gun School is an invitation-only school matching eight of LOL's highest scoring quartets with four of the best coaches in the Society. Its mission is to improve LOL's best competitive quartets, taking near-district champion quartets to championship levels and current district champions to even higher levels in international competition.

Attending the school were 2006 district champs Voices Only, 2005 district champs After Midnight, and 6 other top scoring quartets, including Bandwagon, Quarter Past Four, Geneva, Main Event, Wireless, and Escalade.

Top Gun continued on page 8

Top Gun continued from page 7

The scheduled faculty included four international champion quartet men, all of whom are in high demand for their superlative coaching skills: Jay Giallombardo, Tony DeRosa, Brandon Guyton, and Mike Slamka. The morning the school began, a last minute phone call from Tony DeRosa informed us that he had strep throat and could not come. Well known coach Brent Graham immediately agreed to take Tony's spot, and he filled it well.

Coaching sessions were with quartet pairs, so that each quartet got a dedicated coaching session for their quartet and a master class with their paired quartet from each of the four coaches. Quartet pairings changed every session, so each quartet got to see four different quartets in action in addition to their own coaching.

The improvement seen in a short day and a half was in many cases truly remarkable. Some quotes from the quartets include:

"We now know what to focus on in our rehearsals in order to get to "the next level!"
– Voices Only

"Every single coach was able to pinpoint areas where we could improve the most AND they gave us great exercises to help us develop habits that stick." - Escalade

"We were excited to leave with new rehearsal techniques that could be applied in our weekly quartet practices." – Quarter Past Four

"What a great way to learn how to progress to the top level from those who have already done it!" – After Midnight

"Top Gun was a testament to LOL's mission of encouraging quartet singing in our district." – Bandwagon

As if the terrific coaching wasn't enough, the Top Gun quartets all came over to the COTS location Saturday night for a weekend ending afterglow, with each quartet showing off their skills to an appreciative audience of COTS attendees.

What a great weekend!



Voices Only



Escalade



Quarter Past Four



Singing Valentines 2007



The teacher blushed and smiled, the girls in the class giggled and the boys, grimaced as "Boundary Waters" serenaded a Valentine. With nine gigs under their belts, Jim Johansson, Don Knecht, Gary Little, and Dick Reimenschneider (Commodores) had a grand day singing. Photo by Mary Knecht, their trusty handler.



Gold Rush also went out to do singing valentines this year. We sang in a variety of venues including White Bear Lake High School for Cleon's daughter, Karly (pictured above), a seniors residence for Cleon folks and Red Lobster restaurant for Cleon's sister in law.

We also sang for a couple who have hired Cleon and Steve Nolte's quartets for the 4th year in a row..... We caught up with Erin and her new baby at Babies 'R' Us. Probably the least comfortable was this gentleman picture below as we sang for him in the lobby of his office complex while his co-workers looked on.



After Midnight
a barbershop quartet

Tom Marchinsky
952-931-9715
tom_bbshcp@hotmail.com

Bandwagon

Contact:
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Rochester, MN 55904

Come along for the ride!

Phone: 507-288-3021 Email: jibbass@juno.com

Ellis Jones, Tenor Bruce Gray, Lead

MAGIC

Barbershop Harmony & Sleight of Hand

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Don Miller, Baritone Bill Lybecker, Bass

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

HAPPINESS EMPORIUM
BARBERSHOP QUARTET

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CONTACT: Rod Johnson
1308 Blue Phlox Court
Northfield, Minnesota 55057
507.645.5750

Please support these GNU quartets

GOLD RUSH
A Land O' Lakes Quartet

STEVE NOLTE
STEVE ANDERSON

CLEON WAHLIN
STEVE HARDY*

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Bob Griffith - Baritone
Lance Johnson - Bass

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