



International Medalist GREAT NORTHERN UNION CHORUS

HILLTOP CHAPTER • SPEBSQSA

10,000 LAKES DIVISION – LAND O' LAKES DISTRICT



Volume 13 #3

GNUsNews

December 2008

GNU Wins District with highest score in LOL history



GNU regains District Championship in Appleton!

The Great Northern Union Chorus returned to competition traveling to Appleton, WI for the 2008 Land O' Lakes District Barbershop Harmony Society Chorus Competition.

With 70 men on stage the GNU was the District Chorus Champion with a score of 1069 out of 1200 and overall average of 89.1%. This is one of the highest scores ever achieved by the GNU and earns the chorus the opportunity to compete at the BHS International Chorus Competition in Anaheim, CA in July 2009. The score earned in Appleton seeds the GNU 3rd Internationally.

"We are truly humbled and proud to have been able to return to competition and are honored to represent the LOL District in Anaheim next July." said GNU director Peter Benson.



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Each GNU's NEWS issue is an official publication of the Hilltop Chapter, 10,000 Lakes Division, LOL District, of the Barbershop Harmony Society. 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.

We are on Holiday break but we will be back to normal rehearsals on January 8th.

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

Upcoming events

Holiday Break Nov. 23 - Jan 7

Guest Night Jan 15

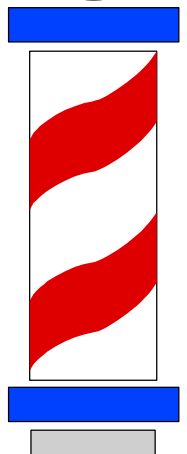
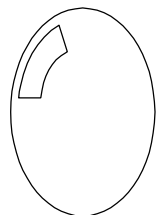
Columbia Heights performance Jan 25

Mark Hale coaching Feb 28

Collegiate Concert March 14

Division Contest March 28

Joe Connelly coaching April 9



To say that the GNU has reason to celebrate 2008 would be an understatement. As I page through my calendar, I am amazed at what we accomplished in just one year. To name a few: First ever combined concert with two of the finest collegiate men's choirs in the country (Norsemen, Vikings), North Central ACDA convention (standing ovation), Youth Concert with Marcoux Corner, First ever Division Championship!, Concert with Robert Robinson, District Championship with record highest LOL score and 3rd place International seeding, and the best Season Finale ever (again!). And those are only some of the highlights!



- ◆ Great Arrangements (Uptune that works for us!)
- ◆ Visual Plan (looks great & allows for great singing)
- ◆ Individual Feedback – personal evaluations/coaching/video
- ◆ Great Sectional Work
- ◆ Addition of several great new singers
- ◆ “Go For It” Attitude

Well, that's at least a partial list. The performance team has discussed the list and is already looking at ways to continue to improve each area as we prepare for Anaheim.

Finally, I want to thank each one of you for a great 2008 season. Ultimately it was YOU who made the success happen. Congratulations! Here's to an even more astonishing 2009!



Anytime this much success is achieved, I think it is wise to figure out how it happened. Tony Robbins says, “Success leaves clues.” Let's look at some of the things that may have contributed to our overwhelming success at the District contest in Appleton. These are things we did beyond our “normal” championship preparation. Here's my list, perhaps you have more.

- ◆ Movement (ABM) – compare to division DVD just 6 months prior!
- ◆ Motion drives Emotion (getting into “Peak State” before performing)
- ◆ Moving Air
- ◆ Celebratory Rehearsal Atmosphere (Energy from everyone & recognizing successes)
- ◆ Contest Performance Practice (Mock judging panel/Friends & Family Night)





Contest Day photos by John Babbs

Clockwise from upper right:

A salute to the sections leaders

The new relaxed approach to contest preparation created a fun, confident atmosphere

Are those the eyes of a champion?

As always, the more experienced (older) members help out the less experienced (younger) members.

From the pub to the stage.....Just Kidding!



In preparation for the district contest we invited a panel of local judges to score us at rehearsal as if we were on the contest stage. They were a very highly recognized trio in the Barbershop Harmony Society who included, from left to right below, Paul Wigley, Doug Miller and Tom Matchinsky. In addition, we brought in Jim Bagby to help with our presentation skills. We also had a performance at Faith Lutheran Church in Waconia as part of their Music by the Lake concert series. Happiness Emporium and After Midnight filled out the concert. It was the last public performance for After Midnight who had been together for nearly 5 years. Thanks to Kathy Litchfield for taking the photos.



The Season Finale was once again proclaimed as our “best ever” by the audience members. It included not only the GNU but also a new college chorus called Wissota Voices (pictured below) from *Wisconsin* and *Minnesota* directed by GNU member Scott Perau. Jared Hoke with his powerful voice, sang the solo on “Every Time I Feel the Spirit”. The show also featured 2 quartets, 2007 LOL District Champs, Vocality and top ten international competitor, Hot Air Buffoon pictured below as Crash Test Dummies!

Dawn Holmberg, photographer



After Midnight

Hangs Up the Pitch Pipe

After nearly 5 years together, After Midnight has decided it's time to hang up their pinstriped suits. We've had a blast singing together and performing for audiences small and large. During our time together we've had the privilege to sing for barbershop audiences all over the Land 'O Lakes District and at three International Quartet Competitions. We've enjoyed meeting and entertaining folks from Winnipeg to Wausau and Madison to Windom and lots of points in between. Of course, whenever four otherwise busy people gather in pursuit of artistic excellence, a great deal of support is lent them by family and friends and



so we have lots of people to thank.

First and foremost, we'd to thank our spouses and families. Without you, we wouldn't be able to take part in this wonderful hobby. In particular, we need to offer special thanks to Steve's parents, Kent and Carol McDonald. They've been constant and ardent supporters of ours and have witnessed nearly every performance After Midnight has done. And despite their refusal to ever let us pick up a check at dinner (or their protests when we do manage to sneak one past them), we still love them with all our hearts. We also need to thank those that have helped us sing and

perform better every year. Brent Graham and Roger Stanfield have been stern critics, great cheerleaders and top notch teachers throughout our entire existence.

Thank you to our Chapter, the mighty Great Northern Union. You guys can always be counted on for cheers at conventions and encouragement whenever we see you. Thanks for being such wonderful brothers in harmony.

Finally, we need to thank the LOL District. Your hard work at all the competitions and your support of programs like Top Gun have helped us and numerous other quartets to reach new plateaus and improve our craft. It truly is a great district for quarteting and we look forward to seeing other groups representing the LOL all across the Barbershop Harmony Society.

All our best,

Tom, David, Steve, and Jim

After Midnight

Learn a Tag on YouTube

James Estes teaches you

“In Dixieland Where I was Born”a tag in a series called *Tag Time!* with James Estes.

Teach these tags to your chapter, or put them in your memory bank for your next convention! Post a video response of your quartet or chorus singing this tag! Or post a video response of you teaching a different tag!

Here is the link to “In Dixieland Where I was Born” and info on where to look for other Barbershop tags in the series when they become available.

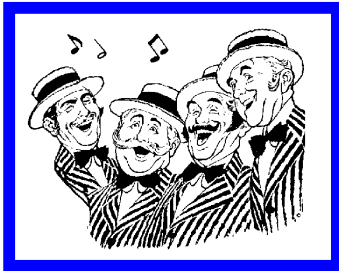
<http://uk.youtube.com/watch?v=hMLZoMpPoXo>

Category: [Music](#)

Tags:

[Barbershop](#) [Harmony Society](#) [Tag Time](#) [In Dixieland](#) [Where Was Born](#) [James Estes](#) [Acapella](#) [Singing](#)

District Contest was filled with top notch quartets including 1st place, X Factor, 2nd place, Main Street Station and 3rd place Sound Image. GNU quartets rounded out the top 6 with Gold Rush and Engage tied for 4th place just one point out of 3rd and Snap finishing in 6th. All the GNU quartets posted their highest scores to date!



Quartet News



Tied for 4th Place Gold Rush

All Contest photos courtesy of Lifetime Image.



1st Place X Factor



Tied for 4th Place Engage



2nd Place Main Street Station



3rd Place Sound Image



6th Place Snap!

WCCO Radio (AM830) featured the GNU on their weekly arts program CenterStage. WCCO host Jearlyn Steele (pictured at right) hosted 10 GNU singers in the studio to help promote the GNU's Gospel Concert on Sept 20 with Robert Robinson and the Twin Cities Community Gospel Choir (pictured below). The spot ran at 9:30pm on Sunday evening September 14. The feature included "live" song segments, interviews, and ticket giveaways. Thanks to Roger Bull for arranging this great opportunity to promote our music and upcoming concert event. John Bergren took the pictures at the gospel concert.



A youth chorus from University of Wisconsin-River Falls will be representing LOL in the Youth Chorus Festival during the Midwinter Convention in Pasadena, Ca this January. The members of this chorus are primarily from Minnesota and Wisconsin thus the name Wissota. Those of you who will be attending the Midwinter Convention can watch them compete.



The members of Wissota have to pay their own way to Pasadena to the tune of about \$400 each. With the cost of college today that puts quite a strain on their individual budgets.

The LOL district has contributed to their travel fund. There may be members of the Land O'Lakes District that would also like to make a contribution. If you can help them financially, make out a check to:

UWRF Barbershop Chorus

Scott Perau

1242 Bartosh Lane #5

River Falls WI 54022



Let's support and encourage these young men in their competitive endeavor.

Doug Miller

President, Land O' Lakes District



Holiday Social/Awards Dinner caps off a wonderful year for the GNU

The holiday social/awards dinner was held at the Fort Snelling Officers Club on Friday evening December 19th to celebrate the season and acknowledge several members of the chorus for their efforts during the past year.

Some of the awards given out include the “Happy Feet” award for the member that has shown the best improvement over the past year with his footwork on the risers and the “BIF” award for the “Best Improved Face”. This year’s Happy Feet recipient was Luke Norell and the BIF award went to Ken Gilmore

A new award, only 4 years old, is one set out to recognize newer members who have stepped up and made major contributions to the running of the chapter in addition to their enthusiasm and commitment on the risers. This year it went to our new chapter secretary, Roger Wambheim who unfortunately could not make it to the gathering.

The highest award given each year goes to the person who, through his untiring efforts, has influenced our organization in a most positive way. It is the Barbershopper of the Year (BOTY) award and this year it went to Ken Slinde, for his great work as membership VP and his work in setting up national anthem opportunities with the Twins and Vikings organizations.

The new 2009 GNU board was presented (as pictured at right) and a check for \$1000 was presented to the Wissota Voices to help with expenses associated with their trip to Pasadena for the International Youth Barbershop Chorus Festival .



A big thanks (as always) to Bruce Watson for supplying the various award plaques and trophies.



Above, Music VP, Brent Buresh presents Luke Norell with the “Happy Feet” award. Below, hands off the traveling “BIF” award to Ken Gilmore.



Ken Slinde presents Roger Wambheim with the Newbie award. ☺

On the QT

You younger guys can ignore this, but others take note. The following was taken from the most recent "On The QT" publication that the **Barbershop Harmony Society** publishes.

--Jim Emery

How to Preserve Your Voice for Your Senior Years

By Jim DeBusman



There are many senior quartet singers out there asking some very important questions such as; "I recently noted my 72nd birthday and am finding in the past few years that both my lung capacity and also my range (esp. low notes) are not what they used to be. Are there things I should know to help me combat the inevitable consequences of aging?"

Some of the answers to these questions are that the older we get, the more important it is to remember that we must spend more time on practicing our breathing every day. Any deep breathing exercises like warm air, hissing, nasal or back breathing exercises will do the trick.

We must also keep physically active. Go swimming, ride a bike, play golf, go bowling, walk, but do some kind of physical activity every day. As your body matures, you just can't just sit on your favorite chair and watch TV. Do something that stimulates your muscles and your mind.

Here are some reasons why you need to do this. It is understood that muscles become tired as you become older. This causes an increasing stiffness of the vocal fold tissue. You need to keep the vocal muscle as flexible as possible and that is why singing a little bit everyday will make a difference as you grow older. Make certain you sing correctly. As you grow older, your voice will not be as strong as it once was and you probably won't have the range you once had, but you still can sing in good quality if you take good care of your vocal instrument. Don't expect to sing only once a week and be the quality singer you once were.

Singing is the stuff that keeps us full of life for a long time. It has the power to heal us and stimulate our minds and bodies. Singing will continue to build your skills and the discipline in your life as long as you wish it too. When you perform in your chorus and/or quartet, it requires fantastic coordination of your body and mind. Continuing to sing throughout your life, all your life, will keep you younger and healthier longer than you could have ever hoped for.

New Editor Needed

After 7 years and 37 issues, Steve Anderson is stepping down from the co-editor position with the GNUsNews.

Anyone interested in taking over this important aspect of chapter communication should contact marketing VP, Wally Brink, or Editors, Roger Meyer and Steve Anderson.





The Great Northern Union hosted an afterglow in the headquarters hotel after the quartet finals in Appleton. Several groups showed up to sing including (clockwise from the upper left) Gold Rush, newly crowned district champ – X Factor, 2007 district champ Vocality, and a new collegiate quartet featuring GNU member Jay Fahl.



JAY TONY DAVID ROBERT



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Ellis Jones, Tenor Bruce Gray, Lead



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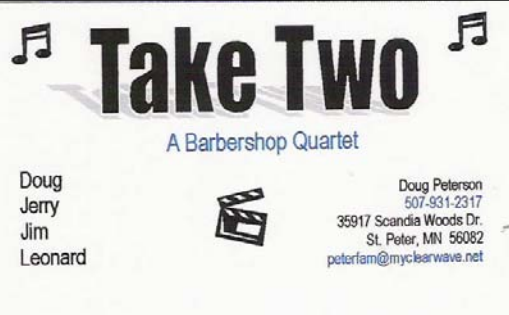
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bgray@gustavus.edu

Don Miller, Baritone Bill Lydecker, Bass



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Doug
Jerry
Jim
Leonard

Doug Peterson
507-931-2317
35917 Scandia Woods Dr.
St. Peter, MN 56082
peterjam@myclearwave.net

SNAP!
A Cappella Quartet

Contact: Phil Jensen Tenor: Jeff Aldrich
Phone: 952-435-2827 Lead: Phil Jensen
E-mail: snapquartet@charter.net Baritone: Heath Walker
Bass: Darren Hoehne

Jim Jay
Engage
Barbershop Quartet

Rick Steve

Contact: Jim Olson Minneapolis, MN
(H) 952-431-3110 olsoncrew@frontiernet.net

GOLD RUSH
A Land O' Lakes Quartet

STEVE NOLTE
STEVE ANDERSON

CLEON WAHLIN
STEVE HARDY*

763 757-0581 1750 - 131st Ln NW
bari@prettygoodquartet.com MPLS, MN 55448

Talk of the Town
A Barbershop Quartet

Judd Orff - Lead
Keith Fransen - Tenor
Matt Hall - Bass
Jim Hall - Baritone

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