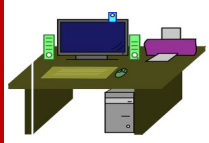
Desert Aires Barbershop Chorus

ENTERTAINING THE WEST VALLEY

2024

Issue 8

On The Air(es)



from the desk

of the President…

As we step into November, a month of gratitude and reflection, I can't help but be thankful for the time we spend together as a chorus and the music and energy we bring to every rehearsal and performance.

Our busy season is about to begin with the return of our snowbirds and the upcoming holiday performances. I recently received a call from Tiffany at The Glencroft, where we are scheduled to perform on December 6. She said there was so much demand from the residents to see us, that she asked if we could also perform on December 5! I think that's a real testament to the quality of sound and entertainment that we produce! As we approach the holiday season, let's embrace the joy of sharing music together. It's a wonderful time to connect, both with each other and with our audience.

Rich

DON'T FORGET TO UPDATE YOUR STATUS FOR DECEMBER 5TH ON CHOIRGENIUS. GO TO HTTPS://DESERTAIRES.CHOIRGENIUS.COM

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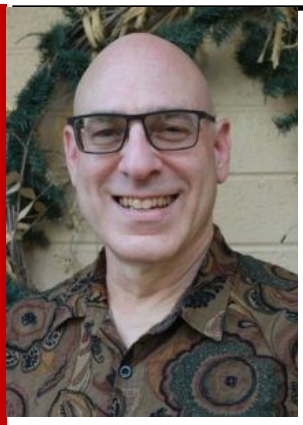


Enriching My Life

As I sat and looked out into the audience, I could see many people tapping their toes, swaying, and smiling. Some of them were calmly sitting looking around the room with little energy only moments before. These seniors responded to upbeat songs most, especially familiar ones. Some, mouthing the words as they rocked gently in their seats.

Although this has occurred time and time again, I'm specifically reflecting on the Desert Aires' recent performance at Solstice. As Off the Clock skillfully sang many familiar songs, the listeners were alive with joy. Not that they were jumping out of their seats, but they were completely engaged with the performance.

Music is perhaps the best way to improve one's mood. When we hear songs of our past, we immediately connect to the times, places, and people associated with the songs. Much like a smell that brings people back to their mother's cooking. To bring music to people is a pure joy that we all enjoy.

As I looked at all of you while we were performing, I saw bright eyes and involved bodies telling musical stories. I saw hand movements and head nods and looks out to the audience. One of the best moments is when I walked away during Hello Mary Lou. You had the song securely in your grasp. I walked into the audience and enjoyed watching you and the audience as you had a wonderful moment with one another.

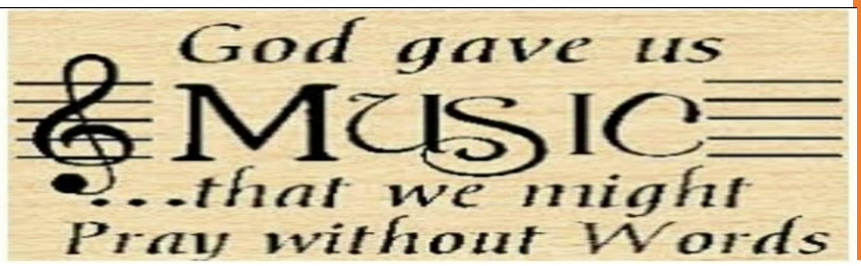
Hopefully, our rehearsals are enjoyable and fun to attend, but there's something powerful about going out to give a performance. I use the term "give" a performance because I think we give a gift every time we sing for folks. Perhaps you have zeroed in on an audience member while singing and it became hard to look away because of the joy in their eyes. That's a unique communication between people who don't necessarily know each other, but who connect over music.

I saw many of you speaking with the residents after our performance, which is a wonderful way to end. One resident came up to me and said, "You were perfect. You don't even know how to make a mistake". Another said that they lived there for 9 years and ours was the best performance they've had there.

It is always my joy to stand in front of you and direct, both at rehearsals and at shows. I love to see the camaraderie that we've built, and I can sense how much we all care for one another. Thank you all for enriching my life.

Cary

32 year member of BHS,
Musicality Judge since 2010,
Coach and arranger,
Director of a senior men's chorus, the Desert Aires of the Sun Cities, AZ Chapter,
Director of a women's a cappella chorus, Wicked Pitch of the West,
Director of a 160-member community chorus for 20 years.



My Barbershop Initiation

My primary musical interest since high school was playing trombone in a Dixieland band, and I've been successful at that ever since. I had sung in church choirs, and a college glee club, but that was it for singing. One time in my early working career, I was invited to a local society chapter meeting, and I enjoyed it, but not enough to join.

My wife and I moved to Phoenix early in this century, and about 2003, I spotted a flyer for a Desertaires annual concert. That sounded interesting, so I showed up at the Sun Dial lobby to see about tickets. There was Doug Campbell , leader of the bass section, sitting by himself with a bunch of tickets to sell. I sat down to chat, he suggested a seat location, walked me into the empty ballroom to show me where those seats would be, and we completed the deal. We talked for a while longer, he asked about my interest in music in general, and singing in particular. I guess I showed some interest, for he invited me to the next rehearsal, told me the time and place. I figured I had nothing to lose, so on that next Tuesday I drove to the church at 12:15, and there was Doug, standing out in the parking lot, waiting for me! He took me inside, got me a name badge, introduced me around, sat me down in the front row between himself and Ralph Brooks and the other basses. I have never felt so welcomed to a new group as I was that day! I'm still there today, sitting in the front row with the basses.

In 2005, I formed a new Dixieland band, called the Sun City Stomperz. It wasn't very long before then director Rich Thompson invited the band to play some tunes as folks were arriving for the Desertaires annual concert. The band started out in the back corner of the hall for several years, then moved to the front corner, then to the floor in front of the stage, and finally after about 15 years, graduated to stage center to begin the show! I've always felt that the two forms of music, old time jazz and barbershop, go well together. I hope we can carry on with the partnership for years to come.

"It's Great to be a Desertaire, Oh Yeah"

Ernie sings base and plays trombone with *Sun City Stomperz*

VOTE

Hello Quartetters!

We have a busy performance season coming up that starts with our holiday shows and continues through our annual show in February. We want to make sure that each quartet knows how to qualify to sing on our shows. You don't have to be an established quartet to perform All quartets will follow the same process. Here are the steps:

- As soon as you know what songs you'd like to sing (1 to 3 songs per performance), please send an email to cdstruyk@gmail.com or write down your choices and hand them to a music team member. You may choose 1 to 3 songs for the holiday season and 1 to 3 songs for our annual show. Getting your song requests in early allows us to ensure there is no duplication. We don't want you to work on music and then find there is a conflict. If there is a conflict, the first quartet that submits the song will be allowed to pursue it. As we get closer to each performance, we'll know how many songs each quartet will sing and we'll communicate that to you.

- To qualify to sing on any show, your quartet needs to perform each song by the third Tuesday prior to that show. This allows us to create the script and to assist quartets as needed. For example, our annual show for Bellevue Heights is December 6th. The third Tuesday rehearsal prior to that is November 19th. So, each quartet wishing to be on the Bellevue show must sing their songs on or prior to our rehearsal on November 19th. Our annual show is February 23rd, so the final date to sing your songs to the chorus and music team is February 4th.

- After all quartets sing for the chorus, the music team will notify each quartet of the songs we would like you to sing (from your 1 to 3 songs). The number of songs each quartet performs depends on how many quartets are available for a particular performance, the length of the show, and how much material the chorus will perform.

If you have any questions, please talk to a music team member as soon as possible. Although we will do everything we can to support you and guide you, we cannot always accommodate last-minute requests.

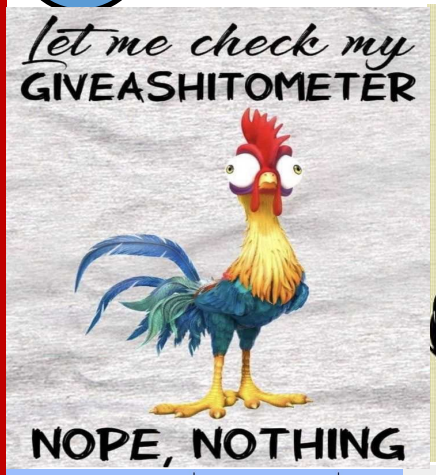
All decisions are made by the music team and not any one individual.

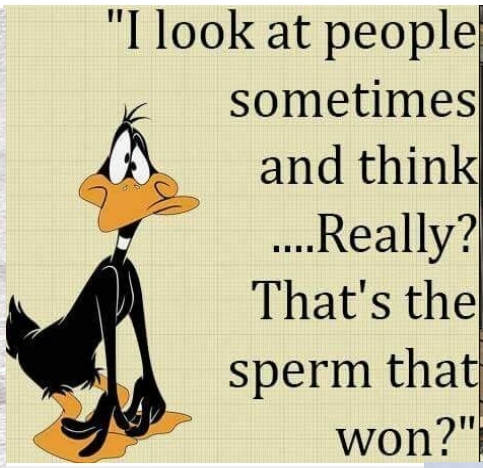
We can't wait to see what our chapter quartets bring to the stage!

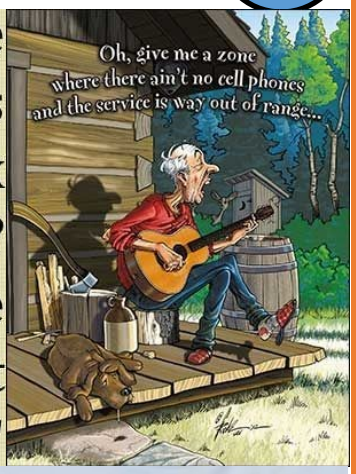
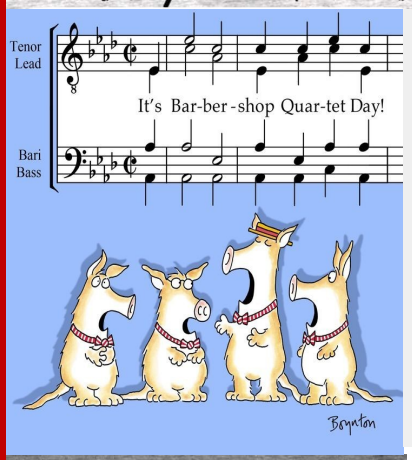
The Music Team

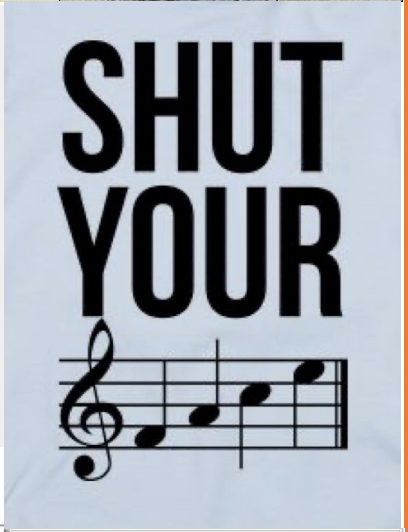
Ernie Landes was observant and pointed out an article in *Live Wire* regarding our rehearsal closing song and the proper way to sing it. I, for one, have been singing incorrect words to *Keep the Whole Singing.* **Here is the Link** *<—(Click) Hold down ctrl or cmd key* Then go to the fifth article: (Do you REALLY know "Keep The Whole World Singing"?)

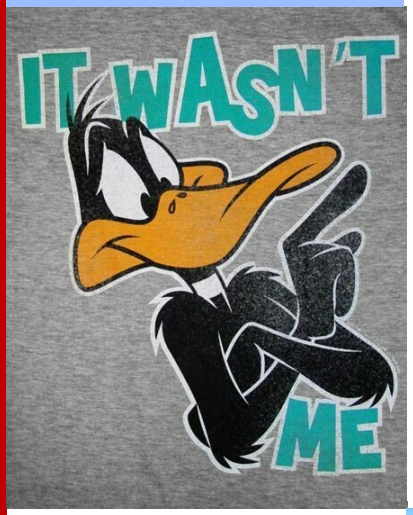
Just For Fun

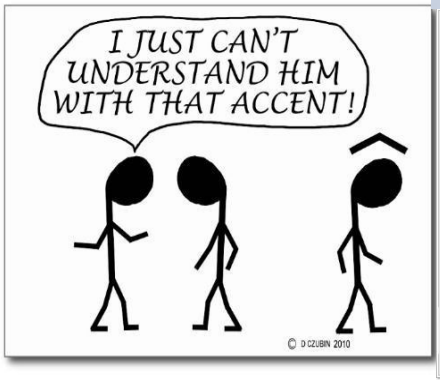


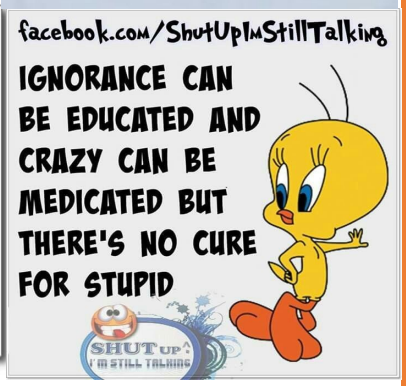




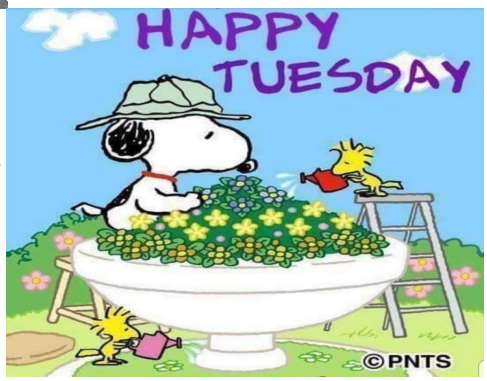








The newsletter is always looking for contributors. Also please give your suggestions on how we can make this chorus better and more fun.



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Comments or Complaints