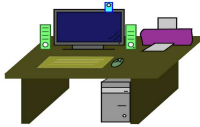


Desert Aires

Barbershop Chorus

ENTERTAINING THE WEST VALLEY

2026
Issue 5



from the desk

2026 Officers
& Directors

of the President...

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Botterbusch**
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VP Music

**Smiley
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VP Membership

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**Directors at
Large**

Bill Shaw 1y

**Barney
Barnhart 2y**

Greg Layne 3y

In the first four months of this year, we've achieved a great deal, highlighted by our FWD Convention performance and our first-ever Retreat. We're continuing to review how we operate so the Chorus remains financially sound, healthy, and growing.

I'm encouraged by the progress underway in our three committees:

- Music - refining how we select and learn new songs, with new members and snowbirds in mind.
- Show - making major updates to our Annual Show, including venue, ticket pricing, and entertainment.
- Uniform - defining a clear uniform policy and providing new Uniform recommendations to the Board.

The Board is also adding new concerts and holiday shows.

Summer is a time to recharge, and with these updates underway, we look forward to the benefits for every member and for our community.



CARY S CORNER

The Difference Between Contest Barbershop and General Barbershop

The following is an overarching, broad definition of the barbershop style:

Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a primarily homorhythmic (the same word sounds at the same time) texture. The melody is consistently sung by the lead (second tenor), with the tenor (first tenor) harmonizing above the melody, the bass singing the lowest harmonizing notes, and the baritone completing the chord. Occasional brief passages may be sung by fewer than four voice parts.

(BHS Website - <https://www.barbershop.org/contests/contests-judging>)

Here are the basic points:

- Unaccompanied (no instruments)
- 4-part chords
- Features consonant harmony (versus dissonant harmony) – Chords with potential to “ring”
- Primarily homorhythmic (same word sounds at the same time)
- Melody in an inside voice with harmony above and below the melody

These are guidelines, since no musical genre can be specifically defined.

Contest barbershop is a bit more confining. Musically Judges assess to what degree a performance of a song fits into the contest barbershop style. For example, if instruments are used in contest, it is a disqualification. If an ensemble sings a song that is not at least fifty percent homorhythmic, the score may be negatively affected. For example, the Society arrangement of the song Darkness on the Delta features a lead melody line, “oohs” in the tenor and baritone, and “doom bah” in the bass. It is not strong contest material.

Musicality judges also assess the chords and chord progressions (which chords follow which chords) to assess their alignment with the barbershop style. Singing mostly jazz chords or singing songs without the characteristic circle of fifths chord progression, may affect your score. Furthermore, scores may be negatively affected if the Performance category assesses the performance as primarily religious or patriotic. These are but a few examples.

Contest barbershop is a relatively narrow slice of barbershop. General audiences often think that anything that is a cappella and sung by four people is barbershop. If a chorus wore traditional barbershop outfits and sang any song a cappella, a general audience would likely say that it is barbershop.

Our audiences have a much less stringent idea of barbershop than we do, especially in the contest arena. Outside of contest, the barbershop umbrella is quite broad.

Con't on page 5 – Cary's Corner

To click on link: Simply click on the link.
If that doesn't work, copy the link and
paste it in your browser.

38 year member of BHS,
Musically Judge since 2010, 2024 Desertaires Barbershopper of the Year,
Coach and arranger,
Director of a senior men's chorus, the Desertaires of 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



M E M B E R

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Music

Music has been in my family for generations. My grandfather had a quartet in 1896 singing 4 part harmony. My father was a semi-professional singer. I had an uncle and several cousins involved in Barbershop Harmony

I have been involved in Music since childhood. I played trombone in Junior high school and high school. I also sang in the high school choir. As an adult I was busy raising 7 children, working and playing sports.

When I was getting ready to retire, I joined my brother in singing barbershop with a small chorus in Saginaw MI. After I retired in 1997, I came to Phoenix and heard the Phoenicians sing. I decided at that time to join them and began a great barbershop experience with them. I sang with 2 other choruses and several quartets. I sang with the Rainbow Quartet for over 20 years. It has been a wonderful journey, and now singing with the champion senior chorus - the Desertaires and the super senior barbershop quartet champions - Midwest Connection I am so fortunate to have joined this wonderful society.

In Harmony,

Grant Fox

Just a quick note to Fred Huff & Aaron Burleson



GET WELL QUICK

And any others under the weather

May Birthdays

Jim Schaefer 6th, Jim Skinner 28th

Ted Dumbauld 29th, Smiley McGinnis 30th

Can't Read Music –You're Not Alone

There are quite a few highly successful professional singers who either can't read music at all or only have very limited ability to do so. Musical literacy isn't required to be a great performer, especially in genres that rely on listening, imitation, and feel.

Here are some well-known examples: **Elvis Presley** – Could not read music; learned everything by ear. **Aretha Franklin** – Had minimal music-reading ability but possessed extraordinary natural musicianship **Eric Clapton** – Has said he doesn't read music and plays by ear. **Paul McCartney** – One of the most famous musicians in the world, yet doesn't read traditional notation fluently. **Eddie Van Halen** – Couldn't read music; relied on instinct and experimentation. **Taylor Swift** – Has acknowledged she doesn't read music notation. **Bob Dylan** – Known for writing and performing without reading music.

Why this is common

Many professional singers—especially in pop, rock, country, gospel, and folk—develop skills through: Listening and imitation, Muscle memory, Emotional interpretation, or Collaboration with arrangers or producers who do read music.

Important note

Not reading music doesn't mean lacking musical skill. These artists often have: Exceptional ear training, Strong pitch recognition, Deep musical intuition

You Don't Have To Be Able To Read Music



🎵 Join the Desert Aires Barbershop Chorus!

🎵 Love to sing? Come harmonize with us!

We rehearse Tuesdays at 12:30 PM at Bellevue Heights Church,

📍 9440 W. Hutton Drive, Sun City, AZ

No experience needed — just a love of music and fun!

Members - Ask your friends, neighbors or those you sing with at church.

We're a fun bunch of guys who get together once a week to rehearse. We also are involved with community outreach to bring the barbershop style to those in various senior living facilities.

You Can Hire Us

So, what kind of songs should we consider singing in our performances? I think choruses should adopt the looser definition of barbershop for general performances. This opens up a tremendous amount of music.

I believe that barbershop is an instrumentation (4-parts), and with that instrumentation we sing a variety of genres. Modern music, pop, doo wop, jazz, country, and classic rock and roll have a place in barbershop. A good example is In My Room. Basically, it is in the popular (pop) genre and has few barbershop chords, but it is well suited to our style of singing. Under the Boardwalk is primarily a melody, some background oohs, and a bass line.

A well-balanced repertoire includes:

- A few contest-worthy songs
- Music that our audiences enjoy
- Music that we enjoy
- Music that is compelling and interesting
- Music that is appropriate to our skill level

Moving forward, it will be fun to see what songs you suggest. There is wonderful music out there that fits perfectly into the general barbershop style.

Cary

TAG SINGING AT ITS MOST DANGEROUS



Surviving tag sessions where the tenors go for the high note,

The basses go for snacks,

The baris go for notes that aren't printed,

And the leads go for whatever the leads go for.

Music is a language that doesn't speak in particular words. It speaks in emotions, and if it's in the bones, it's in the bones.

- Keith Richards

- 1) I'm sorry I'm a demanding director
- 2) I'll try to be nicer
- 3) #1 and #2 are lies
- 4) Go rehearse!

Barbershop:

It either

RINGS

or it

SUCKS!

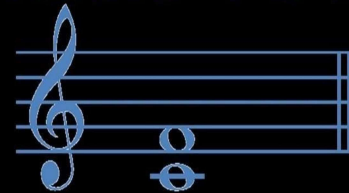
- Syverson

Do you ever just want to grab someone by the shoulders, look them deep in the eyes and whisper no one gives a shit!



Being A Grandparent Is Your Reward For Not Killing Your Kids

MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU



www.bertrandsmusic.tumblr.com/social

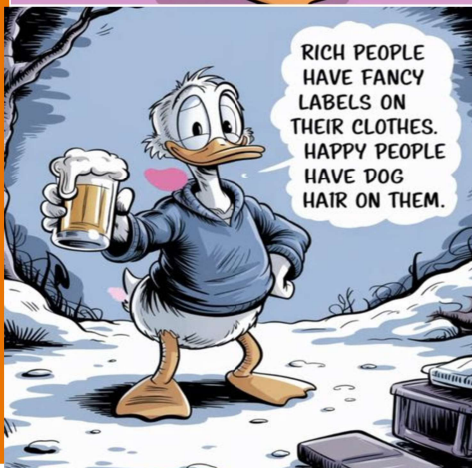
You put your left leg in, your back goes out, you're creaking and cramping and you've got a dose of gout... You Twist and Shout and a little wee comes out... That's what aging is all about!



Some come from the generation 'If you quit crying I'll buy you something.' We come from 'If you don't quit crying I'll give you something to cry about.'



Im old enough to remember when mentally ill people were put in hospitals not Congress.



RICH PEOPLE HAVE FANCY LABELS ON THEIR CLOTHES. HAPPY PEOPLE HAVE DOG HAIR ON THEM.

To the hand you talk



because listening I am not



Editor—
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chorus@gmail.com
Appreciate your
Comments or complaints