



The

Diamond STATEment



The Multiple Award Winning Newsletter of the Greater Little Rock Chapter of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.

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GLR wins gold

Chorus earns three trophies



Don Snow (right) with trophies presented by District officer **Lou Anderson**.

Our chapter won the 2004 plateau AA and overall NE Division championship, qualified to compete at the next District convention and was the most improved chorus. For that, esteemed musical director **Don Snow** collected three plaques.

The consistent scores ranged from 72 to 77 and totaled 451, a mere thirteen points higher than runner up Central Cities. Tulsa also qualified for district with 381 points

while Hot Springs barely missed the mark with 348.



District VP **Lou Anderson** applauds *Flashback* for their win. From left, **Lou, Steve Purdy, Gary Hawkins, Don Snow** and **Terry Mercing**.

Flashback repeats as NE Champs

The obvious class of the division was *Flashback* who scored 901 points (75.1 average) to win their second crown. In their last outing in Corpus Christi their average was 73.1. As a result of that encouraging finish they are flying to Kansas City on April 16 to enter the International Prelims in the Central States District. They need only a slight improvement to qualify to compete in Louisville in July.

Behind *Flashback* in Hot Springs were *The Dynamo Dukes* (837 points), *Dallas Blend* (819) and *Peel'n Paint* (789). Our own *Zirconium* was a strong seventh place with 740 points and qualified to compete at the SW District competition in Richardson in October.

On the inside...

- Chorus performance on April 15
- Tribble fails to three-peat as BETY
- Quartet/Ensemble activities

Miscellaneous

Chorus performance scheduled

by Lou Anderson

Ponce de Leon Performing Arts Center
Upcoming Performance of
The **DIAMOND STATE CHORUS**
Division Champions 2004
Southwestern District
April the 15th of 2004,

which is a Thursday Night, at the Woodlands Auditorium in Hot Springs Village

The chorus will assemble for vocal warm-up at 5:00 PM. Dress will be full Chorus Tux and the performance will last approximately 90 minutes with an intermission of 20 minutes in between.

Directions:

The Woodlands Auditorium is on DeSoto Blvd approximately 8 ½ miles from Highway 7 on the west side of Hot Springs Village. Entering the gated community, ask the guard for specific directions to the Performing Arts Center in the center of “the Village”. for the Symphony Guild

Next Month.

We hope to have

- Board minutes
- Valentines report
- Details about Terry’s positions at International and the SW District

Tribble fails to three-peat

George Tribble, the multiple award winning editor of the DiamondSTATEment, failed in his attempt at three in a row, taking a lowly second place in the District for 2003. The winning entry was from **Michael Hunter** from San Angelo. Astute readers will recognize that name as the new editor of the SW Roundup. Considering the position of the winner, one must suspect politics in the adjudication.



Euphoria at contest. **Don Snow, Paula Steinziek, Gary Hawkins, and Betsy White** are obviously delighted with scores from the NE Division contest. Photo by staff photographer **Zelnick**.



Birthdays

- Apr 7 Jack Larsen
- Apr 8 Burt Wilkerson
- Apr 15 Paul Wilkerson
- Apr 16 Tony Frances
- Apr 17 Marty Koschmann

Anniversaries

- Apr 12 June and Vic Moore

Quartet news

News from the Untouchables

By Lamar Setliff

Since Lamar and Dean were unable to sing at Division in Hot Springs due to schedule conflicts, the quartet decided to attend the SW Division Contest in San Marcos TX on March 19-20 in order to qualify for District competition in October. This contest, which also included International prelims, was very well attended and would remind one of a District Contest. There were 20 quartets including the "big boys" Sterling and Saturday Evening Post. Both of these quartets sang extremely well, and we will be very pleased with SEP in June. They performed some of their show material on the show following the contest, and they were hilarious! The Cooligans from Tulsa, as well as McKinley Street Function from Lafayette, LA also qualified for International. Max Q qualified in another district, and when our own Flashback qualifies in Kansas City in April, that would mean SIX SWD quartets would be eligible for Louisville this summer!

Anyway, we sang OK and qualified for District, but still have a lot of improving to do. We had the interesting experience of a cell phone ringing during our first set. We still do not know the origin of the ring—I thought it was behind the curtain, David thought it came from the judges' table! The contest administrator offered the opportunity to re-sing the set, but since we were emotionally drained, we opted to go with what we had. We drove down to San Antonio Thursday evening and entertained on the Riverwalk at La Casa Rio Mexican Restaurant while people were waiting to be seated. We had a great weekend.

U4ia retooled

by George Tribble

The departure of **Marvin Chism** left an enormous gap the Arkansas' premier senior competing quartet; but that gap has been filled. **Paul Moore** has moved to Baritone which many have said is his more natural position, and new member **Dick Ahern** has signed on as lead.

They will be unavailable for public performances for awhile and did not compete in the Division Contest in Hot Springs, but are busy building a repertoire and hope to sing five or six songs on the annual show in June and plan to enter the senior division of the Swd contest in October.



Zirconium who qualified for District. From left, **Jim Morris, Mark Carter, Mark Hotchkiss and Jim Linsley** (File photo from June 17, 2002)

"Handful of Diamonds" ensemble formed

by Michael Fess

A new ensemble is forming within the chorus for non-quartet members (who would like to be) or quartet members who are not actively doing gigs. A "*Handful of Diamonds*" has been rehearsing a barbershop style version of "Tie A Yellow Ribbon" complete with custom music and learning tapes (thanks to **ART BOHANNON**).

The original members numbered thirteen, however with attrition from changing commitments, there is room for

other interested members to be a part of this VLQ. The group will maintain the same high standards as the chorus (tape qualifications and music team revue) with a goal of a first performance at the Fun Fest in Hot Springs in June.

Some of the most faithful members in early rehearsals are "**Rip**" **Ripley, Larry Walton, George Tribble, Paul Moore, Jon Clarke, Art Bohannon, Richard Zelnick, and Michael Fess.** **Todd Tucker** has been tied up with duties during March but has now joined the group rehearsals. Other non-chorus music will be presented to the group after the initial song has been mastered.

Interested members should contact Michael Fess for information . . . the group has been rehearsing on Monday at 6:00 PM.

DIRECTLY SPEAKING

by Don Snow

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

Way to go Diamond State Chorus! Almost a clean sweep! Do you realize that had Grand Larceny competed, our chapter would have won every award we were eligible for? That is not to imply any regrets, just to state the facts. But enough of our bravado for now! Have you considered why we won (past the obvious "...we scored more points!)? There is much more than the simple surface effect of winning. Have you analyzed the DEPTH of YOUR performance?

There is a story in the SWD about Jim Clancy asking the panel of judges after winning international with 99's, "...where was the final point?" The win was complete, but the process of winning was not! We had one of, if not the best, A&R sessions after our performance on Saturday. The judges were excited and deliberate about their choice of topics where we could improve to take us to the next level of performance.

Joe Liles now infamous quote "... ain't nothin' like right notes" is really the foundation of what we do. Have you considered our policy of no word or note errors to qualify to compete? Think of it this way, if each man were allowed, let's say three errors, multiplied by 40 men would equal a possible 120 errors in a song that lasts 2 minutes equaling 1 error per second! One wrong word or one wrong note every second! Do you think that level of error is acceptable in any performance? Nay, I say again, NAY!! Know your music!

Oops! Sorry, the old soapbox called me away for a moment or two. Actually I am very pleased with our progress as a Chorus and I am punch proud of your efforts to bring our performances into line. But pride must be balanced with humility! We were only just a little better than our fellow competitors, at that venue, on that day! Besides, like golf, we are not actually competing with anyone but the "Standard". We speak of the "standards" bar raising with each successive year as the "singers" become better. This time we did not rise with the bar, we showed gain on it! Way to go Diamond State Chorus!



We, as a Chorus, are doing the things we need to do with the exception of a little more individual discipline on the risers. That, I suppose, is my greatest failing to you as a Chorus. I want you to have fun and blow off a little of the day's frustrations by singing and buddy-ing around with your fellow singers, but I also have a very limited amount of time with you as a Chorus. Do you realize it takes a month of singing on the risers to equal one, eight hour day! Imagine what we could do if everyone spent an extra "day" rehearsing during the week!

I don't mean to fuss, but help me help you by keeping the "noise" to a minimum on the risers. (soapbox crept in again)

The other thing we need to develop is what we heard in our evaluations ... Individual commitment to raise our own performance level; buying into the song with the voice, face, body, and heart! (ps, start with the heart, it makes the rest easier). I know Paula and Steve are working feverishly on choreography for a couple of our newer songs; we are working on music evaluations and Terry just received one of two songs from the VM for us to peruse.



A bear hug for Don by

Remember in all this, that we are in a process of growth. As I was reminded in a recent article, "...an acorn does not grow into a mighty Oak overnight. It is a process that takes time and patience. You can't see your self as just an acorn and grow into a tree. You must see yourself as the tree, while you are yet an acorn." I can see us as a great musical refuge for the Greater Little Rock area and you are the part of that vision. We have five registered quartets (three of which are top ten in the District), an ensemble group in the making, a dedicated and enthusiastic board of directors, a talented directing and music staff, a strong choreography team, and you! You are the one learning the music, practicing the choreography, attending the rehearsals, driving the miles, and making the sacrifices. After all, in the end, You are the one who makes the Chapter work.

Thank you!

Presidents Corner

by Elwin Jones

What a feeling last Saturday when the Judges for Division Contest came into our room and began by saying, "Solid B level singing". Then proceeded to tell us what we did right. Those are the kind of judging comments I want to hear from now on, and I know all of you feel the same. We have a right to feel proud because as a chapter we have made the decision to raise the standard for our chorus performances and Saturday gave us a glimpse of where that decision can take us. My only regret is that the risers felt light with only 31 chapter members present.

With contest behind us, our efforts turn toward the annual show. As you already know, Max Watkins, our show chairman is hard at work with his team and already asking each of us to begin selling ads. Lets make the effort in this area similar to the decision to raise the standard for singing and presentation. The show as each of you know is our main fund-raiser for the year and without revenue from conventions we have received over the past four years, the need for success is vital to our financial health. Please make every effort you can to help in this important process.



Elwin Jones, 2004 Chapter President

Now is also the time while you are sharing our recent success with your friends to recruit for new members. The last couple of years we have fallen off a little on the growth of our chapter and we need to turn that around. Make an effort to bring a guest with you, Paul Moore and his membership team stand at the ready to assist you in making your guests welcome.

We have another performance in two weeks and it promises to be a good one. We need all our chorus members on the risers in Hot Springs Village for a great show on April 15, 2004. This is another paid performance, and could begin a regular engagement for the chorus. Hope to see all of you there.

Elwin

TRUISMS

Good time to keep your mouth shut is when you're in deep water.

Anyone who thinks old age is golden must not have had a very exciting youth.

Why is it that at class reunions you feel younger than everyone else looks?

Scratch a dog and you'll find a permanent job.

There are no new sins...the old ones just get more publicity.

Think about this...No one ever says "It's only a game" when their team is winning.

Money will buy a fine dog, but only kindness will make him wag his tail.

Learn from the mistakes of others. You won't live long enough to make them all yourself.

A backyard barbecue draws two things...flies and relatives.

The nicest thing about the future is that it always starts tomorrow.

If you don't have a sense of humor, you probably don't have any sense at all.

Coming Events

Apr 11 Easter Sunday

Apr 18 Society Anniversary (1938)

Apr 25 Scholarship Auditions

Apr 26 Tux Performance at Cabot

Jun 5 Fun Fest, Hot Springs

Jun 11/12 Annual Show, CAC, North Little Rock

June 19 Greater Fort Smith Riverblenders Show with Acoustix in Alma, AR

Jun 27-Jul 4 International Convention – Louisville, KY

? Annual Pot Luck Family Social and Novice Quartet Competition

Oct 22-24 SWD District Convention and Contest in Richardson, TX.

Fall/Winter Annual quartet show or Christmas show

Mar 5, 2005 Greater Little Rock Chapter 50th anniversary.

Oct 21-23, 2005 SW District Convention – San Antonio

Oct 20-22, 2006 SW District Convention – Corpus Christi

Oct 2007 SW District Convention - Corpus Christi

Hot Springs Show

Year 2004 Leadership

Board Members:

President	Elwin Jones
Secretary	Bob Cox
Treasurer	Rip Ripley
VP Music	David Stafford
VP Devel/Mktg	Burt Wilkerson
VP Membership	Paul Moore
VP Program	Karl Krebs
Board	Lou Anderson
Past President	Larry Walton

Music Team:

Music Director	Don Snow
Associate Director	Steve Purdy
Director Emeritus	Terry Mercing

Section Leaders:

Tenor	Gary Hawkins
Lead	David Stafford
Asst	Mark Hotchkiss
Bari	Steve Purdy
Bass	Terry Mercing
Asst	Jim Linsley

Audition Coordinator	Terry Mercing
Librarian	Todd Tucker

Committee Chairmen:

Show	Max Watkins
Scholarship	Jim Linsley
Valentines	Tim Copeland
Quartet Activities	Lamar Setliff

Special Assignments:

Performance Coord.	Lou Anderson
Uniform Manager	Bernie Powell
Bulletin Editor	George Tribble
Web Master	Richard Zelnick
Staff Photographers	Gary Hawkins Richard Zelnick

District/Society Officers:

Internat. Membership	Terry Mercing
SWD VP Events	Lou Anderson
Chapter Counselors	Karl Krebs George Tribble
DSC Counselor	Tom Rush