



"The most influential communications fraternity in the Society"
 Published quarterly, Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors, BHS
www.harmonize.com/probe

PROBE

Vol. 49, No. 3 BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY July/Sept 2012

Who will be willing to "rebrand" PROBE and stand with those of us who want this great organization to continue?

The purposes of PROBE are to:

Provide for the regular exchange of ideas and information among the Society's Chapter and District Communicators

Encourage and promote mutual cooperation in the furtherance of Society objectives

Create, update and administer the annual PROBE work plan for internal public relations as described in the Standing Operating Procedures (SOP)

Provide all PROBE members with advice, assistance, guidance and counsel with respect to good and effective communications through publications, seminars, training schools, contests and other programs and activities.

2012 International PROBE Awards



Lee Roth
 Year Long Activity
FIRST PLACE
 Public Relations
 Officer of The Year
PROBY



Steve Jackson
 Int'l Bulletin Contest
FIRST PLACE
 Bulletin Editor
 of the Year
IBC



Ray Ashcraft
 Year Long Activity
SECOND PLACE
 Public Relations
 Officer of The Year
PROBY

PROBE — 2011 Web Site of the Year

<http://chordsmen.org/>
 Westchester County Chapter
 Mid Atlantic District



Erik Contzius
 Webmaster

PROBE Hall of Honor Class of 2012 Inductees



Roberta Miller
 Portland Metro
 Portland, Oregon



Karen Nanninga
 Little Apple
 Manhattan, Kansas

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Bulletin Exchange

PROBE HALL OF HONOR

Bruce Anderson, **Ray Barrett**, Herb Bayles, Grant Carson
Jerry Coltharp, Dick Cote, Lloyd Davis, Wade Dexter
Mel Edwards, John Elving, Leo Fobart, **Jim Fulks**, Harry Gault
Dick Girvin, **Ray Heller**, Bob Hockenbrough, Paul Izdepski
Steve Jackson, Terry Jordan, Grady Kerr, Art Lane, Deac Martin
Bob McDermott, **Roberta Miller**, William Moreland, John Morris
Roger Morris, Buddy Myers, **Karen Nanninga**, Dee Paris
John Petterson, Waldo Redekop, Craig Rigg, Jerry Roland,
Lowell Shank, Wilbur Sparks, **Stan "Stasch" Sperl**,
Dick Stuart, Jim Styer, John Sugg, Staff Taylor
Dick Teeters, Arnold Wade, Charlie Wilcox

Photos still needed

Editor Jackson Wins IBC!



YO ADRIAN, I FINALLY DID IT!

Bulletin Exchange Program

Does your chapter publish and distribute a bulletin, even if only a weekly one-page? The chapter bulletin is one of the chapter's, if not its best, PR instruments as well as probably the most effective communication tool between board and membership. Ideally, every chapter should be exchanging bulletins with every other chapter—*hard copy, not just on-line*. Each chapter has its unique characteristics, reflecting the specific needs and interest of its membership, but shares a common bond with brother chapters and experiences similar problems.

Exchanging bulletins is a very effective and efficient way for chapters to share with each other not only news about activities such as chapter shows, special performances and participation in inter-chapter, division, district and Society functions, but also how they've handled problems that challenge most chapters such as recruiting and retaining members.

We need the hard-copy bulletin and we need to be able to distribute and/or mail it to our supporters, friends, members (former, inactive, active and prospective), District and Society officers, and our brother chapters. We also need more bulletin editors, more members in most chapters who are both able and willing to assist in editing, preparing and distributing.

In the real world, the cost of printing and mailing bulletins today is prohibitive for many chapters, even if restricting mailing bulletins to known friends and those chapters close by and distributing copies to active members by hand. A few have weekly news-sheets to keep members informed of chapter activities - published/mailed bi-monthly or quarterly.

Many chapters have gone to on-line bulletins only, some available on their website, others e-mailing copies to those expressing an interest. However, not every barbershopper owns a computer or is computer-literate. As any computer user knows, there are times when either the computer or the printer is out of order, not working, or unavailable. What's the answer? If we all put our thinking caps on and discuss it with each other, surely we'll come up with one.

"It's great to be a barbershop editor!"

Alexander Edwards
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On The Mend



Marketing & PR VP Eric Herr

has been battling prostate cancer and appears to have won the war, coming through surgery successful. Our best wishes to Eric and to his family for his speedy return to full health.

Bulletin Editors VP

Jerry Daiker



Bulletin Editors Contest

The IBC (International Bulletin Contest) was completed and the results will be announced by **Lowell Shank**, chairman, at the PROBE meeting in Portland). Thanks to our great and dedicated judges! Some judges were those who have faithfully served in the past but some were new. Thanks to all judges for your dedicated time and effort. Of course, Lowell has been the foundation of this effort. As a rookie VP I heavily depended on him to get this contest completed. Thanks, Lowell!

International Bulletin Contest – 2012 Results



(1)
Mountain Talk
Steve Jackson
Denver MountainAires



(2)
Chord-inator
Hardin Olsen
Minneapolis, MN



(3)
Toosday Toons
Chiz Bell
Mid Island Nassau, NY



(4)
InCider Press
Karen Nanninga
Manhattan, KS



(5)
The Score
Ken Steffen
Ft. Wayne, IND



(6)
The Orange Spiel
John Alexander
Jacksonville, FLA



(7)
Commanders Current
Pete Witker
Maumee Valley, OH



(8)
Down Our Way
Jack Martin
Lake Lanier, GA



(9)
Fortune Teller
Harry Gray
Greater Vancouver, BC



(10)
Music City Huzzah
David Beldin
Nashville, TN



(11)
Shop Notes
Don Kirkpatrick
Naples/Ft. Meyers, FLA



(12)
Music Men
Joe Fox
Lexington, KY



(13)
Concho Capers
Paul White
San Angelo, TX



(14)
Crown City Bulletin
Bill Cauley
Pasadena, CA



(15)
Harm-o-notes
Ted Hinkle
Kokomo, IND

Deadline for Oct/Dec PROBEmotor is Sept. 25th, please

Judging Panel



Grant Carson
Content 1



Richard Riedel
Content 2



Bruce Anderson
L & R 1



John Elving
L & R 2



Jerry Kindred
G & S 1



Bruce Martin
G & S 2

Mountain Talk was the top bulletin in 2011. Thanks to everyone who took to time to enter and to the judges who diligently scored each entrant.

Lowell Shank

Editor's Note:

These results were phoned into me by chairman **Lowell Shank** who is now en route to a summer vacation in Alaska. When he returns home in early September, he will mail out all the certificates and a detailed score sheet with all the scoring from the three categories judged: Layout & Reproduction, Content, and Grammar and Style. Many thanks to President **John Elving** for supplying a lot of the information above about the editors, chapters, and addresses.



Lowell Shank
IBC Chairman

2012 PROBE International Bulletin Contest (2011 Bulletins)

Place	Bulletin (15)	Editor	Chapter	District	Content		L&R		G&S		Total
					1	2	1	2	1	2	
1	<i>Mountain Talk</i>	Steve Jackson	Denver, CO	RMD	348	352	267	263	295.60	291.50	1818
2	<i>Chord-inator</i>	Hardin Olsen	Minneapolis, MN	LOL	381	326	250	230	296.53	296.20	1790
3	<i>Toosday Toons</i>	Chiz Bell	Nassau Mid-Island, NY	MAD	335	351	230	239	298.00	294.30	1746
4	<i>InCider Press</i>	Karen Nanninga	Manhattan, KS	CSD	354	231	259	184	295.50	277.90	1679
5	<i>The Score</i>	Ken Steffen	Ft. Wayne, IND	CAR	313	289	254	238	292.36	275.80	1671
6	<i>The Orange Spiel</i>	John Alexander	Jacksonville, FLA	SUN	295	279	250	223	296.62	295.80	1656
7	<i>Commanders Current</i>	Pete Witker	Maumee Valley, OH	JAD	315	315	178	220	295.29	294.80	1629
8	<i>Down Our Way</i>	Jack Martin	Lake Lanier, GA	DIX	346	296	207	202	292.63	283.70	1628
9	<i>Fortune Teller</i>	Harry Gray	Greater Vancouver, BC	EVG	326	257	218	261	294.15	286.00	1565
10	<i>*Music City Huzzah</i>	David Beldin	Nashville, TN	DIX	299	161	161	227	296.87	293.60	1547
11	<i>Shop Notes</i>	John Kirkpatrick	Naples/Ft. Meyers, FLA	SUN	204	255	206	233	297.50	290.00	1473
12	<i>Music Men</i>	Joe Fox	Lexington, KY	CAR	208	153	240	221	295.67	292.60	1413
13	<i>Concho Capers</i>	Paul White	San Angelo, TX	SWD	176	215	168	141	293.00	292.70	1378
14	<i>*Crown City Bulletin</i>	Bill Cauley	Pasadena, CA	FWD	206	157	125	195	296.50	288.90	1357
15	<i>*Harm-o-notes</i>	Ted Hinkle	Kokomo, IND	CAR	248	177	132	187	296.50	287.60	1333

NOTES:

* weekly bulletin

- Judges:

Content:	1) Grant Carson	2) Richard Riedel
L&R:	1) Bruce Anderson	2) John Elving
G&S:	1) Jerry Kindred	2) Bruce Martin
- IBC Chairman: Lowell Shank
- Preparation of *Participation Certificates* for the contestants: Bruce Anderson

Presidents Message

John Elving



Walking an unfamiliar path

This has been quite a year. There are time that walking down this path has been like walking through the jungle—you don't know where you are going, you don't know if there is any other human life with you, and you definitely don't know the destination.

PROBE is at a crossroads in its existence. We definitely want to hold on to the past and all it has meant to the organization, but we also realize the need to embrace the present and even look to the future. That often is the scary part. Where are we in the present and what is in the future? We know where we have been, the past, we can see where we are in the present, although we may not know all we need to know about it, but we have no idea as to what is in the future.

In asking the Society headquarters staff and key BOD members three questions to help understand what PROBE meant to them, I received one answer. Here are the three questions posed to them:

We would like to know from each of you how you perceive your functions, especially in regards to communication with "the troops."

We would like to know where PROBE would be able to help you in your job.

What is your perception of PROBE and its functions?

Unfortunately in the one response I got, we were thought of as a brotherhood of guys who produce newsletters for their chapters. Not one mention of Public Relations (the PR in PROBE). Not to mention that two of us had been in the meetings of the Society M&PR Committee at the annual forum.

"I am asking all of us to step up our efforts a little more so that PROBE will continue to not only survive, but thrive once again!"

The time has come for us to change our image and the perception of what we are about — communication. I am not advocating doing away with anything that we have done in the past. As you all know, bulletins have been a staple of our very existence. They will continue to be, although they are being done differently. Not only do we have online bulletins (hard to believe those are becoming "old hat" in being published as pdf documents), but now we are seeing more and more use of social media. More and more chapters are using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn. We need to embrace the new and find out how we can help with communicating to the world about this great "hobby" that we are so passionate about.

I appreciate all the officers and appointees who work so tirelessly to make sure that the things in their areas get done. It is a big job and to be done well, it takes valuable time—time that could be spent doing family things, chapter things, and quartet things. I am, however, asking all of us to step up our efforts a little more so that PROBE will continue to not only survive, but thrive once again. I realize that time is valuable to all of us. But somehow we all find the time to do something for those things we love, that are a passion with us.

Steve Jackson continues to put publish a high quality magazine, PROBEmoter, four times a year. He does this along with publishing the Rocky Mountain District Vocal Expressions magazine and his local chapter newsletter. I thank him for being there when I have a question or problem I need to discuss. What a great mentor. If you aren't reading the PROBEmoter from cover to cover and finding something useful for your area, whether it is PR or Marketing, Bulletin Editing, Webpage matters, or whatever, then you need to drop him a line asking for it. Better yet, send your articles to him for publication.

Let's make this coming year a banner year as we move forward in our efforts to regain the prominence that PROBE once had.



Virus Warning

Thought you would want to know of this email virus. Even the most advanced security programs cannot take care of this one. It appears more frequently to affect those born prior to 1960.

The symptoms are:

**You send the same email twice
You send a blank email
You send an email to the wrong person
You send it back to the one who sent it to you
You forget to attach the attachment
You hit send before you are finished
You hit delete instead of send
You hit send when you should delete
This is called the C-Nile Virus**

**Seen in "The Plains Notes", Alexander Edwards, editor.
Taken from PROBEmoter, April/June 2007**

Lyle Southam

Lyle@BarbershopHarmony.ca



Web Site of the Year, 2011

Winner:

Westchester Chordsmen

<http://chordsmen.org/>

Westchester County Chapter

Northern Division

Mid Atlantic District

Congratulations to the web team including: Bill Kruse, Music Team, Richard Kaiser, Marketing, Scott Colman, President, Howard Sponseller, Membership and Valentines and **Erik Contzius**, Webmaster

The Chordsmen web site maintains the best practice principles that are most productive for barbershop chapters:

- Page layout – overall attractiveness and most or all above the fold
- Quality images & graphics that relate to the topics presented
- Good use of bandwidth – total page size and download times
- If providing media samples, following copyright laws
- Accurate and timely information and overall, an accurate portrayal of the chapter life.
- The site has a good volume of visitors, brings in guests and converts guests to members, uses social media, blog comments and a growing email list to market their brand to the world from White Plains, NY.
- The site look and feel is excellent -grabs your attention with a few good images that rotate. The focus is more on youth and energy.
- Nice logo - text and line shaped like a hat, very subtle.
- Drop down menu very understated but immediately visible.
- Most important, the site produces good results for the chapter.



Webmaster **Erik Contzius** reports that "The Westchester Chordsmen has maintained a balance of quality and camaraderie. We have always had a great sense of humor and community, and it comes out in our singing. We are competitive, but not to the degree where we lose sense of fun. We are proud of our history in the Society" One of the members, **Steve Delehanty**, is well regarded as an arranger, coach, and judge at the international level. Delehanty has helped contextualize the International Barbershop culture in chorus rehearsals" says Contzius.

PROBE provides resources and assistance to chapters to produce and utilize web sites and periodic publications as tools to meet the goals of the chapter mission. For further information, go to <http://harmonize.com/probe/>



Web VP/Webmaster **Lyle Southam** has stage 3c cancer. Yikes! After a routine colonoscopy, found some polyps, some with cancer cells that penetrated the colon wall. The next step was surgery - after some removal, his recovery from surgery is 75% complete.

"Anyway, four of 12 lymph nodes removed had cancer cells, so I am on chemo every two weeks until Christmas as a preventative measure. I/V Injection in hospital followed by pump at home for two days, and then I'll start to recover. Some side effects are still manifesting themselves.

The outcome of chemo is that I will be free of cancer and back to physical normal by next spring; followed by a long life full of a new found appreciation for what the medical profession can do for our good health.

My schedule and lack of ability to travel has and will impact delivery of what I do for PROBE and for Barbershop. I still sing, but am taking a break from chorus while on chemo and during/ after surgery. I do sing on weekends up at Harmony Ranch. We have a trailer in an all-Barbershop trailer park with 115 others and it's a great place to recover from surgery and to relax after chemo treatments.

So, while physical work is reduced, think-tanking and web stuff is the order of the day. Joanne, who works for the city as a webmaster, is able to work 'from home' so we make use of our broadband connection at the trailer, as well as use the pool, the pond, the mini-golf, and on and on.

Look through MyHarmonyRanch.com and you'll see what summers are like just north of Toronto. By the way, **Waldo Redekop** also has a spot at the Ranch and I'm sure both of us will be happy to host a gathering for PROBE types during Toronto 2013. Some of you may want to camp there for a week or so and/or stay for the convention and car-pool to the contests. By then, I'll be fine.

If you are planning to come to Toronto 2013, then plan to take in a weekend before or after the convention to join us at Harmony Ranch. Bring a tent or trailer or motorhome or just yourself and we will find a spot to put you up."

A PROBE road trip? Hmmm.....

BARBERSHOP HISTORY QUIZ

author: Mark Axelrod, editor
"Blue Chip Chatter," Teaneck, NJ.



You Never Know

By Lee Roth
Hunterdon, NJ



QUESTIONS:

- 1- In the two-decade period from the end of WWI (1918) until the establishment of the Society (1938), barbershop was eclipsed by many other types of popular music; the decline was sudden and profound. A few stalwart quartets (there were no barbershop choruses back then) soldiered on. Name the most notable of these.
- 2- How did the quartet alluded to in question #1 make itself known to the public?
- 3- In the mid-1930's, when barbershop was off the popular music radar screen, two efforts were made, i.e., organizations were established, in the state of [Illinois](#) to promote barbershop. Where else did such efforts take place?
- 4- State what you can about either or both of the organizations alluded to in question #3.
- 5- Three of the four members of a future international championship quartet sang with one of the two Illinois barbershop groups. Name the group, the quartet and the year it became the king of the barbershop hill.

Answers on page 11

I have been in some of the most unlikely places when someone noticed my ribbon and asked about it. I have been questioned in an elevator, a gas station, at a ball game, etc. The ribbon itself is a idea thought up by a Canadian barbershopper who shared his idea with me at a conference. When I was the MAD District Marketing VP I introduced the idea to the then Membership VP and we used it thought out the district.

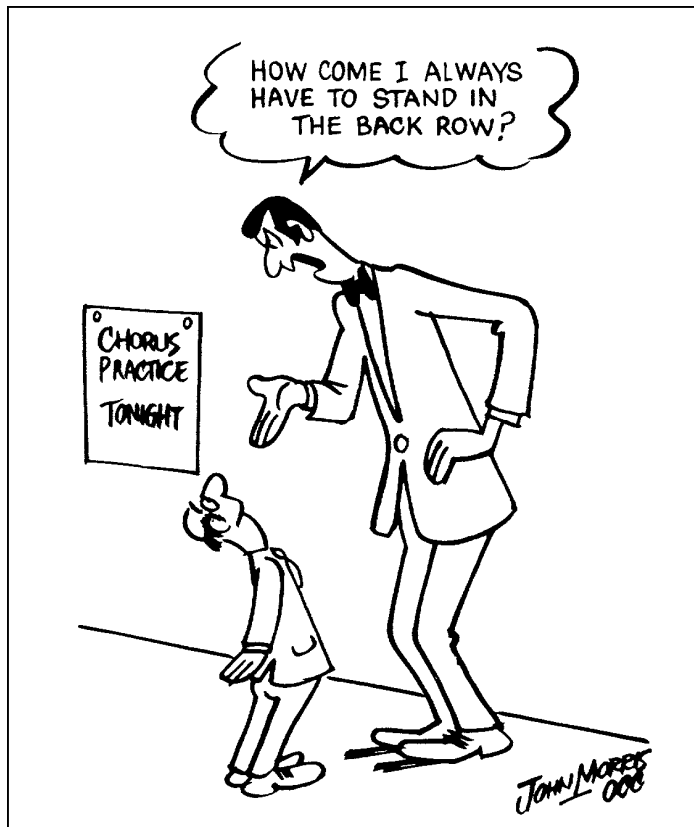


It is a simple concept — and it works. We noticed that sometimes our singers do not talk to everyone they meet about their singing activity. What does the ribbon do? It caused people to ask what the ribbon is about or for, and thus opens the door to discussion. It is a red and white striped ribbon held on by any barbershop pin.

This past weekend I was attending a law school reunion at Cornell. During the more formal dinner I was wearing a jacket with ribbon in place. The wife of a class mate at our table noticed and asked about my ribbon. I told her I was a barbershop singer. The lawyer next to me said he used to sing in a six man group as an undergraduate at Cornell. He is winding down a law practice on Long Island. He suggested, and we sang, a few bars of *Coney Island Baby* as a duet. He thinks he may have to look up one of the New York chapters to visit. He had not thought about singing again until our dinner discussion.

The young women on the other side of him, who works in the Cornell Alumni office in New York City, said she did not know much about barbershop singing, except she had a cousin working in Nashville who sang in a quartet called *Lunch time*. I suggested the quartet might be called *Lunch Break*. She said that was it! How could I know about that. I told her they were a great quartet and famous in the Society, but a secret to the outside world. A really fun comedy quartet that I had heard and seen perform a number of times. She had never heard them. I told her about Big Apple and Voices of Gotham in New York where she works. She will look them up.

You just never know where a conversation will lead if you wear a red and white ribbon.



Eric Herr



Public Relations Vision for 2013

Statement of Purpose

I think it's fair to say that enthusiasm for this great hobby we call barbershop singing is on the rise, evidenced at least in part, by the popularity of programs such as **American Idol, The Voice, America's Got Talent** and others. But the better news is that the age of those participating in BHS competitions at all levels is skewing much younger than ever before.

So, in order to communicate more effectively, I believe we need to reevaluate how we will deliver our message to an intergenerational audience. To do this, I think it's important to look at several key elements, which, for lack of a better term, I'll call the four C's of good messaging.

- **Content:** The actual idea or concept that will be delivered to the consumer.
- **Conduit:** The means by which that idea can be delivered. TV, Radio, Print, Internet, mobile devices, etc.
- **Consumption:** The medium by which our audience(s) actually receive the message. (i.e. Film, CD, DVD, HDTV, I pod technology).
- **Convergence:** How different mediums and technologies converge or work together to deliver the message.

By evaluating all of the above factors and understanding how our target audiences get their information, we become more savvy in reaching out to our targeted groups.

However, before we look at any of the four C's, we first need to define who we are as an organization and what our members may or may not know about PROBE.

Based on a recent conference call, I think a "Back to Basics Approach" and clearly defining who we are and our role in the internal and external Public Relations process, will pay big dividends in the long run.

A Marketing Vision for 2013

Creating an effective strategy implies identifying our target audiences, establishing measurable goals and objectives and asking a lot of questions. Over the next year, I think it's important to do some fact finding among chapters, which will in turn will help us to chart a better course for the future.

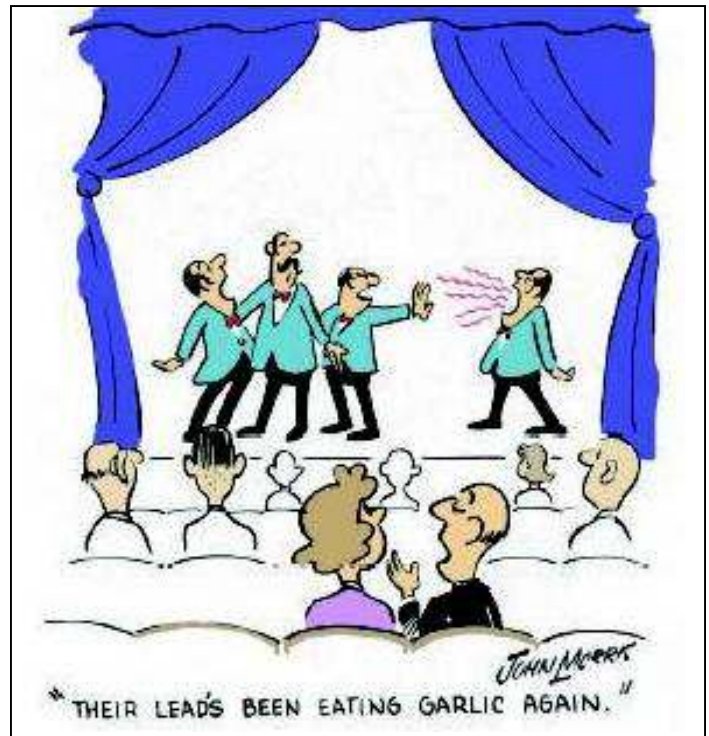
The following questions are some I have shared in past PROBE newsletters along with others that have been put forth recently by **Stephen Rafe**.

- What is PROBE?
- What is the perception among members of what PROBE is and what PROBE does?

- What do we want our message to be and how do we want to be perceived.
- What does the Society need in terms of coordinating communications that it is currently not getting?
- How can PROBE assist in facilitating better communications?
- Do members know the various "players" in PROBE and what they do?
- Do members know the various "players" at the Society and District levels?
- Do members know their roles?
- What are they actually doing?
- How effective are their efforts?
- What is missing?
- What can we offer -- and deliver -- that will support and strengthen their efforts?
- What kind of receptivity can we expect from any offers we might make?
- What resistance, if any, might we anticipate?
- How do we address that up front?
- Who benefits?
- How do they benefit?
- What adjustments would we need to make in PROBE to continue to deliver whatever we take on?

I believe that if we get these core questions answered, we can be a positive Marketing & PR force which can take our barbershop singing message to a whole new level.

To that end, I have begun discussions with several chapter PR people and hope to have in person meetings during the upcoming year to move this process forward. Let's keep a good thing going! Here's to a successful and harmonious 2013!



Stephen C. Rafe



THE PORTFOLIO APPROACH TO BETTER COMMUNICATION

If you are your chapter's VP-Marketing & PR, please read on. If not, please read this anyway and then pass it on to him. Do you and your other chapter leaders spend a lot of time cajoling and exhorting project chairs to start their projects on time and keep them moving forward effectively? And do you ever find that one reminder is not enough? In return, have they responded with "I'm working on it" or similar replies that, in reality, let you know the project is behind?

Why This Happens

In most cases the problem is not their unwillingness. More likely, it can be explained with the phrase, "not enough time" – which happens also to be barbershoppers' classic reason for giving up our hobby. Sometimes the root cause is that we often give an inexperienced member an assignment he is not prepared to handle, and fail to provide the mentoring he may need. In any case, however, incomplete communications may be at the heart of the problem – inadequate record-keeping and incomplete reports. Without those, men are forced to start from scratch, or nearly so, each year.

A Solution

There is a solution. You can improve your chapter's communications in ways that *simplify the jobs* of each person who takes on an assignment. It's called the "portfolio approach" and was first adopted decades ago by the U.S. Jaycees. The first year you try it, you can expect it to take time beyond what has been anticipated in the past. So be prepared to sit down with each project leader, explain the process, and help him set deadlines for each aspect. Also be ready to help him set deadlines for each aspect of the project.

It's time well-spent, though. Once the rudiments are in place, the project portfolio will make it easier for anyone to carry out the steps successfully – and with far less time being spent. Ideally, each project's chair will have an assistant, an understudy – someone whom the chair will mentor to become the next year's chair. If such a person is available, maintaining the portfolio is a good job for him.

What It Should Contain

Each portfolio should contain at least the following:

- Job description
- Contact information for all Board members
 - The chapter's overall plan – goals, objectives, activities -- for the coming year
 - Contact information for all external sources that need to be involved in any manner
- A list of project activities (with backup or support information and materials) that should be carried over into the coming year
- A list of the project's components (with backup or support information and materials) that were completed in the previous year – with suggestions and recommendations
- A timetable that shows each step of the project and when it needs to be done. Ideally this timetable should also show which activities can be carried on simultaneously (The "Critical Path" method would be useful here. An Internet search will provide instructions.)
- Samples of all materials developed including emails, posters/flyers, applications, permits, and the like
- Recommendations for what should be added, continued, changed, or dropped next year

Having such a document available makes it easier to find replacements in the future because it simplifies the work of every man who accepts the request to chair a project.

A Note from the Author

Creating the portfolio approach and pairing that with mentoring/succession planning can pay HUGE dividends for the chapters that adopt the concept and put it into practice. And the people who are involved will be developing life skills that can pay off for themselves and others in business, family life, and even in other volunteer work.

If it seems like too much work, take one annual event at a time, sit down with the previous year's chair and the current chair, and talk through the entire event. Recording the session and have a court stenographer transcribe it into a Word document for you. Then you can "massage" it around as needed. The work invested up front will save you hours of work throughout the year, relieve a lot of the stress formerly associated with such events, and produce better results for everyone.

I once had a sign that said: "Why is there never enough time to do a job right, but plenty of time to do it over?" And another that said: "Proper Planning Prevents Poor Patchwork."

Stephen C. Rafe



Why is there never enough time to do a job right, but plenty of time to do it over?



Steven Jackson
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PROBEmoter Report

All is good in the wonderful world of bulletins. Despite the challenges of putting out a monthly chapter bulletin, *Mountain Talk*, a by-monthly District bulletin, the *RMD Vocal Expressions*, and the quarterly *PROBEmoter*, it seems to get done.

Deadlines for the PROBEmoter are the 20th of each third month, i.e. June 20th for the July/Sept. I do prefer to put this issue out AFTER International so the contest results are still fresh to those concerned.

Deadlines work for some people, not so well for others. I've made it a working policy to post first call, reminder a week later, and then notify of final cutoff date before I wrap it up and send out what I have. Publishing on-line does give us the advantage of sharing much history and craft as well as some officers reports and the articles, cartoons, clipart found in the bulletins (and websites) I browse. I can hear the servers groaning already — *oh man, here comes another one of Jackson's bulletins! Doesn't he know about downscaling?*

Nice to have the steady articles by Stephen Rafe and the colorful talents of San Angelo editor Paul White (who is responsible for the colorized cartoons you see in each issue).

I encourage all editors to get on the swap list (thanks, Alex Edwards).

I also find our presence on Facebook (which is a wonderful resource for news and photos) very beneficial.

I would really enjoy working with a cartoonist to develop some additional Ideas — maybe more effective than a ranting tirade? I prefer a subtle yet humorous poke at ourselves.

I am disappointed that I don't get more articles from the Board (as a whole). I know that we're all busy. May I gently suggest that you did agree to serve as a PROBE leader. One of those responsibilities is to communicate — in the words of today's youth, TAG, YOU'RE IT! I know there's room for improvement and I have the utmost faith in our hard working officers to get the job done! First order of business is to get everyone healthy!

JUST CONTRIBUTE — THANKS!

Barbershop Quiz Answers:

- 1- The Maple City Four from La Porte, Indiana
- 2- By singing (my source did not indicate how often but fairly regularly makes sense) on Chicago radio station WLS, and by performing as the Singing Cowboys in Gene Autry and Roy Rodgers movies. If you've ever heard the Singing Cowboys in those old movies, you'll know that their harmony, although close, was not barbershop.
- 3- Starting in 1935 (and continuing until 1960) there were the annual NYC Parks Department Barbershop Quartet Contests. There were, however, no chapters or an organization above the chapter level established which would have been much more effective in promoting barbershop than the contests alone. Based on my [study](#) of barbershop history to date, other than the NYC contests and the two Illinois groups, no other organized attempts to promote barbershopping existed anywhere during barbershop's in the wilderness period in the 1920's and 30's.

The USA is a big country and once upon a time (in what was then the not-distant-past) barbershop had been extremely popular. This persuades me to believe that it's most unlikely that attempts to relight the barbershop flame in venues other than NYC and Illinois did not occur. If you, dear reader, know of any other locations, please enlighten me and I'll be glad to publish a correction.

4- One was the "Peoria Klose Harmony Klub" founded by an ex-vaudevillian by the name of John Hanson in 1934. The PKHK eventually grew to over fifty members and became an early Society chapter. The other was the "Illinois Harmony Club" (founded around the same time as the PKHK, but my source did not indicate a specific date), which had monthly meetings in four locations (Canton, Decatur, Peoria and Springfield) in the central part of the state. In its second year of existence, however, a group of barbershop aficionados from Chicago was bused in to [join](#) the festivities; thus the city boys and their country cousins all got into the act.

5- In that first group of Chicago barbershoppers who were bused to a meeting of the Illinois Harmony Club were three-fourths of the "Misfits", the Society's first place quartet in 1945.

And it doesn't have to be a long piece, and it doesn't have to be a masterpiece — don't worry about the formatting, spelling, punctuation (except for Elving, he knows better) — I'm the editor, you're covered! Stuck for an idea? Ask me! Apply your chapter or quartet experiences into your perspective. I always like to include a photo with each story. If you're NOT on Facebook or don't have website where I can find it (don't worry, I enjoy browsing) send me a jpg or pdf, please. When I see clever or colorful clipart, I like to share it with our members. Cartoons, too (thank

The importance of images

By Lee Roth



We know how important image is to enhancing our singing performance. We pay attention to how we dress our quartet or chorus. We develop performance packages to enhance our singing. We are judged in contest in three categories, one of which is “performance.” The performance category is another way of saying the “*image we create*” category.

People's attention is attracted to sound and to *images*. Think of your own experience. You pick up a magazine because of a photograph on the cover. You begin to read a story in the newspaper because a picture gets your attention. We create an *image* through our visual performance when we sing. We stay longer with a web site that opens with a strong *image*.

Do you use photographs or other *images* in the process of promoting or marketing your chapter? You should! Historically the society has provided clipart to enhance chapter bulletins. These images provided interest and attracted attention. They were easy to use in the day of limited ability to reproduce images. We have progressed to the era of digital images supported by technology that makes photography easy and accessible and reproduction affordable and available.

What was once a complicated process of knowing how to set a camera, buying the right film, darkrooms and chemicals, now involves little cost and minimal time to a person with a point and shoot digital camera and access to a computer. The cost to take a number of pictures from which to choose a good image is negligible. A computer allows us to bypass the costs and requirement of dark room film processing and printing of photographs. The photographer must still have a sense of good composition. He or she must also have taken the time to study the images used by any publication, in which space for promotion is sought, in order to know what to submit.

Experience tells us that an image that meets the requirement of a publication dramatically increases the prospect of the story submitted being published. Especially if space is sought for a feature story, as compared to a breaking news story, the images must be truly attention-getting and fit whatever the criteria of the publication may be.



It is well to take the time to get to know the decision-makers in any given publication, be it a magazine, newspaper, or web publication. Inquire of that decision maker as to what they are looking for. But first have studied their publication so that you develop a comfortable feeling that you know what their answer will be. If the answer surprises you, dig further and learn more. Perhaps policies or needs have changed.



Also learn the technical requirements. Do they want the submission to be in electronic form? Do they also want hardcopy of the submission? Do they prefer telephone communication, face-to-face meetings, or e-mail communication? Is there a particular person for different submissions for different purposes? For example some publications have an arts editor, a different feature editor, and a still different news editor. What category will your proposed submission fit into? Do these people talk to each other? There is additional information you want to know before preparing any submission. How current should the submission be? What information that you might not otherwise think of should be part of the submission? Names and places? If you are promoting the sale of tickets or recordings are model releases required from identifiable persons in a photograph?

Lastly, it is important to know the schedule and timing requirements of any particular publication. The feature story material usually requires a longer timeline for submission. Even breaking news submissions must meet timing requirements in order to be used. Some publications will not accept submissions from outside photographers for publication. They want to use their own photographers, who are under contract to the publication, so they are sure to control the intellectual property rights in the images. Of course they also want to control the quality of the images they use. I have found, particularly in this economy, that most publications are happy to accept high quality, high-resolution, images that do not involve any cost to the publication.

There are a few general rules. Most publications do not get excited about, nor really want to use what they refer to as “grip and grin” photographs. These are the pictures where people shake hands welcoming a new officer to the leadership of your chapter, or the person while delivering a check as a donation from show proceeds. Of course they will use these pictures if the people in the pictures are important enough in the community. For example we offered a picture that was used of a local mayor handing a resolution to a quartet in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the chapter. The quartet had just sung for the governing body and were dressed in the formal uniform of the chapter.

Publications generally do not want to use group pictures, but prefer not more than four persons in a picture unless it is a group engaged in an important activity where the activity itself is more important than the group. For example a chapter singing at a big-league ballgame, or performing in front of the 9/11 memorial on September 11 will likely get used if submitted on schedule.

Can the picture be posed in a way that it does not look posed and is it an image that would stand on its own as a photograph? For example we used the picture of a quartet singing to a lady barber in a barbershop promoting Valentine's Day. The singers were not an actual quartet, but they appeared to be. We also took several images using different people from different areas of the community in that "quartet" to enhance the value of the picture for publications in different areas of the community. Publications like to include persons from their market area.

And of course you need to supply names and where people are from. In promoting a show, start early. Be sure to dress participants in costumes the same as or similar to those that might be used in the performance of the show. Ask yourself; is this picture truly eye-catching? If it is, it will likely be used and will draw attention to the promotional story itself that accompanies the picture.

Who will take your pictures? Look for someone in your chapter who is already a good photographer. Someone who posts good photographs on Facebook is a prospect. Someone who is a member of a local camera club and competes in photo competitions is a prospect. Don't limit yourself to chapter members in your search. A wife or girlfriend of one of your singers may be just the person you're looking for. At your next event look around and see who is taking pictures. Speak to those people to get a feel for whether they may be the person you're looking for. If you can't get a volunteer hire someone. My chapter once used a studio photographer to get formal pictures of lead actors for a show.



Dave Stock is honored as CSD Barbershopper of the Year

Photo courtesy of Don Fuson.

Dave has been the PROBE CD master for many years, distributing those wonderful clipart /cartoon cd's — what, you don't have one?

dmstock@cox.net

Don't forget your chapter bulletin. Good pictures enhance your internal publication as well as your news releases promoting membership, shows, or other events you participate in. They say a picture is worth 1000 words. It is, particularly if it causes a publication you submit to, to give you the space for 1000 words promoting membership, or your show, or other activity.

This brief commercial message was brought to you by the grateful editors of PROBE!



PROBE Historian Emeritus

Dee Paris

DeeParis15@comcast.net



John Elving's article on the future of PROBE took courage to write but the facts support his view. I regret that I cannot offer any solution that would strengthen the organization but as the founder of PROBE, I fully support his effort.

Here's some information on how it came about. Mid-Atlantic District had only 12 chapter bulletins. I proposed a plan to increase the number and President "**Pom**" **Pomeroy** president accepted. I established the Mid-Atlantic Press Service (MAPS) and in two years we had 47 chapter bulletins. We added more in the third year and reached 90 percent.

This prompted me to try this on the Society level. I proposed the Association of Bulletin Editors (**ABE**) and, not wanting to name myself as president, I convinced **Wade Dexter** of the Kansas City chapter to serve the first year. It was the right idea at the right time.

During the Int'l convention in Chicago, I suggested we needed to promote chapter public relations and should combine ABE and PR. The minutes of that meeting did not identify the alert individual who proposed we reverse the letters and be PROBE. And so we were off!

The **Harmonizer** editor handled the mailings and the Society paid the cost. At our peak we had 1,400 members which included District and Society officers. I promoted a lunch at the Dallas convention that drew more than 100 people. PROBE conducted a District display contest at our reunions and I judged the last one we had. Some Districts had displays and enclosed are those of one M-AD convention.

Chapter PR recognition was not limited to an annual contest but was continuing. The chapter who had displays in their local bank windows was cited in our newsletter. The same for the Wilkes-Barre chapter who created O.C. Cash's original setting on a hotel roof and the photograph taken from an airplane was published in their local paper. Chapter choruses and quartets participated in local parades, lip singing the songs played on a PA system in the open truck.

"At our peak we had 1,400 members which included District and Society officers."

We obtained resolutions from local officials during the founding April month. We managed to get a resolution from the U.S. Congress thanks to **Ed Place**. While I was District of Columbia Chapter president, we sang for a formal state dinner at the White House for President Eisenhower and members of his cabinet. Our encore was "*Sweet Adeline*" with the words "Sweet Mame Mine."

Hugh Ingraham and I conducted the PR and BE classes at the first Int'l COTS. I taught both subjects for many years at COTS and at many District schools. It was one of these that a student gave me the only recording of **O.C. Cash**, an interview for national radio made after the Oklahoma City convention. I gave the metal transcription to the Society and a copy to Cash's daughter who was surprised to learn the announcer left broadcasting and was her church minister.

We expanded from ABE to PROBE at the Chicago convention in 1961, third year of ABE, formed at the Los Angeles convention.

I'm in my 96th year and will reach my next in July. Still active in veterans' affairs, I have just completed three years as president of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. As a tank platoon leader I led the task force that captured the Bridge at Remagen, Germany and the first Allied crossing of the Rhine River in Germany. The enemy surrendered exactly two months after that March 7, 1945 crossing.

Both British and German television have interviewed and filmed me on that action. The Republic of Slovakia also filmed an interviewed me since I ended my combat in Czechoslovakia which the Versaille Treaty of WWI screwed up by combining the two countries.

Also filmed and interviewed last week on the Battle of the Bulge for an oral history operation by the West Point Military Academy. Here's an organization training our future U.S. Army Officers who, 67 years after the Army's largest battle that cost 81,000 casualties of which 19,000 were killed, is just now getting around to recording an oral history. Also, three students at expensive girls' school have interviewed me on assignments for a WWII veteran. I'm getting more attention now that when I worked for it.

Jerry Roland won the PROBE bulletin contest with Mimeograph (wax) stencils and won again using offset printing. I wrote a manual covering all phases of gathering and writing news, printing methods (mimeograph, ditto and offset printing), how to justify margins (the type twice method), envelope and self mailers, postage rates and bulk mail permits, maintenance of mailing lists, etc. The Society published the manual and it went through three printings before modern reproduction methods replaced our early methods.

We originally used volunteer judges for our contests but established a system for judging categories and certifying judges. During that weekend we eliminated a couple of volunteer judges. I developed the **Grammar and Style** category which was designed to recognize that a southern or rural editor might use language suitable for his chapter members but might not be acceptable to a grammarian with a doctorate degree. I tested candidates by having them judge two bulletins which were made up from a dozen different chapter bulletins.

I stressed the need for helpful comments and suggestions. The value in this came when a Canadian chapter editor told me he won his District contest after following my suggestions. And I coached two or three editors who won District and PROBE contests. That's the great joy in teaching and sharing.

One of the international contests I judged was in Los Angeles. The panel barred a quartet from M-AD (Fairfax, VA chapter) for one of their songs. (Two of us judges refrained from voting). In those days before Harmony Marketplace, quartets sold their records at the convention. We found the record from which the quartet had copied the song which caused their debarment.

More than 100 men at the PROBE meeting adopted a resolution criticizing the Society for allowing the sale of music that was not acceptable in contest. The was the reason the Society inserted the phrase "may not be suitable for contest" in their recordings. That was the power and influence of PROBE!

Albuquerque, New Mexico

An absolutely amazing thing happened at our meeting last night, May 23rd. A young man who lives in Mississippi and is on TDY on business here found us with the BHS search engine. He showed up, stood with the chorus until the break, then promptly grabbed a couple of us and asked if we wanted to sing some tags. Which we proceeded to do. He's a wonderful bass who knows dozens of tags.



Bill Biffle



Cory Duplantis is a sophomore studying computer engineering at Mississippi State in Starkville, Mississippi

So far, not that amazing, right? Well, I asked him what chapter he belongs to. He said there aren't any within two or three hours of his home. So I asked him if he's a member of the Society and he says, "No, I've never been to a meeting before!" Any meeting, anywhere! How did you learn to sing like this and to know all these tags, I ask? From the INTERNET, he says! "I was surfing YouTube and stumbled onto a **Vocal Spectrum** clip and was blown away by it, so I searched for others like it."

In short, he's learned dozens of tags and to sing like a quartet champ in his own, in his room, on the INTERNET! We have to maximize this great tool that occupies such a place in the lives of young people everywhere! I know we're doing lots. We just have to do lots more!

SEEN ON FACEBOOK, THANKS, BILL!

Society Webmaster

Eddie Holt

eholt@barbershop.org

To vector or not? That is the question

A vector is like a mathematically drawn file with lines, curves, points, etc. When you zoom in or increase the size, the image is literally redrawn and recalculated to expand and keep all the lines crystal clear, no matter how big it gets. So the resolution is theoretically infinite.

Whereas rasterized (like a JPG, TIF, PNG, etc) are like photos. You're basically looking at a photograph of something. When you zoom in or increase the size, you're stretching it out and things start to get fuzzy and distorted pretty quickly. The easiest way to see it quickly is to take a PDF file and zoom WAY in really closely. And then do the same with the JPG version and you'll see a big difference in the clarity and detail.

For smaller print jobs, you won't really see that big of a difference between a raster or vector, really. For printing, a TIF file is every bit as good as a vector when the TIF resolution is high enough to be appropriate. But the vector version is for anything you might need really large (if you need to blow the logo way up for banners, for example). Or if you just want the satisfaction of knowing that no matter what size you're working with, the vector will always look and print absolutely crystal clear.



The Town Crier Returns - Meet David Belden

From the Dixie website

Dixie Town Crier joins the Rebel Rouser as Dixie bulletins

The quarterly Rebel Rouser (editor Keith Therell) welcomes the monthly Dixie Town Crier (editor David Belden)



The new editor of the [Dixie Town Crier](#) David Belden has been a member of the **Music City Chorus** for the past four years. My wife and I moved to Nashville upon retirement after careers as a teacher and principal in Ohio. Retirement "took" for my wife, but didn't for me, so I have gone back to work as a certified teacher evaluator here in the state of Tennessee.

For three years I enjoyed my role as the "quietest man in the chorus," but when I mentioned that I also had a background in journalism, the chorus leadership found that even the "quietest man" has something to contribute. I became Nashville's contributor to the original [Dixie Town Crier](#), and last year I began to publish "The Music City Huzzah!" a new weekly electronic newsletter for the chapter. That led to the offer to edit the [Dixie Town Crier](#).

My journalism background comes from real-life experience. Young teachers almost always have a second job to support their families. Since coaching was out of the question (absolutely no athletic ability of any kind!), I applied for a job as the sports writer for the local newspaper. That started me on a 25-year career in journalism as a reporter, then sports editor, and finally managing editor of [The Leader Enterprise](#), a small town Ohio weekly.

My philosophy as a sports writer was that every kid on the team deserved to have his name in the paper sometimes, not just the star quarterback. My ability to work in praise for the guards, and tackles, and centers was my trademark, and endeared me with the parents and grandparents. You see, I believe the role of a small town newspaper is to give everyone a chance to shine and in doing so, everyone will want to buy your newspaper!

This same philosophy is what I hope to bring to the Dixie District monthly publication. EVERY chapter in the Dixie District is important, and therefore every chapter ought to get the chance to tell the world (well, at least the world of the Dixie District) about the good things it is doing. I see the [Dixie Town Crier](#) as a method to shine the light on whatever YOUR chapter sees as important. For some chapters that is singing at international, and for others it is the chance to entertain friends and neighbors at the Panoply Arts Festival! (See the April edition.)

The first step in this process is for each chapter to have a contributor who will see that news, photos, and show flyers get to me each month. But that is only the start. The next step is for every man and every chapter to tell that contact person, "You know, this would make a good article (or picture) for the [Dixie Town Crier](#)." Obviously, we are all involved in this hobby because we love it but we love it for a variety of reasons. If each chapter is willing to share the joy that is barbershop, then the [Dixie Town Crier](#) will certainly be a success!

75 years and still harmonizing

In 2013, the Barbershop Harmony Society will celebrate its 75th Anniversary

Celebrate Harmony!

We've come a long way from O.C. Cash's original thought that ...

“About the only privilege guaranteed by the Bill of Rights not in some way supervised and directed, is the art of barber shop quartet singing.”



A couple years ago, CEO **Ed Watson** formed a 75th Anniversary task force – and the group has been hard at work from the very beginning of that assignment.

The purpose of this document is to share with you some of our plans, hopes and dreams for entire year of 2013, and especially the 75th Annual Convention in Toronto, Ontario, July 1-7.

....and we really have some great reasons to celebrate!



CONFEDERATES



THE SUNTONES with Bob Hope



Two 75th Anniversary Logos

One for the Toronto Convention and one for the year that you can use on your show programs and chapter web sites, flyers, etc. There'll be pins and merchandise for both.

A logo contest was held for interested Society graphic designers. Several outstanding designs were received.



Thanks and congratulations to our Logo contest winners

Greg Backwell of Canada

Darryl Marchant of Toronto

Who won two VIP registrations for the 2013 International Convention in Toronto



Historical Display During 2013 Toronto Convention

A massive historical display is being planned for the summer convention. It will include photos of all chorus and quartet champs, record albums, **Harmonizers** and the winning uniforms worn by our quartets champs all the way back to the 1939 **Bartlesville Barflies**. Each district will also have a booth to display their history.



A HISTORY BOOK OF OUR 75 YEARS!

The Society will be releasing a 75th anniversary history book in time for the 2013 celebration. It will include lots of photos and fascinating retrospectives on our rich heritage. Like the 10, 25 and 50 year books, the 75 year book will be a **MUST HAVE** for every member.



75th Anniversary Committee

- Roger Lewis**
Committee Chairman
Past International President
- Rob Arnold**
Toronto Convention Chairman
- John Miller**
Bass, The New Tradition-1985
- Dusty Schleier**
Society Staff Events Manager
- John Schneider**
Former Society Staff
Events Manager
- Grady Kerr**
Society Historian

Show Production Team

- John Mallett**
Toronto, Ontario
- Steven Armstrong**
Oshawa, Ontario
- David McEachern**
North York, Ontario

BUFFALO BILLS



ELASTIC FOUR



AN ANNIVERSARY SHOW

One of the first things we brainstormed was a show that would share the 75 years of the Society's history with every chapter's audiences. We wanted a very special opening song, and a very special closer, and approached a giant in barbershop, Joe Liles for the opener.

The opener, "Celebrate Harmony" has been written and the learning tracks are made. Then Joe inserted a bridge of "Keep the Whole World Singing" and a new voice over to the opener to make a great "reprise" to close the show. You may see some new compositions emerge for the show, too.

At Harmony University this summer, we hope to give the Saturday night audience a glimpse of the show – the opener, closer, and perhaps some additional snippets. The basic package will be a scripted 20 minute show that your chapter can use on performances throughout the year.

Additionally, there will be optional songs, each with scripts that you can use to expand the show to fit your situation, including recommended songs by quartets. All songs will have learning tracks available.

Imagine what your chapter can do by inviting other neighboring chapters to join with you on your show, and the possibilities of every Joe Barbershopper singing on any of hundreds of shows across the Society. Hmmm. Maybe we ought to have an incentive and a reward for that?

Defining terms: what's in a name?

Clarifying the Layout and Reproduction scoresheet

By category specialist Steven Jackson

A. NAMEPLATE [page one requirement] (possible 50 points)

#1 #2

- ___ ___ 1. Does the nameplate attract and announce with impact? It should take up no more than one-third of page one [0-5].
May be split, top and bottom of front page.
- ___ ___ 2. Does the bulletin look like a barbershop singing publication? Some indication of quartet [5], singing [3], music? [2].
- ___ ___ 3. Is the Society's logo [3], name [2], or initials [1] in the nameplate? (Maximum of 5 points)
- ___ ___ 4. Is there a District logo [6] or name [4] featured in the nameplate?
- ___ ___ 5. Is there a chapter or chorus logo featured in the nameplate? [10]
- ___ ___ 6. Is the volume number [1], issue number [3], and date [6] clearly shown?
- ___ ___ Subtotal

The books I have refer to the name of the newspaper - "The Podunk Chronicle" - as the nameplate. It also says this is mistakenly called the masthead but should be referred to as the nameplate - the IDENTITY of the paper. In "Editing the News" by Roy H. Copperud and Roy Paul Nelson (W.C. Brown Co., 1983) there is a pretty plain statement on this on page 212:

"The Nameplate

Perhaps the most important single element of design in a newspaper is the nameplate. Mistakenly called the "masthead" by some people, the nameplate quickly establishes the paper's identity." To me, the masthead was the area where the business information was listed, usually in a box, and listing the publication info, the name and phone number (and now email) of the publisher, editor, and different staff heads (sports, news, advertising, etc.). I hope this helps.

James Botelle
gblead@yahoo.com
Carroll County and Dundalk, MD chapters

I worked for a weekly community newspaper for six years and acted as editor for two monthly magazines for the next eight years. I have been retired for about four years.

Webster's dictionary doesn't define a nameplate but a masthead is "a statement of ownership, etc., in a newspaper. Obviously, when the original scoresheets were designed, we had newspaper men in the loop — hence the heavy flavor towards "newspaper" to cover newsletters, bulletins, etc. Over the years, as we have learned more about editing and what works and reads well in our bulletins, our parameters have been stretched.

So, why should you put all this information into the bulletin nameplate, you ask? A nameplate announces! Imagine this; you're finished reading the bulletin, so you leave it in your local muffler shop. Larry Jones wanders in, and sees it just lying there. Hello there, what are you? Oh, you're a barbershop harmony publication. I can tell from your clever use of music notion and the reference to music in your bulletin name. The Oxnard **CLAR-ION**? And your chapter is the **Singing Canaries**? Hey, I like to sing, and I'm not too bad either — I don't get booted at the local karaoke bar.

A **masthead** (sometimes called an imprint) is a small section usually near the front of the publication (sometimes on the editorial page) naming generally the senior individuals and their positions. Sometimes it has founding dates, predecessor publications or slogans ("All the News that's Fit to Print" being the most famous I suppose).

The **nameplate** is the distinctive rendering of the publication name found on page one. In the attached judging sheet for instance, the words on the logo at the top of the scoresheet "PROBE Barbershop" with the quill would be the nameplate. Hope this is helpful.

Editor's Note: *I cringed when I saw this, I will modify the document to correctly identify it as the "Layout & Reproduction" score sheet (as L&R specialist)*

Hugh J. Rushing
Executive Officer
Society of Classified Advertising Managers of America
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Birmingham AL 35253
205 592-0389 Fx 205 599-5598
www.scama.org
hrushing@usit.net

Hmmm, part of a national organization. I see reference to a region, too. So, what IS a FWD? Well, your bulletin sure is colorful with that old-timey red lettering and the barberpole. Wow, you guys have been around a long time, volume number is 55? Really? So, BHS, huh? Well, I guess that's not as hard to say as that old moniker, spebsqwak...or something like that, wasn't it?

I really like the "singing ox" in the chapter logo — looks like a fun place to visitlets see, Tuesdays at 7:00. Well, I suppose I could tape *American Idol*. Wonder if anyone would mind if I took this copy with me? Gotta read more about these guys! Oh wow! There's 12 pages here. I need to meet this editor — let's see what's on page two....bingo!

B. MASTHEAD [page one, two, or last page] (possible **43 points**)

- ___ ___ 1. is the chapter name [4], city [4], state [3] and district [3] identified?
- ___ ___ 2. Is the chapter meeting place [3], day of the week [3], and time [3] shown?
- ___ ___ 3. Is the editor's name [4], address [4], phone number [3], and e-mail address [3] clearly shown?
- ___ ___ 4. Is the chapter's webpage address clearly shown? **[6]**
- ___ ___ Subtotal

A bulletin masthead has always been scored as listed above. I submit to you that what we are judging is just "more of the same." As a judge, I look for editor contact info in three spots (I don't expect to see it in the nameplate). Page 2, inside back cover, or last page in the form of a mailing square (return address with phone and email).

I think the return address should be just that. Below that is a perfect spot to put the PROBE logo and the "Proud to be a member of PROBE!" You are, right? It doesn't have to be large, it's so easy to resize to fit your format.

Back to the score sheet: I think the masthead should include your officers and contact info, too. The category is being looked at to tighten it up and haul it kicking and creaming into the 21st century, too. Nothing official yet, just my opinion! But it's the logical spot to award you additional points for inclusion.

Who publishes your bulletin? Your chapter does (not your chorus, and don't get me started) not you; you are the editor — the guy who puts it all together each time out — molding each issue into a masterpiece for your adoring readership.

I think it's import for SOME contact information to go into the nameplate — how about your chapter website and where and when you meet? So many times, this info is strewn about the bulletin, if indeed, it is even included. Believe it or not, I once judged a bulletin and I had no clue who edited it — true story. Always identify yourself; your bulletin can be an effective recruiting tool. You may ask why put your meeting place in the nameplate? It's called easy access to information for the reader! If you chose to place it elsewhere, put it in a prominent spot (masthead, back page, bottom of front page, etc.) We can tweak the scoring sheets so that this masthead would be the standard fit for any bulletin (listing of officers could vary — I offered my chapter as an example).

Cont. from page 18

There's all their contact info — even a map, and look, officers with emails (now, that's thinking) AND phone numbers. I wonder if I know any of these guys, no way, **John Elving** is a member? That turkey, he sings in my choir and last week, he tuned my piano — thanks for telling me, John!

All humor aside, that's why you get 50 points (and a pat on the head) for inclusion of "all the facts!" Helps the historian, too. You are making sure that at least one copy of each issue is tucked away in your archives, right?

Let's use my own chapter as an example of what an effective masthead might contain

Mountain Talk

is published by the Denver MountainAires chapter
Denver, Colorado
Rocky Mountain District, BHS

The chapter meets every Tuesday evening
at 7:30 pm at the Edgewater Community Church,
2497 Fenton St., Edgewater, CO 80214

Deadline for each issue is one week before
End of month, i.e., July 24th for August issue

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IT'S GREAT TO BE A BARBERSHOPPER!

GNU Collegiate Men's Choral Festival Article Now Posted

Jeff Taxdahl



TV, radio and newspaper advertising in the MPLS/St. Paul market is too cost prohibitive. But that is just fine. There are plenty of other ways to reach a market today. First of all, I believe we cannot underestimate the impact product quality has on marketing and recruiting efforts. When the conversation turns to marketing, all too often it goes right to tactics (email, press releases, etc.) with little consideration to the actual product itself. This is not unique to the BHS, but true for many small to medium-sized companies (which the BHS is).

I agree that frequency sells. But I would take it one step further. The only thing better than frequency is diverse frequency. If you can reach your market with more than one media, you have a better chance of getting the action you desire. For example, when we are promoting a GNU concert, we use direct mail, email and postings on our Facebook page. There is overlap between those lists so many people see the message more than once.

About our direct mail efforts: we send a postcard to our mailing list of about 4000 people 3 1/2 to 4 weeks prior to a concert. That is a large list. It has been developed over the last ten plus years. I will send a copy of one of our postcards in a separate email. We send two emails using the same graphics and text for continuity three weeks prior to a concert and then again about a week before. That has worked really well for us.

Here's a little thing that I think has made a big difference for the GNU. If you look at our direct mail pieces, emails, our Facebook page and website, you will not see a picture of the GNU standing motionless on the risers. For the GNU, music is movement. We use only "action shots" of the chorus. The movement is something that makes us different from 99% of other choral groups. We empathize that fact in all media. In addition, we use photos that are close enough so you can see the passion and expressions of the guys in performance. That really helps communicate and build our brand.

I appreciate you're not wanting any empty seats at a concert. We feel much the same way. Last year we experimented with a new idea. If advanced ticket sales are sluggish for a particular concert, we promote "rush tickets." Rush tickets are deeply discounted (like 50% off) and are available only 15 minutes before curtain. They get whatever seats are unsold. Could be really good ones or ones in the back. It works great for people who might be a little tight on cash. We decide if we are going to offer rush tickets 4 or 5 days before the concert. Then we use Facebook and email to tell people about it. It worked really well the two times we have used it. It brought a lot of people to our concert that probably wouldn't have come without the rush opportunity.

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Jeff, I appreciate your comment about the best marketing is singing (performing) well. Advertising a restaurant with slow service and lousy food only helps it go out of business faster! I agree with the comments here about knowing your market.

I am a dual member of two distinctly different choruses and markets: the Anchorage **Midnight Sons Chorus** (EVG) in Anchorage, Alaska and the **Vocal Majority** (SWD) in the Dallas, Texas area. Anchorage has about 300,000 people in the city and surrounding area – a little over 40% of the state's population lives in a relatively small area. Contrast that to the Dallas/Ft. Worth metroplex (DFW) with about 6.5+ million humans in about 9,300 square miles ... even a local quartet is a long distance quartet!

Anchorage (TV & Radio)

In Anchorage, TV and radio are extremely affordable compared to most markets. Since 50% of the advertising revenues are owned by the local Anchorage Daily Newspaper, the other media are competing for the business which reduces their cost. And because Anchorage's population is concentrated in small area of the state, TV/Radio provide full market coverage. Plus the electronic media are very generous in helping out the community. They provide reach and frequency. Frequency sells. One problem with press releases (if you're lucky and they print it) you get one splash and then it's gone. If they were to run them everyday for two weeks it would be different.

I worked closely with the electronic media by packaging some chorus services and traded it out for air time with the stations. The stations were even generous enough to allow our sponsors to be mentioned in the ads—so our sponsors got a lot of value. The nice thing about electronic media (if you can afford it) is reaching not only your own market, you reach people who may not be on your fan base but could be interested in caroling for Christmas, shows, events, singouts or even coming to visit a rehearsal. Anyway, that's how Anchorage market is.

Dallas-Ft. Worth Metroplex (Non-Broadcast/Social)

DFW is another story. Broadcast and newspaper is cost prohibitive. Travel is lengthy and traffic affects decisions from going to rehearsals to attending shows. Social media – facebook, Constant Contact, emails, etc., like you have been describing are the tools. I have been spending this year learning these new marketing skills – so the stuff you have been doing, Jeff, is timely for me. In fact, I will be teaching a marketing/advertising workshop at Harmony Ranch (SWD educational event) June 1-2, showing what I have learned. I think what is unique about this class is I get to ask all the dumb questions- proving if I can do it, anyone can! Getting your input is appreciated.

I handle advertising and marketing services for a number of companies in Alaska. I also produce a weekly radio show called "The Big Alaska Show" that airs Saturdays 9am-10am Anchorage time ... radio is a later phenomenon in my career.

Email is a great tool. It's very easy to use. Very inexpensive. I use Constant Contact and it works great. The hard part is building the email list, but it can be done over time. The effort will pay off.

Grant money is out there in a lot of places. It does require some research and time. We just got a \$10,000 grant for new risers. If you can find someone with a little grant writing experience, it can really help you get some of the money that many groups really want to give away.

Now, about chapters defining themselves. Some are really good at community service. Some provide a great outlet to sing the old songs and of course some love to compete. But a chapter that can define those goals for their membership will be much better off.

Finally, the best tool a chapter can have in their marketing tool box is to sing well. People are drawn to a good product. Whether you are trying to attract members or audience, the better you sing the more success you will have. We can talk until we are blue in the face about press releases, email, Facebook and Harold Hill-type efforts. But the truth remains, the effectiveness of those tools is in direct correlation to how well you sing. Period.

It is a subject we barbershoppers don't like to talk about. You probably have heard athletes say, "Winning fixes a lot of problems." In our world, singing well fixes a lot of problems when it comes to recruiting, retaining members, selling tickets, getting the attention of educators, etc., etc.

Every chapter has to find what works from them. The challenge for many chapters is fully understanding the all the tools that are available to them. In addition, knowing when to use one tool vs. another given different situations. To say the least, I would like to see more leadership from the district and BHS in this area.

One of my frustrations is the fact that for many chapters the prevailing marketing strategy is trying to get press releases printed in the news media. While that might have been a good strategy 20 years ago, there are much better options today. In many small communities that probably works better than a metro area.

However, I believe there needs to be a number of touch points for marketing to be effective. We have to use tools like email and Facebook to reach people. Just getting a press release printed in the newspaper doesn't cut it.

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I am a past M&PR VP of **Southern Gateway Chorus** (SGC) – the largest chapter in JAD. As the current Marketing VP of Johnny Appleseed District since 2011, I have visited chapters of varying size and need, and learned a few things about what works and doesn't work in various locals. I've worked with large chapters like SGC, medium sized chapters like Dayton Metro, and very small ones like Athens. Based on these exposures to a few JAD choruses, here's my "executive summary" of opinions.

a. As Jeff points out, press releases do work in some smaller towns (but only occasionally in Cincinnati, and only if you "know" the editor). Mostly, they're a waste of time... but I wouldn't suggest abandoning them altogether.

b. Social media – especially Facebook – work great to promote barbershop among young people. It's not the Facebook "ads" about shows that help. It's the enthusiasm about barbershop singing that young members share with their "friends" that draws in new, younger members. Those new, young members bring a new group of friends and family to shows. Ergo (as we all know) membership equals marketing.

c. Having your show at a local HS gives you the opportunity to invite the HS choir to sing on the show (two songs after intermission is plenty). That puts parents in the seats (revenue, marketing) and gives you the opportunity to promote membership to the dads (Maybe invite them a song on stage?).

d. A raffle ticket sale at the show, with contact info to be eligible, helps build your contact list.

e. Grants are not that difficult to get in a larger metro area... so long as you are patient. SGC started writing grant proposals two years before they received their first grant of for coaching. The next year they got another grant from the same organization to help pay members' expenses to international contest. It can work, if you have long term vision.

f. Lastly, I think many choruses are "drifting in a sea of song," without any particular sense of identity. Every chapter needs to articulate its reason for existence. Call it a mission statement. Call it a purpose. Call it anything you want. Until the members have a common vision, it's pretty difficult to get behind any activity unless it aligns with their purpose.

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If you would like to explore building your own website, below is a link to a document with loosely-structured guidelines for what to look for and how to approach the entire project from start to finish. Of course, there are MANY ways to build a website, and this is just one of many perspectives to help point you in the right direction. Happy building!

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