

Minneapolis Commodores CHORD-INATOR



OFFICIAL CHAPTER BULLETIN

April 2026

“YOU BELONG HERE”

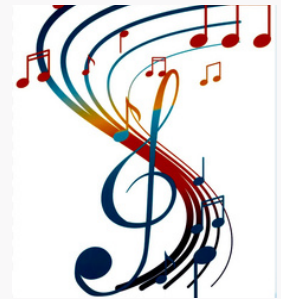
VOLUME 82, # 1



DAN TRUE

Striking A True Chord

FROM OUR PRESIDENT



“All for One Chord, One Voice for All”

While I was rehearsing our new song "Seize the Day", the phrase "All for One and One for All" fired a lot of neurons. We talk a lot about unity—but not just the kind you can see. We chase the kind you can hear. The kind that locks a chord, makes the overtones ring, and reminds us why we choose to sing together.

That's where "all for one and one for all" truly lives—in our music, in our friendships, and in how we serve others.

"All for one" starts inside the rehearsal room. When one section carries the melody, the rest of us support it. We adjust for the chord, not for our own spotlight. But it also means something deeper: we look out for each other. We notice who's having a rough day. We welcome new voices. We laugh together, work through challenges together, and build a chorus that feels like a place people belong.

That camaraderie doesn't happen by accident. It comes from respect, encouragement, and the understanding that this chorus is stronger when everyone feels valued.

Then there's "one for all."

In Barbershop, every chord matters. One singer out of tune—or one singer not fully engaged—can affect the whole sound. But the same is true in a positive way: one person who prepares, who listens carefully, who reaches out to help, can lift the entire chorus.

And that idea doesn't stop when rehearsal ends.

As a Barbershop chorus, we don't just sing for ourselves—we sing for our community. When we show up to perform, to support local events, to bring music to people who may not hear live harmony very often, we're offering something meaningful. Each of us represents the whole chorus, and together we represent something even bigger: the joy and connection that music creates. We don't sing next to each other—we sing with each other. And we don't serve the community as individuals—we do it as a united chorus.

Unity, in music and in service, is intentional. It's listening more than singing. It's trusting the director, trusting your section, and trusting one another. It's showing up prepared, engaged, and willing to give a little extra—for the sound, for the group, and for the people we perform for.

(Cont. on Page 2)



(Cont. from Page1 - Dan True)

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And when it all comes together—when the chord locks, when the laughter flows, when a performance brings smiles to faces—we’re reminded why this matters.

That sound, that impact, doesn’t belong to one voice. It belongs to all of us.

So let’s keep singing with intention, supporting one another, and sharing our music beyond these walls—because when we truly live all for one and one for all, that’s when Barbershop—and community—magic happens.

In True Harmony, Dan

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Thanks for the Pictures In This Issue

Jamye Casperson
 Mark Ortenburger
 Dan True
 Bill Walkowski

Thanks to our team of Proofreaders

Bill Albrecht
 Andy Richards
 Dick Riemenschneider

It’s Great to be a Commodore!



Mason's Musings

FROM OUR IMMEDIATE
PAST-PRESIDENT



THE POWER OF IMPERFECTION

Trying to rank “Best Songs Ever” is like ranking “Favorite Child.” It’s an unfair question - and it changes depending on day or mood (note: Nobody mention that line to my family, please). But when critics and musicians decide to try to rate songs, The Beatles masterpiece A Day In The Life is usually at or near the top of the list.

I love that song. It’s epic. Deep. Like many Baritone parts, nobody knows why but it just works. And also like many Baritone parts (and Baritones?) I love it because it’s just... so... weird!

It’s two disparate songs plus random ideas stitched together using cutting-edge recording techniques by a band at the height of their creative output and experimentation. And it’s not clinical or sterile. From the first note to the almost 1-minute chaotic string and piano decay, it’s perfectly imperfect. There are studio sounds, phantom noises, and so many other flaws. But they make this song rich and real.

The Commodores experience, for me, mirrors this great song. Culturally - thank heavens - smart leaders decided long ago to aspire for musical excellence, but never at the cost of confraternal excellence. We continually improve, but we will not prioritize clinical improvement over our community’s cultural cost.

Because of this beautiful emphasis on Sangha over perfect singing, there is only one thing that makes me kinda sad at rehearsal:

Whenever I hear people get personally corrected for something we all do every week / song (miss a word, miss a note, shake the wrong jazz hand, etc)... it hurts. Do it to me and I’m usually going to laugh about it. My motto has always been: “If you can’t sing good sing loud.” But when it happens around me I just kinda wish it would stop.

Correcting whole sections? Gotta happen. Making sure that the right note happens at the right time? Sure. Vowel unification? Ubetcha. But making it personal? Please let’s not. There is a world of difference between, “Hey could we run that again?” and “You missed that note or word.” It’s instruction vs. destruction.

If I have done this before (It’s human nature, like foot sweat and nose hair), I’m sorry. Truly. And I will do better. And I hope we all will.

Here’s to working hard. Here’s to putting in the time and effort to know our notes, words, rhythms, & music so rehearsals are productive and magical. And more than anything, here’s to kindness, respect, community, and mutual admiration as we raise unified and flawed voices in beautiful mostly-in-tune song.

THANK YOU FOR BEING MY TRIBE. MY SAFE SPACE. IT IS GREAT TO BE A COMMODORE.



Markin' Time



This is a *truncated* issue (with nary an elephant in sight) of the CHORD-INATOR given that the Commodores usually don't have any major events going on in the first quarter of the year. This provides us with a great opportunity to learn new music. Stay tuned since the rest of 2026 promises to be very busy (BOTY Celebration, Annual Show, Holiday Show, and summer park performances throughout the Twin Cities). And if that's not enough, preparations are already underway for 2027 when the circus comes to town, aka the Barbershop Harmony Society's International Convention - *we're gonna need a bigger boat*.

We've often heard that our job as performers, eloquently stated by many people in different ways, is to continually strive to connect with everyone in the audience whenever we sing. We are privileged to have the opportunity to sing wonderful music with amazing arrangements and meaningful lyrics. Simply singing what's on the page isn't enough. We need to bring the audience into the story and make them feel the way we do about the music. If we can create those special moments that's when the magic occurs.

One of the best examples I can think of about the power of music and a performer to create something extraordinary can be found in *Nants Ingonyama*, the song that opens the Lion King. Right from the first notes, your body and senses are overwhelmed as you move to the edge of your seat with feelings of majesty, joy, and wonder, awaiting the story that is going to unfold in front of you. And that's just from a few notes with lyrics that you might be able to sense but don't really understand.

Interestingly, if this was sung in a language you did understand, it might be confusing or detract from being able to absorb the majesty of what you're hearing. Various translations of this famous Zulu chant give us lyrics that say something like: "Here comes a *lion, Father, oh yes it's a lion*". Without understanding the context of what they mean to the Zulu people it might almost sound a little funny and you might expect the performers to turn-tail and effect a rapid retreat. Fortunately, in this case the performer uses the musicality inherent in the lyrics going into full power-ballad mode, with a magnificent, almost ethereal, backing chorus, to make sure that we are totally engaged and ready to hear a moving story that will stay with us forever.

Jim Richards Chord Candy

Chord Candy 9

by Jim Richards



As Minnesotans recovering from a long winter we welcome the warming days, the lengthening hours of daylight and the skys that tend not to be “cloudy all day!” These thoughts suggest the tag to this familiar old song from a prior century. Leads, you start out on familiar ground on the melody for the first three measures and then pass it off to the tenor. Leads get to sing a high bari part thereafter. Aren’t you lucky! The harmony embraces the melody with some delicious harmony. Find three

other willing guys and try this one out during chapter break or after the meeting. If more time is needed, join us at the Legion after our chapter meeting for refreshment and song. Enjoy!

Jim Richards 2003

And the skies are not cloud-y all day, all day. The
 skies are not cloud-y all day, all day.
 day.
 day.

Reprinted from earlier versions of the CHORD-INATOR in memory of our great friend, consummate Barbershopper, mentor, BHS Society President, and International Senior Quartet Champion with Grandma's Beaus - Jim Richards



Our Annual Show

by Doug Johnson



Hey Kids, Let's Put on a Show! - Seasons of Singing

On Monday, April 11, 1938, at 6:30 pm, **O.C Cash**, and **Rupert Hall** invited 14 other guys (26 showed up) to a "songfest" on the Roof Garden of the Tulsa Club on the northwest corner of 5th and Cincinnati in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

In 1939, the movie Babes in Arms was released and Mickey Rooney first uttered those famous words "Hey kids, let's put on a show!"

In the fall of 2025, this correspondent sat down with an idea, a list of 36 songs, put together 100 learning videos, and wrote a four-page proposal to the Commodores Board to try something different.

What the heck was I thinking?

On September 12, 2026 at about 3pm the Minneapolis Commodores will present our annual show - Seasons of Singing - at Minnehaha Academy in Minneapolis.

Let's start off with our featured performers. Yes that's right, our headliner, the one, the only — MINNEAPOLIS COMMODORES!! That's right WE are the featured performers, top of the bill, name above the title, and whatever else WE can think of.

We will sing the majority of the music and spend the majority of time on-stage, we are the lead performer in this show. This is OUR show and a chance to shine and show our patrons and audience what we can do and where we are going.

The Commodores have a rich and proud history of service and song and we have a bright future of continuing service to the community and excellence in singing. This is when we have our opportunity to strut our stuff.

What about quartets? Just One More was my main choice for a featured spot. These guys have entertained us for years, yet we have never featured them in our annual show. That oversight has been corrected. Frostbite, our up-and-coming Varsity quartet, will be fresh off their second trip to International. I can't wait to see what they do. These quartets will anchor the second half of the show. It is great to be part of a chapter that can have these two fine 'homegrown' quartets finally be featured on their home turf.

AND

Any chapter quartet that wants to sing just needs to get ahold of me or any member of the music team so we can find a place for you. I only ask that you let us know what song you want to sing and you perform it in front of the chapter.

(Cont. on Page 7)

Our Annual Show

by Doug Johnson

(Cont. from Page 6)

What happens now? There is still a lot to do before the actual date and more information will be announced in the coming weeks, but here's what YOU can do,

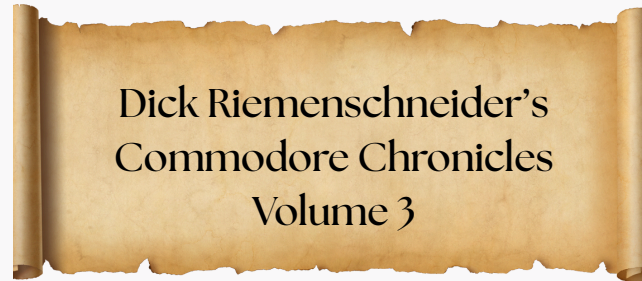
1. Use the tools you have available, learning tracks, videos, pencil, paper, warmups, vocal exercises. Anything you can do to keep your voice prepared.
2. Be engaged at rehearsal. Approach every rehearsal as a performance. Sing out like you are on stage and not in the library. It is so much easier to make alterations and corrections if the difference can be seen and heard.
3. Write things down. If there's something you don't understand or words and notes you don't know, or moves you want to work on, or breaths in the music. Use your pencil to write it in your music RIGHT AWAY. Don't rely on your memory.
4. Start promoting tickets. We have a great chapter. We sing well and know how to entertain. Ticket information will come out in the next few weeks. Everyone has at least three or four people outside of their family that they know would come to the show. Start NOW.
5. Ads. I'll be honest, this is where I sometimes struggle. I'm not naturally inclined to approach business directly and ask them to advertise our program or sponsor any organization I'm involved in. It's just not something I do. However, ads, sponsorships, and shoutouts are incredibly important for the chapter's financial well-being! Ad sales, next to nut sales, are probably the chapter's biggest money maker, so they're really crucial. If you've sold an ad before, please reach out again. These businesses already know you and are eager to support you. If you're in a quartet, consider advertising. If you're simply being yourself and want to thank someone, pay tribute to someone, or simply say thanks to your fellow Commodores, please talk to us about an ad or special mention. **Steve Grady** has lots of great ideas on who to ask and how to get in touch with businesses. We'll find a way to make it happen.

More information will be coming out in the next few weeks as we start firming things up. If you're reading this, or coming to rehearsal, you are on the "show committee". Without you this show doesn't happen.

I'm so proud that this will be a Commodores show that will showcase the chapter, honor our history and move us forward.

It's Great to be a Commodore in 2026!

Don't forget to be AWESOME!.



Commodores-Chord-inator Archives # 3

A short history of the Commodores auxiliary, The A-Commodears. Not many Commodores know how instrumental the A-Commodears were in the success of the Commodores. One of the notable things the A-Commodears did was found the Annual Nut Sales Fund Raiser. If anyone can [help](#) I would like information regarding original date of the nut sales.

- From the July/August, 1977 Chordinator: At the 1977 Ladies Night a friendly petition was circulated seeking support for a Commodores Auxiliary. The Commodores Board gave its approval for the auxiliary at the June meeting. This issue of the Chordinator had an article with the lead ATTENTION GALS. The article went on to state that a Saturday brunch would be held at the Chalet Buffet for any interested Commodore wives to attend. The stated purpose of the auxiliary was to “form a supplemental group to help out the working end of the chorus (not a social club), allowing them (the men) more time to sing and practice”.
- From the September. 1977 Chordinator: The Commodores Ladies Auxiliary has a name and it is [A Commodears!](#) They will be cheering the Commodores on at the District Convention in Greendale as well as providing corsages for all members wives so they can be identified as Commodores wives. How to pay for the corsages ...well a garage sale of course to be held in the Brooklyn Center Civic Center.
- From March 1978: The [A Commodears](#) will be busy announcing a Fashion Show, Salad Luncheon and Silent Auction to be held at the sons of Norway Hall. And the second annual garage sale date was announced.
- From May 1978: Thanks to a successful Fashion Show, Salad Luncheon and Silent Auction the [A Commodears](#) have enough money to have all Commodores wives in matching shirts at the Cincinnati International Convention.



Around Town

The Land O' Lakes 2026 Harmony Academy was held at the University of Wisconsin, River Falls campus over a cold weekend in early January. In addition to a lot of "How To" classes for chapter officers and Barbershoppers, there was a full day of teaching and performing for high school aged singers. **Jamye Casperson** and her quartet, Elevator Music, taught and guided the "kids" through the joys of making 4-part harmony music. The evening gave the high schoolers a chance to show what they had learned, performing as a chorus for a very appreciative audience. Jamye also taught two of the "How To" classes on Saturday as part of the Director track for attendees.



Any spare moment always finds lots of tagging going on



Elevator Music

Jamye Casperson, Grace Mason, (Natalie Berdahl), Debbie Mason,



The High School chorus



Hanging out in the school cafeteria



Around Town

April 11 is National Barbershop Quartet Day every year. Last year the Lakelanders Chapter started an event to celebrate the day and raise money for several organizations their chapter has supported over the years. Commodore quartets (both organized and a few that came together just for the event) turned out in force, along with other Commodores who were there for the entertainment, to help support the event.



The Grand in Northfield. A very cool theater with old timey vibes (circa 1899)



The incomparable Bill Mark who MC'd and helped organize the event



Hall Pass
(Ken Wentworth), Tony Mason, Dave Casperson, (T.J. Streblin)



BOMP
Mark Ortenburger, Bill Walkowski, Dave Wall, Harvey Weiss

Around Town



Just One More
 Matt Richards, Ben Wanggaard,
 Tony Lapakko, Nate Weimer



The Minnesota Go-4's
 John Carlotto, Bill, Don Bartels, Harvey



Hall Pass/Swype
 Ken, Tony, Dave, with Mark Bloomquist



The Lost Boys
 Nate, Tony, with Steve Zorn, David Lapakko



**Minneapolis Chapter
Quartet Contacts**

BOMP:

Mark Ortenburger..... 952.250.0968

CINEMATIX:

Steve Grady..... 952.334.7500

EAR DOCTORS & FROSTBITE

TJ Striblen 224.306.9950

HALL PASS:

Dave Casperson 651.247.6319

JUST ONE MORE:

Nate Weimer 316.204.8756

SWYPE:

Mark Bloomquist 612.325.9349

**The Commodores meet
every Tuesday at 7 pm:**

Oak Knoll Lutheran Church

600 Hopkins Crossroad, Minnetonka 55305


**Guests are welcome but please contact us
in advance so we can meet you at the door**

(Neal Mortenson nmortenson@usfamily.net)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jun 7 **BOTY, Family and Friends Celebration, St. Paul**
- Jun 16 **Parade of Quartets**
Benilde St. Margaret
- Jul 7 **Commodores in the Park**
Minnetonka, MN
- Aug 11 **Como Park BBS Show**
Como Park, St. Paul
- Sep 12 **Commodores Annual Show**
Minnehaha Academy
- Oct 17 **LOL District Convention**
Bloomington, MN
- Dec 12 **Annual Holiday Show**
Minnehaha Academy


July, 2027

*Barbershop Harmony Society
International Convention
Minneapolis, MN*

The Chord-Inator is available on the
Minneapolis Commodores website
commodores.groupanizer.com

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