



Chord Rustlers

BARBERSHOP CHORUS OF BOZEMAN, MT

March 8, 2011
Volume 4, Issue 2



"The Old Chorale"

Contents

♦ Caberet	1
♦ Dewey's Dialog	2
♦ Officers	2
♦ Drinking Gourd	3
♦ Who is this C.R.?	4
♦ Mission	5

Upcoming Events

- ♦ **April 2, 2011**
American Legion Show,
Grace Bible Church,
2:00 PM
- ♦ **May 13-14, 2011**
Divisional Contest
Moses Lake, WA
- ♦ **May 30**
Soldier's Chapel
- ♦ **August**
Sweet Pea Festival
- ♦ **October 7-8, 2011**
District Contest
Spokane, WA
- ♦ **November 11, 2011**
Veteran's Day Show

"Cabaret"

The **Chord Rustlers** and shared the stage with choirs and choruses from around Gallatin and Park Counties for a gala night of singing and instrumentals. It was hard to pick the "best part" of the show...everyone performed superbly. It was exciting to hear the **Quarterions** on their first annual show with their rendition of "Follow the Drinking Gourd" and "Java Jive." The **Doodle Dandies** "trimmed the light fantastic" with "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" and "Piano Roll Blues." These guys just keep going and going and going! Our own Isaac Nelson literally stole the show with "Hey Soul Sister" performed by his trio **Bus**. The Belgrade girls, **Azule**, performed "Fever" and the guys, **No Intro**, "In the Still of the Night" and "Silhouettes." Bozeman **Fine Nine** (minus two) gave a rousing performance singing "Blackbird" and "Over the Rainbow." The lively Livingston **Glee Club** received hearty applause with a "Beetles' Medley" and "Rag Mop" complete with complicated choreography. Our emcee, Darin Oelkers, provided us with a very professional front man to announce the songs and notices.

The second half featured **Boothill Betterment Society** livening up the show with their parodies of "Side by Side" and "Over the Rainbow." **Bridger Mountain Harmony** singing "Kickin' It Up a Notch" and "Saturday Night at the Twist and Shout." **ReZound** Quartet added their contest set "10 Feet off the Ground" and "A Tree in the Meadow." The two combinations of the Bloxham gang, **My Three Sons** and **Brotherly Love**, showed what they have learned to do for the past 20 years...sing with tremendous enthusiasm, great sound, and a love for the barbershop style. Joined by Austin Sprenger on saxophone, **MTS** version of "After Glo" was sweet. Who can forget **BL's** "My Cup Runneth Over" and "The Impossible Dream." Is "Cruella Deville" devilish enough for this crowd? And, of course, the **Chord Rustlers** gave one of the more stunning performances (probably the best), at least since I have been privileged to sing with them for the past six years. Great job to all of you and to Natalie who guided us through a wonderful show.

Co-chairmen, Dan Hopper and Dennis Bloxham



Dewey's Dialogue for the Ageless

*"...sing something
so it is barely
audible ..."*

Dwight Adams



LOWER THE VOLUME

The show last weekend was about as flawless as it could be. The real joy to being the oldest was to see so many who could be my grandsons doing their thing. Having said that, let's talk about something the Chord Rustlers, in my opinion, could do better. It occurred to me during the symphony concert Sunday afternoon. The orchestra and a superb pianist played a Brahms concerto. In places the music is loud and bombastic. But in the same piece there are passages that are beautifully quiet. As Charlie McGuire says (not an accurate quote) it isn't hard to sing loud. But how about bringing the sound down occasionally, say to a one? So here is a modest proposal. How about spending a few minutes in every rehearsal singing something so it is barely audible? Say, the "babies cry" section or part of "Jeanie." *Aura Lee* would work...or any tear-jerker. If you bring the sound way down, the audience pays attention, thinking you may be up to something. *Dewey*

Most Barbershop music does not add the dynamic markings pp, p, mp, mf, f, ff, sfz, etc. It is left to the interpretation of the Director and singers. Orchestras and symphonic choirs have roadmaps that take them through all the ranges of dynamic markings. That is one of the beauties of barbershop...we make our own decisions and thus our own music. DH

♪ Music Team ♪

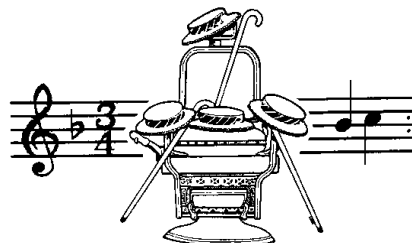
Directors: Natalie Berdahl	406-579-2211
Assistant Director: Charlie McGuire	406-582-0471
Music VP: John Sheppard	406-924-4515
Section Leaders:	
Lead: John Sheppard	406-924-4515
Baritone: Tim Lund	406-388-6232
Tenor: Kevin Mattson	406-388-6232
Bass: Bernie Bissell	406-586-2966
Chorus Mgr: Jerry Mollock	406-570-2468
Librarian: Jack Lehman	406-388-3121

♪ Committees ♪

Show Chairmen 2012: Jack Lehman Dave Schrupp	406-388-3121 406-585-9493
Tater Pig Chairman:	TBA
Singing Valentines 2011 Chairman: Mike Tank, Dave Schrupp	406-585-9437 406-585-9493

Chord Rustler Officers

President: Bernie Bissell	406-586-2966
VP Music: John Sheppard	406-924-4515
VP Chapter Development: Dave Schrupp	406-585-9493
VP Marketing/PR: Dan Hopper	406-582-5194
Treasurer: Sig Dehn	406-586-5747
Secretary: Frank Smith	406-586-4676
Immediate Past President: Dave Schrupp	406-585-9493
Board Members at Large:	
Charles McGuire	406-582-0471
Mike Tank	406-585-9437
Kevin Mattson	406-388-6232
Executive Vice President: Don Greer	406-586-7871
Sunshine Chairman: Jesse Edgar	406-579-5354



Following the Drinking Gourd, Barbershop Style

In this year's **Chord Rustler** Annual Show, a new quartet came to the stage—The **Quaternions**—and sang a remarkable song steeped in the history of the Underground Railroad. This song was a medley of two “freedom songs” arranged by Bob Jones comprising “*Follow the Drinking Gourd*” and “Lonesome Traveler.” The history and current thinking about the background of Drinking Gourd is so interesting, that a website has been established discussing its cultural history:

<http://www.followthedrinkinggourd.org>.

Drinking Gourd is believed by some to be a map song, providing a route for slaves to escape from the Deep South to freedom. Supposedly sung by “Peg Leg Joe,” a journeyman worker traveling from plantation to plantation and planting seeds of freedom, the song directs slaves to “follow the drinking gourd” to the north. The drinking gourd is a reference to the Big Dipper, which can be used to identify the North Star and find one's way out of slavery.

This song was first published in 1928, well past the time of the Underground Railroad. Even so, many musicians have accepted on face value the authenticity of the song as one used to guide slaves to freedom. Specifically, the route calls for slaves to head north during the spring from the area around Mobile, Alabama to the Tombigbee River, which empties into Mobile Bay. Once the river is reached, the traveler identifies the path forward with trees and landmarks made out of charcoal or mud forming a left foot and a right peg foot (representing Joe's peg leg). The traveler then heads north to the headwaters of the Tombigbee near Woodall Mountain and crosses the hills to find the Tennessee River on the other side. Once there, the path is followed straight north to the Ohio River. The route ends in Paducah, Kentucky where the traveler is supposed to meet Peg Leg Joe (or his representative) to go the rest of the way.

Recent studies have started to raise some questions about this amazing song's history. For example, it is now commonly believed that Peg Leg Joe was not a historical figure but is a composite representing several people actively involved in the Underground Railroad since there is no reliable historical evidence found to date that confirms (or denies) his existence. Additionally, the route identified in the song is not likely to have been followed since there is little evidence of slaves in the Deep South escaping to the north. Rather, most slaves in the Deep South generally headed for major southern cities or safe havens in the Caribbean and Mexico. Those escaping to the north typically came from the Border States. Also, the area around Paducah was known to be sympathetic to slavery and dangerous to those attempting to escape. Finally, the Underground Railroad was successful for being inconsistent and unpredictable in the routes used. Having a map song that delineates a specific route would have been a very bad idea.

Bob Jones has given us a wonderful barbershop arrangement, and the story behind the arrangement is very interesting. Very protective of his music, Jones purportedly did not like to write any of his arrangements down and insisted that groups learn his arrangements “by rote.” Some great quartets have sung this arrangement, including **Seattle Sound** and **Realtime**. At the request of Neal Booth, director of **Northwest Vocal Project** and son-in-law of Bob Jones, we were asked (via Dennis Bloxham) to transcribe the song and make it available back to him. This has been done, so in return, The **Quaternions** were given permission to add the song to their repertoire and had the privilege and pleasure of being able to perform it on our show.

John Sheppard, VP Music and Performance

March & April Birthdays:

Mar 11 David Schrupp

Mar 14 Tony Westcott

April 3 Ben Elliott

April 17 Bill Purcell

April 24 Mike Tank

Who is This Chord Rustler?

Periodically, "The Old Chorale" will have an article describing a member's life and experiences. See if you can figure out who it is before the end of the article.

This chorus member comes from a family of musicians. Her dad was a music director at several high schools and a prison. Her brother is an accomplished, well known, local musician, and "an official Bigfoot Investigator"; her mom is the Bridger Mountain Harmony Sweet Adelines music director and gives piano lessons. Of course, we're talking about our director, Natalie Berdahl.

Natalie was born and raised in Bozeman. She was in her high school chorus, marching band, softball, and threw shot put and discus in track and field. She has been a member of the Sweet Adelines for 11 years and is their assistant director and head choreographer. Her mom, grandma, and immediate family influenced Natalie's strong desire to get involved in music. But her first "hooking" moment of barbershop was the first time she heard the tag of **Keepsake's** "When the Saints Go Marching In."

She enjoys hiking, photography, reading, watching movies, fishing, tubing, playing the piano and is organizing a "ghost hunting team"...ask her! She has been our director for the past two years. Natalie has been to film school at MSU and plans to continue this educational path at the New York Film Academy in Los Angeles.

In Natalie's words, "I didn't have the best luck with outdoor sports when growing up. When I was seven years old attempting to learn how to water ski, I somehow didn't hear my Uncle say 'Let go of the rope when you fall!' which resulted in me being drug by the boat while drinking half of the lake. A few years later I learned to tube which is now a huge passion of mine. Same Uncle, same lake, I was on the tube with the hole in the center. Since I was young I was told to start on my knees and when the tube rises above the wake you fall on your chest. Well I miscalculated the timing and fell through the center of the tube. My oversized life jacket got stuck in the hole keeping me underwater. I was stuck under water for almost a minute trying to free myself. My family kept saying 'She's not coming up!' and my brother was about to dive in after me. I finally was able to unhook the life jacket and slide out. I was terrified of water sports for five years. But now I'm an avid jet skier and tuber."

"In May 2008, my dear friend Kelly Lynch, who was a big time barbershopper in the Billings Big Sky Chorus, was killed in a plane crash in the Billings Heights. My whole world turned upside down and my music came to an unexpected halt. I found it so hard to sing and attend rehearsals, so I ended up taking an eight-month leave from barbershop. It was as if someone blew my flame out and I just couldn't sing anymore. I know that is something Kelly would never have wanted, but I just couldn't do it. I have healed some, but every day I do the best I can to try to build up my passion for my music. I believe that barbershop singing helps our members express themselves, enjoy the fellowship of others and create music together."

"When I attend Harmony University, it is filled with hardcore energetic barbershoppers like I used to be. It lifts me up and reminds me of the joy barbershop gave me. What inspires me, lifts my spirits, and awakens my passion is directing the **Chord Rustlers**, being a part of this chorus and being so honored to be your director. I have loved every minute and never knew this was a path I was supposed to take. You have let me express myself, be a dork, and share my knowledge. Thank you for becoming my good friends and even a new family. I love being one of the guys."

Jerry Mollock [With a lot of help from Natalie Berdahl]



We're behind you 100%, Natalie!!! Chord Rustlers

Chord Rustlers meet Tuesdays at Grace Bible Church, 3625 South 19th, Bozeman. Rehearsals are from 7:00–9:30 p.m. Guests are always welcome.

Mission Statement — Bozeman Chord Rustlers

“The mission of the Chord Rustlers is to sing *a cappella*, four-part harmony, in the barbershop style, to support vocal music education of youth, and to provide audiences with wholesome entertainment for all occasions by men who enjoy musical and social camaraderie, desiring to share their love of music within the community, and who aspire to grow in musical excellence and preserve the tradition of four-part harmony singing.”



"The Old Chorale"
Dan Hopper, Editor
3120 Augusta Dr.
Bozeman, MT 59715
dan_hopper@bresnan.net

