



# Undertone



What's Happening in the Burlington, Vermont, Chapter  
Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet singing in America, Inc.  
Member of the great Northeastern District since 1947.  
We meet Tuesdays - 7:00 p.m. South Burlington High School, South Burlington, Vermont - Call (802) 985-8714 for Information.

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## Spring Retreat Saturday Coach – Dan Signor

by Jerry Walter, Editor

Saturday the Burlington Chapter of SPEBSQSA, Inc. will hold it's annual Spring Retreat. [I know it will probably be snowing, but it is Spring by the calendar.]

This year for the first time we have the honor of coming under the tutelage of Certified Singing Judge, Dan Signor, of South Sutton, New Hampshire, recently lead singer of the 2000 Northeastern District Quartet Champions **Overdrive**.

Dan was recently certified as a Society Singing judge and is a Music Educator, a voice teacher and has a background in mixed quartet singing. Dan and his wife Gaye LaCasce sing with Jay and Gail Hall of Nashua in the new mixed quartet, **'round Midnight**.

Dan is also the lead in a new NED quartet **24/7**, organized earlier this year. Dan sings lead, Steve Barden sings tenor, Jack Baggs on baritone and Jim Bentsen on bass.

24/7 has already showed their hand so to speak by entering the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Wilbraton Rotary Club Barbershop Ballad Contest earlier this month and finished second behind the current District

Champions **Road Show**. Thirteen other quartets competed for the gold.

Watch for 24/7 at the International Preliminaries in Manchester, Connecticut April 19-20.

### Directions to St. Francis

The school is located on St. Peter Street in Winooski just next to St. Francis Xavier Church. I'll give a choice of approaches.

From the North, take I89 or US route 2 south, at Exit 16 turn right on US2 south then at the third traffic light (S.Spring St.) turn right go one block to Weaver Street, turn right and go one block north, turn left on St. Peter Street and turn right into the church/school parking lot. Enter the school just off of the parking lot.

If you are going south on US2 count four lights after passing under I89, then turn right on Spring, right on Weaver and left on St. Peter, as above.

From the South, you have two choices. First choice: take I89 north  
See **Directions**, page 2

## Retreat Schedule

by Charlie Church, Music VP

We will be welcoming you to our annual Spring Retreat at the St. Francis Xavier School in Winooski, see directions elsewhere and accompanying map, beginning at 8:30 a.m., with the following loosely planned schedule.

- 8:30** Set up, sign in have coffee, etc.
- 9:00** Coaching under the direction of certified Singing Judge Dan Signor.
- Noon** Break for lunch, your choice of local eateries from BK to MacDonald's, Friendly's and even Libby's Blue Line Diner.
- 1:00** Continued coaching with Dan Signor.
- 3:45** Wrap up and "State of the Chapter" discussion under the direction of President Villeré.
- 4:30** Retreat ends for another year.

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## The Undertone

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Unless accompanied by a byline, all articles are written by the editor, who assumes all responsibility for accuracy and content. Articles represent the opinions of their authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the members or officers of the chapter. To the extent permitted by space, all written communications received by the editor will be published. The editor, reserves the right to edit all copy for punctuation and length.

Deadline for copy is 9:00 p.m. Monday preceding each issue. Copy is accepted in the following order of preference: e-mail, IBM compatible 3.5 diskettes - WordPerfect or most any other word processor, ASCII text; binary files in the above formats by modem to editor's home phone; oral dictation by phone and, of course, hard copy.

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### Burlington Chapter Board of Directors

President	John Villeré 802 859-3403
VP Development (Membership)	Dick Labrecque 802 864-5439
VP Music & Performance	Charlie Church 802 879-1981
Quartet Vice President	

Secretary	Dave Merrill 802 658-2531
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Al Carpenter	Dale Higgs
Serge Rizzo	Jerry Walter
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Music Director	Greg Morrill
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Steve Plumb	Dan Signor
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20 Week Club Chairman	Ed Bechtel
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Baritone - Reid Allen	Bass - Jerry Walter
Librarian	John Zweighaft

Lighting/Sound Coordinator	
Chorus Manager	Don Pierce
Package Show Producer	Charlie Church

### Chapter Barbershopper of the year 2001

**Ed Bechtel**

### Division Barbershopper of the year 2000

**Charlie Church**



Photo -Panorama, Oct.1950

**Maple Sugar Four**, Ed Bechtel, Bob Titus, Bruce Butterfield and Howard "Doc" Slack

## Doc Slack — Charter member 1914 – 2002

Last Thursday, March 21, Dr. Howard D. Slack, D.D.S., passed on to the chorus in the sky, to join many other of our chapter's founding members. "Doc" was one of our staunchest fans and, you might have guessed, he was a baritone. Perhaps his most famous role was as a member of the **Maple Sugar Four**, international contenders in 1950.

While being relatively inactive in recent years, Doc, never the less was a regular "older gentleman observer" at the Champlain Echoes meetings held at his residence, the Pines for many years.

Doc's office was conveniently located just across the street from our old meeting place, the Burlington Knights of Columbus Hall, on Cherry Street in Burlington.

His love of barbershop grew out of a musical sideline which saw him play saxophone and clarinet with big bands of the '30s and '40s.

Doc was a natural Vermonter, born in Derby. He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Mona, two sons and a sister, Barbara Wright of West Glover.

A memorial service was held on Sunday at the College Street Congregational Church, in lieu of

flowers, Doc requested that donations be sent to the church, Burlington, Vermont 05401.

We'll miss you, Doc.

## Directions from page 1

to exit 16, turn left (US 2South) and pass under the Interstate and at the fourth light turn right on to Spring street and then the next right on Weaver Street and the next left on St. Peter Street to the school.

Second choice, take I89 North to Exit 15, Vermont 15, and turn left at the end of the exit ramp – Vt 15 West. Go under I89 keeping in the right lane past one light for about 1/4 mile you will see the Railroad Crossing and a Y-intersection where the right lane must turn. This is East Spring Street. Go straight for about a half mile past one stop sign to the first traffic light. Go straight across US 2 and turn right at the first street (Weaver Street), then make the first left on to St. Peter Street. The school is on your right.

For those brave enough to show up in a blizzard, maps are available. For others email is the way to go.

## Life Line unit available

One of the three free LifeLine emergency paging units dedicated to the memory of Brian Andreoletti is now available. Application forms are available from Len Beams or High Voltage.. Completed forms should be submitted to the adjudication committee, High Voltage.

## Updated Song Learning Schedule

Song	Intro	Out of Spots
"Gaudeamus"	Feb 26	March 26
"Moments to Remember"		
	March 26	April 23
"Halls Of Ivy"	April 9	May 7

# A chording 2 your president – I don't usually read the Harmonizer – but...

by John Villeré, President

I have a confession to make. I do not read the Harmonizer. I have lots of reasons for this but I won't go into that now. Today was different. I wanted to gather a little more thought stimulus in preparation for this article.

When I read the cover and table of contents, some headlines sounded interesting. As I paged to the inside the very first article was entitled “Having fun while working hard” by Darryl Flynn, Executive Director. It just so happens that the subject is one of the key components of what I wanted to write about.

Much of the article was a recap of an article from the *Albuquerque Serenader*. He reiterated the writer's vision for the New MexiChords to “rediscover the joy to be found in singing barbershop well — working hard to get better, but always remembering that we joined this organization to have fun.” He then quoted Jim Clancy of the *Vocal Majority*, “...that hard work is fun when progress is apparent.” Darryl went on from the article in the *Serenader*, “Work hard. Make Progress. Have Fun. Go Home.”

So far, this sounds like pretty good stuff. I'll read more! The next article by Roger Lewis, SPEBSQSA President, discussed growing our membership roles. Well, **that** is certainly relevant to issues we have with our chapter, so I read on. Among a whole lot of good information was “Review your audiences. It's fun to sing for a retirement home, but that may not attract many perspective members. Do we spend enough of our performance time in front of the right kind of people?”

That is certainly something we should think about.

Then I came to the letters to the editors. I find that it is always good to review the feedback others have on the articles within a publication. These mostly reflected on earlier stories about membership growth. One letter stressed “potential members have other opportunities for simply ‘a guy's night out.’ Likewise, the young men we wish to attract want to sing quality, exciting music that will be applauded by their peers.”

Another letter stated “We've lost our ability to have fun, and with it we've lost members. ... These men already have jobs, and aren't looking for something that's just more work.” Still another writer shared, “I became inactive because I wasn't having the fun I expected relative to the time and energy invested.” Followed by, “The strenuous movements sap my energy and interfere with the quality of my voice.” He finished his letter with, “Couldn't some way be made to accommodate the needs of all?”

This issue's feature article reviewed non-traditional groups as a means of addressing the diverse needs of Barbershop enthusiasts. The article deals with the theme, “Not everyone is looking for the same experience. One of the lessons we've learned as a Society has been that one size does not fit all.” Of particular note is a story about an Arizona Phoenicians member who opts to travel 400 miles round trip each week rather than participate in a local chapter. Among other things, he says that he goes to this expense to share in their experience of

“pushing themselves to the next level and beyond. And where they go is quality.”

So all of this research provides lots of raw input for my article. I garnered raw input, but few answers. Yes, I found quite a bit of material that supports my own opinions on these matters. But as chapter president it is my responsibility to help the chapter move towards ends that reflect the needs and wants of the membership, not my personal agenda.

So I encourage you, also, to take the time to read the Harmonizer and other Barbershop publications. But I urge you to go the extra mile and give careful thought to what you read that may go contrary to your own beliefs. I say that, because the diversity reflected in the articles mirrors that within our own chapter. As much as possible, I want our membership to avoid the two extreme examples cited above. Although opting to travel six hours each week reflects a tremendous commitment to excellence, it also bears witness to the query tendered by the writer who instead chose to become inactive: “Couldn't some way be made to accommodate the needs of all?”

March 30 is our spring retreat. The principal goal is to improve the quality of our singing. At the end of the session we will have a little time to address chapter goals. Attendees will be asked to brainstorm on a number of important topics. Ultimately, I hope to approach some level of consensus on where we should steer the chorus for the future. Please be prepared to participate fully.

## DIRECTOR'S

### CORNER There's one more place on the risers!

by **Greg Morrill**,  
Musical Director

We lost one of our charter members last week, Howard "Doc" Slack. A few years ago my quartet had the privilege of singing for their 60th wedding anniversary. As part of that celebration, Doc sang "My Wild Irish Rose" with us — baritone, of course! He more than held his own belying his age. Men like Howard Slack took the initiative to start an organization here in Burlington dedicated to preserving the singing they loved.

Whether they thought that it would still be going over 50 years later, I don't know. But, we can thank them and the many that have contributed since then. We are their legacy. That's a significant responsibility if we want the Green Mountain Chorus to still be thriving 50 years from now! We owe it to Doc and all the others to try and make this organization the best we can. One way is to respond to the challenge issued in the latest Harmonizer: can we increase our chapter's net membership by one in 2002? Doc's gone and we'll need more than one new member to replace him.

A reminder about our coaching session this Saturday. This session is not just for those going to contest! This is an integral part of our goal for singing with quality all the time! Plan on attending this Saturday — if you can't make the whole time at least be there for part of the time.

## Singing opportunity next Friday 4/5

by **Jim Mallabar**

For those who enjoy another chance to spread the joy barbershop to yet another captive audience, there is an opportunity on Friday April 5 in Essex Junction. The Grace United Methodist Church is holding their annual "Send the Kids to Camp" talent show/fund raiser at 7:00 pm that evening.

This would be a great chance for a quartet to try out a new song or two, or for a few guys to get a "Very Large Quartet" together to perform something.

There is a fairly loose definition of "Talent" at this show, but I can say that scheduled to appear is Amy Johnson, the reigning Miss Vermont. While she we probably be playing the flute rather than modeling for the swimsuit competition, I can tell you it will still be worthwhile. So for anybody who would like to sing a tune or two Next Friday night, let me know and I can put you on the playlist.

## 20 Week Club Results

12/25	3 Marion Beaulieu	Dan Venditti
01/01	33 Carol Henson	Dick Labrecque
01/08	247 Bob Bouvier	Dick Labrecque
01/15	75 Donna Walter	Jerry Walter
01/22	80 Christina Gonillo	Ed Bechtel
01/31	211 Adam Socinski	Dan Blouin
02/05	244 Matthew Higgs	Dale Higgs
02/12	175 Conrad Hazelton	Charlie Church
02/19	157 Ray Ouimette	Charlie Church
02/26	70 Becky Senesac	Dan Venditti
03/05	81 Don Goliber	Dan Blouin
03/12	18 Walter Fischer	Ed Bechtel
03/19	219 Deanna Higgs	Dale Higgs



March 30 (Saturday)	- Spring Workshop See article page 1 for details
April 19-20 (Fri. - Sat.)	- Division Contest Manchester, Connecticut
May 3 (Friday)	- 20 Week Club Banquet South Burlington K of C
May 25 (Saturday)	- Montreal's Annual Show
June 1 (Saturday)	- 2002 Annual Show College Days featuring Michigan Jake
June 8 (Saturday)	- Package Show – Morrisville
July-August	- Vermont Expos singouts Dates TBD
August 10	- Package Show – Troy
September 27-8 (Fri. – Sat.)	- Annual Retreat Coach -Gary Bolles Place TBD
October 25-26 (Fri. – Sat.)	- NED Fall Convention Lake Placid, New York

Jerry Walter

### **The Undertone**

66 Bacon Drive  
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**IT'S GREAT TO BE A  
BARBERSHOPPER!**