



NED's NEWS

A monthly newsletter for members and friends of the
Northeastern District of the Barbershop Harmony Society.



SEPTEMBER 2021

1946 - 2021 ~ 75 years

Vol. 4 / Issue 9

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About "LINKS"

Links to online web pages and email addresses are provided here in this PDF doc throughout in text - and images.

Light blue text.

All are interactive - just hover & select and your browser will do the rest!

District Web Page:
NEDistrict.org

Society Web Page:
barbershop.org

BHS Member Center
Login here: **MEMBERS**

Submit articles and other information for the NED News to Ed Fritzen:
elfritze@gmail.com

The deadline for the next **NED News** is Friday, October 15

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1. Monthly Featured VP Letter

I'll step up this month and provide the "Letter from the President". I've had a little bit of practice at it, and just want to pass on some words of encouragement speaking as your Immediate Past President.

While I'm officially a "has been," I've been very encouraged during this past year with everything that has gone on in the Northeastern District. We have provided so much, under new, and somewhat difficult, circumstances. We had a great presence at the BHS **Virtual Midwinter Convention** and we also participated in the BHS **Virtual International Convention** this past July. A lot of that was spearheaded by VP of Chorus Director Development, Dan Falcon and our Executive VP Mike Savard. Most recently we had a successful **Harmony College Northeast** thanks to the tireless efforts of **Brandon Mollon**, our VP of Music and Performance. The faculty was outstanding and the courses offered were excellent. Not to be overlooked however was the great Saturday Night Show, featuring the talents of some our past **Harmony Explosion Camp Northeast** performers as well as the HXNE-2021 Virtual Chorus performance. This was all due to the work of VP of Youth in Harmony, Scott Domaratus. I guess what I'm trying to say is that we in the Northeastern District are very fortunate to have an exceptional **Board of Directors** who continue to serve the district and work on your behalf. The board continues to provide programs in spite of the difficulties of fighting a pandemic. My only wish is that more of the members would participate. I know everything is virtual these days and we're all "Zoomed Out," but even so. I do enjoy seeing and chatting with my fellow NED barbershop brothers and sisters.



In case you haven't heard, the NED is still planning on having a 2021 **Fall District Convention with Contests** at Worcester State University. All the details can be found on our web site. Start here: <https://www.nedistrict.org>. NED Registration and BHS Contest Entry has been open for a few weeks now. Note the deadlines for each, as well as for hotel reservations! We have COVID policies and protocols in place that will be followed, and I encourage everyone to read them thoroughly on the website - on the Competitor page - and be prepared to follow them during the convention. We are trying to make this the safest possible convention imaginable. As of this writing, the only way the convention will be cancelled will be if Worcester State University or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts cancels all such activities. If that should happen, you'll be the first to know. Let's keep our fingers crossed, and hopefully we can gather safely in October. I'm looking forward to it.

~ Ed Fritzen • NED Immediate Past President • elfritze@gmail.com

NORTHEASTERN DISTRICT BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY FALL DISTRICT CONVENTION & CONTESTS 2021
FRIDAY & SATURDAY • OCTOBER 29-30 • WORCESTER, MA

2. A Touch of Grace

I received this heartwarming story from **Robert Cassie** and thought it was worth sharing with the District. Some of our more mature members will recall the **Top Hats** from “a few” years ago.

I love it when a fifty-year plan comes together – unexpectedly! Barbershopping is not just a fraternity rooted in song, but it can be filled with a lifetime of relationships. Recently, my sisters and I had to say goodbye to our dad who was a proud barbershopper for his entire adult life. He paid his dues religiously and just got his 64-year membership card prior to becoming another victim of the menace we now call COVID. Upon his passing, while tidying up my dad’s affairs, I came to learn of one of these wonderful barbershop relationships.

I came across a Christmas card envelope addressed to my dad from a name I didn’t recognize. I put it aside for a bit with a thought to track down the sender to advise of my dad’s passing. It sat on my desktop for longer than I wish to admit. The envelope, so it seemed, kept asking me to pick it up and read again the content and the contact names. I finally tracked down **Bill and Jan Grace** who had fondly kept in touch with my dad during his final nursing home years. Visiting occasionally and sending holiday cards regularly, the Grace’s wished Dad encouragement and good song until COVID lockdowns limited in person visitations. I had never heard of the Grace’s – Jan & Bill, until I read the card.

Rewind to 40+ years earlier, while at a casual neighborhood party, my Dad meets Bill and bends his ear sufficiently to suggest he try Barbershopping as a hobby and sing with the **Manchester CT chapter**. So begins Bill’s entry to the fraternity of song. Dad had a habit of bringing men into the fray, including me for a few of my college years.

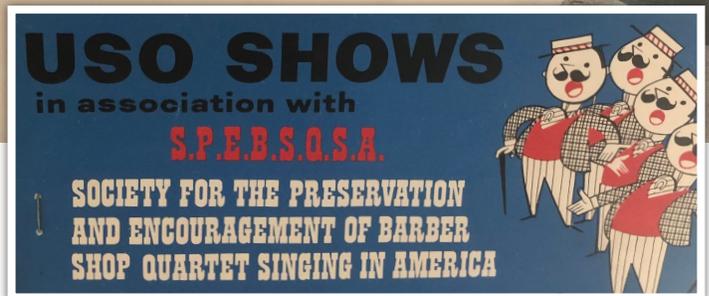
Years later, Bill’s romantic second date, with his eventual wife, Jan, turns out to be where Bill also meets Jan’s dad, **Jim Ferris** – a very talented tenor in the renowned **Top Hats** comedy quartet. By this time, coincidentally, my dad is singing bass with the **Top Hats**, in addition to his endless support with his local chapter in **New London, CT**. The **Top Hats** quartet traveled on USO Tours to Japan, Guam, Philippines, and Guantanamo Bay bringing song to recuperating soldiers on bases across the islands. The **Top Hats** flew across the greater northeast bringing harmonious comic relief to countless chapters’ annual shows.

Fast forward to 2021, as I was planning my dad’s **Celebration of Life** for this July, I thought it would a nice touch to have a barbershop quartet sing a few songs for those who gathered to that day to pay their respects to Dad. A bit of Facebook searching led me to the awesome **Off The Chart** quartet, all members of the famed **Silk City Chorus of Manchester CT**. With a tip o’ the cap to **Vin Zito!**

Graciously, the contact for **Off The Chart, Craig Minor**, offered to sing a few songs – if they could only find a bass! Their bass was not available for the date - so the search was on for a back-up bass! After a week or so, Craig calls me to say they found a guy who agreed to dust off the pipes and would be happy to step in and sing. To my astonishment they tracked



Top Hats Quartet (L/R)
Jim Ferris-Tenor
Lou Grillo - Lead
'Bobbie' Aregood - Baritone
Doug Cassie - Bass



down **Bill Grace** who my dad introduced to barbershop 40 years earlier and had married the daughter of the **Top Hats** fine tenor, the late **Jim Ferris!** We were so thankful to secure **Off The Chart** with **Grace** for the day!

After an array of pole cat songs, peeks of smiles through the happy tears in the crowd, the spirit rose amongst those gathered that only 4-part harmony can bring to life. I think I even heard my dad, singing from above, as he belted out the tag like only a true wood-shedder can do!

God speed and rest in peace to our father,
Doug Cassie...

Keep the whole heavens singing.



"Off The Chart" Quartet (L/R)
Craig Minor - Baritone
Bill Grace - Bass, for the day
Dick Moriarty - Lead
Neal Kellogg - Tenor

3. REMINDING YOU of ...

Upcoming Deadlines!

NED Fall District Convention
 Quartet & Chorus

Contest Entry (BHS) Wednesday, Sept. 29

NED Fall District Convention

Hotel Reservations (cut-off) Wednesday, Sept. 29

NED Fall District Convention

Program Advertising (submit/pay) Monday, Oct. 4

NED Fall District Convention

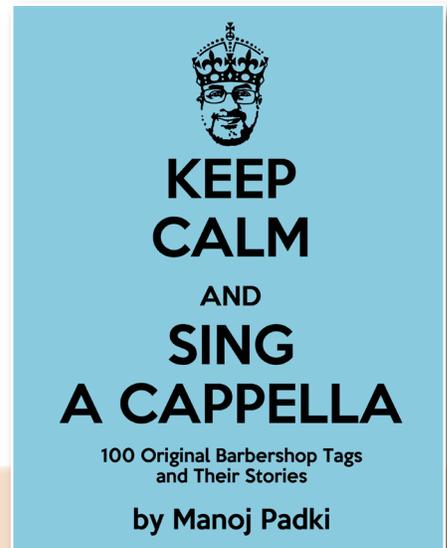
Early-bird **Registration**
 at Eventbrite -- ends Thursday, Oct. 14

NED Fall District Convention

Dining Choices, prepaid only
 at Registration (Eventbrite)
 (brunch and/or dinner) Thursday, Oct. 14

Start here for all:

<https://www.NEDistrict.org>



Keep Calm and Sing A Cappella

by Manoj Padki, 30-year member of BHS and NED
 A book of 100 Original Barbershop Tags and Their Stories

2 versions available for sale:

- **PDF version: \$5.00**
 This is a PDF file with 104 pages and file size of 7.1MB.
- **Autographed, printed version: \$10.00** + \$5 domestic shipping. Free PDF included.

Venmo and PayPal accepted.
 Please email me directly for details.

padki@yahoo.com

4. NED Events & Other Important Dates —

Now on the [District Calendar](#) (link). More information & links may be found there!

Organizers: Please submit/provide/verify your future event date, time and link. Attending? Look at the online calendar!

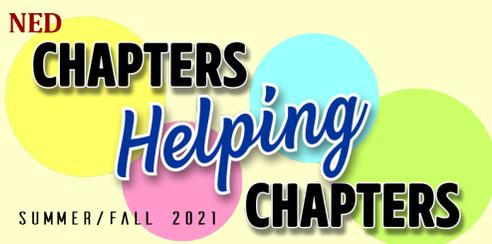
DATE	DAY(S)	EVENT	INFO LINK	LOCATION
September 24	Friday 7:00 PM	NED House of Delegates Meeting	SELECT	Zoom
Oct. 29-30	Friday & Saturday	NED Fall District Convention	SELECT	Worcester State U.
Jan. 7-9, 2022	Friday-Sat.-Sunday	NED-OLA-22 / Online Leadership Academy	<i>t b a</i>	Zoom
Jan. 11-16	Tues.-Sun.	BHS 2022 Midwinter Convention	<i>t b a</i>	Pasadena, CA

5. Video of the Month

Here's a classic performance from BHS 1999 International Champions **FRED**. Performed here in 1995.

They were the first "comedy" quartet to win the gold. Enjoy! (*Jared Carlson – tenor, Rick LaRosa – lead, Clay Hine – baritone, Joe Clay – bass.*)

<https://youtu.be/2GZU16nRI6k>



- Has your chapter joined the conversation?
- Does your chapter need ideas to rebuild?
- Can you share in your chapter's success?
- Share ideas! Share successes!
- A Community of Chapters helping each other!

SEE **NEW** UPDATES NOW POSTED here:

<https://www.nedistrict.org/chapters-helping-chapters>

Summer time is a busy time for all us as we spend more time enjoying the nice weather and take much needed vacations. I'll blame "summertime" for the short newsletter this month. I'm sure there are some more news worthy items out there that can be shared with the district. Please send any items of interest to Ed Fritzen, elfritze@gmail.com. THANKS! The deadline for the next issue is Friday, October 15.