River Ramblings Editor-Jeffrey Grimmer

JACOB RITTER ARRIVES ON AUGUST 1st

Jacob Ritter the new "Riverblenders" Music Director will arrive on August 1st, 2012. We welcome him with open arms and are eagerly looking forward to his guidance and wisdom. So that you know a little bit more about him, here is the information which he submitted when asked to apply.



"I grew up in Columbus, NE, where my father, Fred Ritter, was my high school music director. He is currently a member of the Fremont, NE Pathfinders Barbershop Chorus and sang in the competition in Portland, OR, this month. While in high school, I formed an a cappella quartet called Out-4-Fun. We performed hundreds of gigs and recorded two

albums.

After high school, I joined a barbershop quartet at Doane College and competed in the Collegiate Contest for 3 years. We won our Central States District Contest in 2003 and competed Internationally in 2003 and 2004. I also had

opportunities to sing barbershop during college in a men's small group call DoubleWide, which was led by Barbershop Harmony Society icon Larry Monson.

In 2007, I was selected to be a Dapper Dan for Disneyland in Hong Kong, China. For 13 months, I sang barbershop professionally and worked with many outstanding performers from around the world.

I was a member of the Homestead Harmonizers from Beatrice, NE, and the Continentals from Lincoln, NE.

During my time at the University of Central Missouri, working towards a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting, I coached a men's group and a quartet that competed in the Central States District Collegiate Contest.

I earned two silver medals while singing with the Great Northern Union Chorus in Minneapolis where I serve as Warm-up Leader and Associate Section Leader. In addition, I have served as a Clinician in the Young Men in Harmony program in 2003 and 2004.

I look forward to becoming the Music Director for the Mankato Riverblenders Chorus.

Jacob Ritter

International Contest - Portland

After all of the hard work and extra effort GNU put into their contest preparation for Portland, they succeeded in singing the best that they have every sung on a contest stage scoring a 95%. The only problem they encountered was "The Ambassadors of Harmony" from St. Charles, Missouri who scored a 96.8%. Great job representing yourselves and the LO'L! All of the "Riverblenders", that went and saw you, said you did a fantastic job! We had several "Riverblenders" singing with GNU - Byron Norell, Greg Rosevold, Charlie Johnson, and Doug Peterson.

The other LO'L Chorus "Midwest Vocal Express" from Greendale, Wisconsin, also put on a great

show! Congratulations and a hardy thank you to both groups!!

The LO'L had three competing quartets. "Vocality" finishing 29th, "Expedition" right behind them in 28th and our favorites "Grand Design" finishing 42nd. Congratulations Guys!!

The most interesting and amazing thing in the quartet finals was that 1st place "Ringmasters" outscored the second place quartet by 236 points!!!! { see page 8}

Bruce Gray was honored for being a 50 year member of the society with a diamond studded pin. **Congratulations Bruce!**

Barbershop Harmony Society announces new CEO

The Great Northern Union Chorus is very proud that our President Marty Monson, has been chosen as the new CEO/Executive Director of the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS). The BHS represents nearly 30,000 members in the United States and Canada as well as 10 affiliate organizations in countries from Sweden to South Africa. Marty was named to the post after an extensive search process conducted by the Barbershop Harmony Society's Board of Directors and their search firm. Nearly 60 candidates, many with extensive musical and association management experience, were considered for the position. Marty has been president of the Great Northern Union for the past five years. His leadership has helped to significantly grow membership and transform the GNU into one of the Society's most dynamic organizations. During his tenure, Marty has built a very strong leadership team. As an organization, the GNU is as strong as it has ever been thanks in large part to Marty's leadership. His departure clearly leaves a void in the GNU. We will miss his friendship, musical talent, leadership and that infectious laugh on a weekly basis.

So while we are sad that he is leaving, we are very happy that he is bringing is considerable talent, energy and passion to the BHS headquarters in Nashville. There is no doubt in the minds of GNU members that he is the right man to lead the BHS into the future. The question is are they ready for the whirlwind that will be coming to Nashville?

We send Marty and his family to Nashville with all the love and support we have along with a big Thank You for everything they have done for the GNU!

Good Luck and Godspeed Marty, Amy, Stefany and Luke!





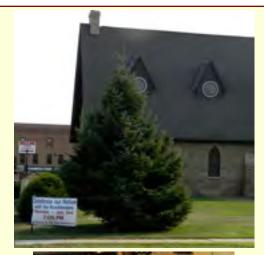
Twenty-three-year member Martin "Marty" Monson was named to the post after an extensive search process conducted by the Barbershop Harmony Society's Board of Directors and the search firm Genovese, Vanderhoof & Associates. Nearly 60 candidates, many with extensive musical and association management experience, were considered for the position.

"I am honored by the opportunity to serve the Barbershop Harmony Society in this capacity," Marty said. "I'm eager to get started." Society staff was informed of the decision on the morning of Friday, July 20. They will meet with the new CEO on Tuesday, July 24.

"The search committee was looking for a strong blend of skills, experiences, energy and vision as demonstrated in business and barbershop," added Shannon Elswick, Society executive vice president. "Marty's success at the chapter level is undeniable, his energy is boundless, and he brings a vision that we believe will engage current members and attract new ones. We also believe Marty will use the great resources we have as an organization to broaden and enhance overall awareness of barbershop harmony."

Marty, his wife, Amy, and their children, Stefany and Luke, will relocate to Nashville, Tenn. in the near future. The newly appointed CEO will meet with the Operations Team and deliver the keynote address at Harmony University on Sunday, July 29. He will officially begin his duties at the Society's Nashville headquarters on August 13.

Celebration of Our Nation









Outside signage and everyone enjoying a beverage and treats after the performance

A note from Doug about out performance at the Church of the Holy Communion in St. Peter July 2, 2012 at their annual Celebration of the Nation - Editor

To those of you who were able to attend, thank you so much. I'm so proud of you all. It's always a thrill to direct when we have good numbers and all parts are well represented. It was a sultry day to perform, which I think affected our ability to sing as well as we could, plus the acoustics felt different also. Nevertheless, all feedback was very positive, and I am thrilled we

were able to pull off the Patriotic Medley that well on such short notice.

Kudos to all, even those who weren't able to attend but were helping learn the song during rehearsals. I think it's a great song to have in our repertoire. I could only see the smiles of the pastor and his assistant, and they sure enjoyed it. Patriotic songs are always a hit, as are upbeat gospel songs.

Director - Doug Peterson



July 2 - Celebration of Our Nation - Performers

Church Performances



July 15th performers pose for a picture in front of the First Presbyterian Church Sing (read sign)

Thanks go out to Joel Botten and the rest of the guys that lined up the vast amount of churches and retirement centers that we sang at this July.

On July 15th we sang at: First Presbyterian, Zion Lutheran, First Methodist, in Lake Crystal. We then went to Messiah Lutheran and Oak Terrace East, North Mankato, and Pathstone Living in Mankato.

Thanks to a great group of singers and great people to sing for.



July 15th performers pose for a picture warming up in the First Presbyterian Church



Performing at Oak Terrace and Pathstone

More Church Performances



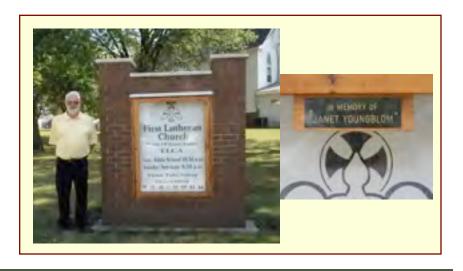
The July 22 Church Performers fueling up and warming up at Ron's Pine Street Cafe in Nicollet

The July 22nd Church Performances started out at Ron's Pine Street Cafe in Nicollet at 7:30 for a beverage and a roll. Ron made some great sticky Buns! Ron was also gracious enough to let us warm up in the cafe while his regular customers ate their breakfasts.

We thank everyone that had a hand in setting this all up as it went very smoothly and thanks to all of the Riverblenders that participated. When we performed at First Lutheran Church in Lafayette, at their after service festivities, I was able to take a picture of Chuck Youngblom as he stood next to the churches sign out front. Chuck financed the replacement of the wooden and glass section of the sign and dedicated it to his wife Janet. Pretty cool!

Also, in a picture below is a photo of Jeff Grimmer's shoes. He assures us that he has another pair just like this pair, at home.





Other Important Messages Sunday, August 5th Sing-out – St. Peter/Norseland Mankato Carpool – Happy Chef North Mankato at 7:00 AM

7:15 AM – Warm-up at Trinity Lutheran Church 8:00 AM - Sing at Trinity Lutheran, then coffee and rolls 9:00 AM - First Lutheran Church 9:30 AM - Union Presbyterian Church 9:55 AM - Scandia Grove Lutheran Church (end of service) 11:00 AM - St. Peters Catholic Church (end of Mass)

Our last summer sing-out - perhaps! Here's whats up for August 12th!!

6:30 AM meet at Gander Mountain Parking Lot - Mankato group 7:00 AM Warm-up at St. Teresa Catholic Church - Mapleton 7:30 Sing at Mass opening at 7:30 AM 8:00 AM Coffee and refreshments at Medo Lutheran 8:30 AM Sing at Medo Lutheran 9:00 AM Sing at United Church of Mapleton 9:30 AM Sing at Mapleton Community Home 10:00 AM Sing at Country Neighbors Assisted Living 10:30 AM Sing at Faith Bible Church in Mapleton

For all of you that were at rehearsal on July 24th, we would like to thank you for being such great hosts to our Grandsons. The guys, Nick, Sam and Charlie really had a great time. They got inspired to come and listen to us learn "Swing Down Chariot". They had some young boy exuberance, but tolerated our continual stops and starts very well. Water bottles turned into footballs during the break, but that burned off some energy that built up during the early evening. Frank, thanks for helping Charlie with some of the music while we were on the risers. Jeff, great touch having them involved in the TAG. It sure is easy to see why you

still are such a popular teacher in the Mankato

The boys night was capped-off at the Wine Cafe with Pizza and Mountain Dew. They didn't really need an energy boost! Surprisingly, they knew songs to pick when it was their turn at the Wine Cafe. All three boys expressed interest in coming again in the future. The lesson learned for Charles and I, is having our family members see us having fun with our hobby and then joining in. It's a great thing.

(The boys were also able to score an "I Sing button", thanks to Ron)

Ron Meyer and Charles Youngbloom



Duane Fraze and slimmed down Riverblender

Have any of you noticed this thin man singing and performing in the chorus? Well he is Duane Fraze. Duane had gastric surgery and is really looking great!! Congratulations Duane!



The best use of a wheel barrow that I have ever seen!

A Golden Dream With A Silver Lining

I heard the Riverblenders for the first time at the Nicollet County Fair in the early 1970's. I was very impressed, and wanted to be a part of them as I love to sing. I thought someday, when I retired, I would join them.

Norseland got a new Pastor and his name was Dave Wall. He also loves to sing. Dave soon became a member of the Riverblenders and often used the line on me "If you are too busy to sing you are too busy". So, I went along with Dave to practice and I joined the Riverblenders in 1983, the year before my son Luke,

We had our second child, and I felt again that life was getting too busy. So I quit the chorus and I knew I would be back someday. I missed the singing, but most of all the friendships I had made with so many neat guys. After a few years off, I rejoined. I often find that I am too busy, but I need the hobby. makes me feel good and is so refreshing.

As if life wasn't busy enough, I became a Soul Purpose man, thanks to Chuck Schubbe's positive encouragement. What a joy it has been to sing with We have had many golden Arv, Greg, and Sandy. moments singing as a quartet, not to mention the friendships we have made with each other.

My son Luke was also interested in singing with a chorus. Luke joined GNU. My whole family shares a love of music so we all followed GNU to Anaheim in 2009, and saw them get their Bronze Metal. Then on to Kansas City last year, to see them get a Silver Metal. Wow, was that impressive. Luke encouraged me to join him sing with GNU. "Come on Dad, you can do it too". I started going to GNU and I passed the auditions to join. Wow, what a relief I'm in! What a treat to sing with my son!

Now the work was just starting. I had all winter to get up to speed on the songs. You need to audition and pass each song before you can sing on the risers, the pressure was on. Everybody in the chorus had to go through evaluations, not only on singing, but also the choreography. I got lucky as Luke was one of the evaluators for choreography. At least I thought I was lucky! Luke got to evaluate me and he failed me twice on one of the contest songs.

Derek Glenna got to listen to my recording on one of the contest songs, and he failed me twice. I was ready to give up, to say I tried. I teased them both that I used to like them. They both assured me that I was close and shouldn't give up now, and they were right, I

It's hard to explain the feeling when you get on that International stage, but I had to fight back my emotions as we were lining up on the risers. Just before the curtains opened, Luke turned around and gave me a thumbs up. Needless to say the tears flowed. It's a moment I'll never forget and will always treasure. A Golden Dream with a Silver Metal lining.

I find myself singing now with the Riverblenders and GNU and Soul Purpose while I am farming. have heard me comment that my occupation is getting in the way of my hobby. "If you are too busy to sing are you too busy?" Singing has sure made a difference in my life. It's been a dream come true.

Byron Norell



Some Golden Words From The President

In the May/June Harmonizer, Society President, Alan Lamson, relates a story about the message in a fortune cookie: "Music melds all the separate parts

our bodies me to reflect on how affect me personally. say that I don't plan aren't just hollow enjoy (most of the Ron Meyer time) the interaction I



together". That got weekly rehearsals You've all heard me to retire. Those words, I do really

have with the folks I'm fortunate to work with. In just a few days, I'll be finishing my 35th year with New York Life. However, just like anything else in this world, it's not perfect, all the time. Many years ago, I would allow myself to skip practice if I wasn't feeling emotionally "up", on Tuesday evening. Then, I

discovered that it wasn't possible to go to rehearsal feeling lousy, and go home feeling the same way. Bingo, my magic elixir! The interaction with all of you, the music we learn and the many challenges we overcome in the learning process, leave me on a higher emotional level than when rehearsal started.

Most Wednesday mornings you'd hear me whistling at the office. Of course, if the "after" practice session at "The Wine Cafe" runs a little long on Tuesday evening, Wednesday morning may start just a little later.

It's my hope that each of us can attain that same level of enjoyment in this great hobby of "Barbershop Harmony". By the way, don't sell "The Wine Cafe" short, we have a lot of relaxing fun there.....stop by. President: Ron Meyer

Scoring from the Contest

PORT



LAND

1st Place - Ambassadors of Harmony - St. Charles, Missouri Pictures - Barbershop Harmony Society

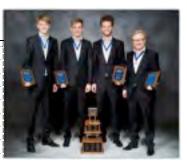


1st Place Quartet -Ringmasters-SNOBBS

Draw
1. 'Round Midnight
2. The Allies
3. TNS
4. Wheelhouse
5. Main Street

6. Musical Island Bo 7. Throwback 8. Ignition! 9. Momentum 10. Ringmasters OFFICIAL SCORING SUMMARY, BHS, International Convention International, Quartet Finals, Portland, Oregon, July 7, 2012





1st Place Collegiate Quartet Lemon Squeezy's

Singing Dale Comer CSD GE 8
Chad Guyton - DIX
David Mills - SUN

Dave Tautkus - FWD Chad Wulf - JAD

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John Santora - MAD Doug Arrington - RMD

Randy Meyer - FWD

16. Artistic License 17. Masterpiece 18. Da Capo 19. Hot Air Buffoons 20. Lemon Squeezy Music Steve Delehanty - MAD

Tom Gentry - JAD Jim Kahlke - EVG

Rod Sgrignoli - RMD Kirk Young - NED Dwain Brobst - SWD

Steve Janes - NED

Mark Kettner - DIX

Marty Lovick - EVG Gary Plaag - MAD



This event should be on every barbershopper's "bucket list." Coming to Harmony College means you can enjoy a potpourri of classes offered. You are not tied to a specific curriculum and have the freedom to enjoy whatever your heart desires. The members of the faculty are today's legends that we will be talking about tomorrow. The classes are more fun than you know what to do with and the extra curricular activities, the late night tagging, and all the Ice Cream you can eat will make you long for more hours in the day!





Calendar

*August 5, 2012 - Sunday

Church Performances
St. Peter/Norseland

August 7, 2012 - Tuesday

Christ The King

Regular Practice - 7 PM

*August 12, 2012 - Sunday

Church Performances

Mapleton & Medo

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August 14, 2012 - Tuesday

Christ The King

Board Meeting - 6 PM

Regular Practice - 7 PM

August 21, 2012 - Tuesday

Regular Practice - Christ The King

*August 25, 2012 -Saturday

Annual Riverblenders Auction

Jeff & Carol Grimmer's

August 28, 2012 - Tuesday

Christ The King

Regular Practice - 7 PM

*Oct. 26-27 – Fall Contest –

Rochester

*Nov. 18, 2012 - Sunday

Disney Show

Nicollet

April 13, 2012 - Saturday

Annual Show

Former Member Dave Giersdorf

is at home under hospice care.



RIVERBLENDER'S

BARBERSHOP BUCKS PROGRAM 2012

Bender Bucks will be awarded according to the following schedule:

\$1,000

- 1) Attending a regular meeting (on time) +\$1,000 bonus with name tag
- 2) Directing the chorus at a rehearsal (not regular directors)
- 3) Participating in a tag quartet/octet at a rehearsal4) Singing a polecat song in a quartet (correctly)
- 5) For every \$25.00 worth of ads sold for the show program
- 6) For every \$25.00 worth of tickets sold for the show
- 7) Helping to set up and tear down the risers at rehearsals
- 7) Setting up and tearing down the sound system at a performance
- 8) Volunteering to set up the rehearsal room on a regular or an extra practice (at "Christ The King" church only)
- 9) Singing a new chapter song off the paper 4 weeks after it is introduced

\$5,000

- 1) Bringing one guest to a rehearsal (first visit only)
- 2) Singing at a chorus performance (other than annual show or a contest)
- 3) Singing in a pickup quartet or octet at a performance (not show/contest)
- 4) Attending an extra chorus rehearsal
- 5) Attending a chorus social function +\$1,000 bonus singing in a Quartet
- 5) Hauling the risers to and from a performance (vehicle owner)
- 6) Putting together a program for a chapter meeting (one that we use) (not the regular PVP)
- 7) Hosting a guest at a regular rehearsal (no doubling up from #1)
- 8) Singing a new chapter song off the paper 3 weeks after it is introduced

\$10,000

- 1) Bringing two guests to a rehearsal (first visits only)
- 2) Attending a show dress rehearsal
- 3) Singing on our annual show
- 4) Singing in a contest chapter, division, district, or international
- 5) Singing in a pickup quartet or octet at a show/contest
- 6) Direct a chorus performance (not regular directors)
- 7) Become a new member
- 8) Becoming a board member (once a year)
- 9) Obtaining a chorus performance (not the Chorus Manager)
- 10) Participating in any aspect of Singing Valentines
- 11) Singing a new chapter song off the paper 2 weeks after it is introduced

The purpose of the barbershop bucks program is to create an interest in participating in all the activities of the chapter and to provide funds for the annual auction usually held in August. Your attendance and participation in our activities helps us become a better chapter. Earn bucks by your participation AND spend them at the auction - for all sorts of items, from prized possessions to junk. The list above is not complete - other extra efforts and good deeds may be rewarded from time to time. This years dollars are only good for this year.

NO LATE PAYMENTS - IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU GET PAID AT THE TIME OF ITEM COMPLETION!!!