

River Ramblings

Editor - Jeffrey Grimmer

Another Great Show!!!



Lots of Action During the Shows First Half of "Everybody Wants To Go To Heaven"

The 2013 Riverblenders Spring Show was a huge success thanks to so many who did so much. We sang our hearts out on the gospel medley that opened the show and we held the audience until we closed it. Chapter quartets and the VLQ sang best-ever renditions of their gospel songs and featured quartets, Grand Design and Lunchbreak, left the audience cheering for more. The show probably ran too long at nearly 2 ½ hours, but some folks told me the time just flew by because there was never a dull moment!

Every Riverblender deserves credit for making this show one of the best in recent memory. We dedicated ourselves to preparing a completely new set of gospel songs and every song had been polished to perfection by Jacob. We owe a huge thank you to him for keeping a sharp focus on the show and preparing us for the stage with his enthusiastic leadership. Tim Schubbe gave us a great script and Thom Schubbe led our stage preparation – like a couple of "hired guns" they came in and made it all happen so quickly. They recruited Matt Strum to take the "lead" and brought in Jerry Morton to create another great

quartet. Tim and Thom never cease to amaze me with all they do so well. Then there was all of that planning before the show.

The Show Committee began their work over a year ago when they contracted for the venue, made contact with potential guest quartets, chose a show theme, and began selecting the music. Steve Pettis did an outstanding job creating a beautiful show poster. He's also the person who printed all the tickets and assembled the show program with the ads, show notes, and program details. Ron Larson collected all of the ad copy and makes sure we get paid for the advertising. Jon Schwichtenberg handled all the tickets, house arrangements for ushers, and mailing lists – much of his work contributed to our record ticket sales this year.

And thanks to Bailey Blethen's advertising blitz in the Free Press and in many local papers, and Carl's idea to have a drawing in the Home Magazine we had great publicity.

There are so many people who looked after details – and I'm sure that I'll miss someone – but here's a partial list of those who come to mind:

Continued on Page 4

“Show Set Up”



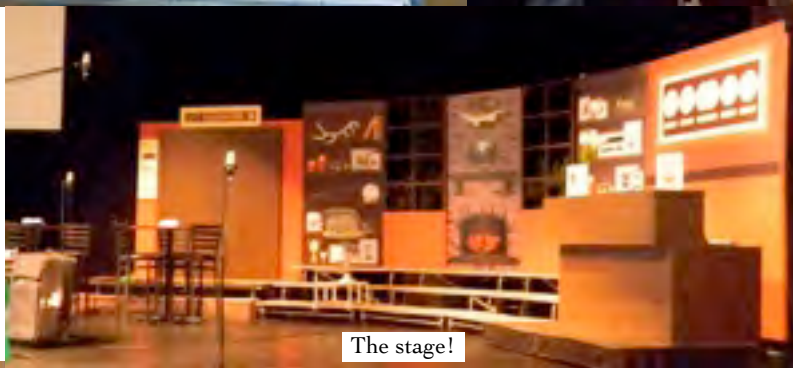
Stan and Tim moving in staging



Jerry and Willy setting up the backdrop



Sharon. K our church contact



The stage!



Jon - getting the tickets set

Photos-
J. Grimmer



Jeff set up our Lobby Display



Chris W. and the DVD Crew



Don the Gambler



Soul Purpose warming up the lobby

As always, many hands make for little work. Thanks to all of the members that came early to assemble the set and set up risers, etc. We are a very lucky chorus to have so many guys take part in all of our activities. We also have good people from Crossview to work with, all coordinated by Sharon Kleinsasser! THANKS SHARON!



The Three Musketeers-
Willy, Bruce & Len



Director Jacob Ritter warming up the Chorus

"Show Start Up & Performance"



Thom and Tim starting the show



The Glee Club - Feelin Fine



Opening Number: Train-Saints Medley

Photos-
R. Schoenstedt



Getting Riverbend on Stage



Getting RFD on Stage



Is Matt Dead or Alive?



Winer's My Lord What A Mornin

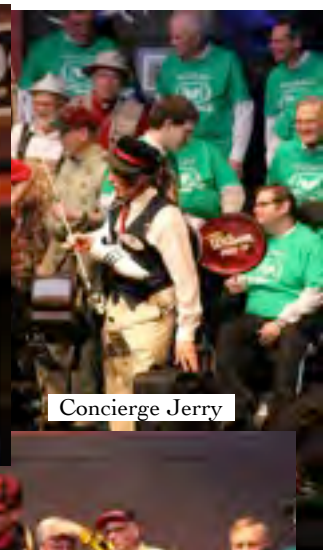
With a lot of work and a little luck, everyone got onto the stage, remembered their lines, and sang with a lot of heart and feeling! Thanks to Tim Schubbe's son Matt for his design work.



Show Chair Arv



Riverbend coming on stage



Concierge Jerry



RFD



Soul Purpose



Preacher Chuck Brooks

- Carol and Gerry Larson – what a great local talent for our show
- Willy Derner – created another beautiful set
- Chuck Schubbe – kept us “glowing” – before, in-between, and after
- Jeff Grimmer – a couple of very memorable Award of Harmony presentations
- Stan Bruss – made sure that we had everything – and then left the place as we found it!!
- Bruce Gray – coordinated with our featured quartets
- Doug Peterson – made music and quartet arrangements
- Magic, RFD, Riverbend, Oh Brother, and Soul Purpose – all new music – we thank you!

- Ron Meyer – our leader who made sure we had everything we needed

As you can see, it's a team effort and every Riverblender should be very proud of the part that you played to make this year's show a huge success. From your great ad sales, ticket sales, poster placements and personal promotions – to a great show – you did it all. It was a pleasure to see our show “unfold” before audiences and to see and hear their reactions. We provided a wonderful entertainment package to our community and I thank all of you for making it happen and sharing with me in this great hobby we call Barbershop.

Arv Zenk - 2013 Show Chairman



Matt Calling Home

"Second half"



Thom & Jeff Prizes



Harmony Award Recipient
Jeanne Makela



Harmony Award Recipient
Denny Wahlstrom



"Grand Design"



"Lunch Break"



"Riverblenders" Performing Their Contest Package

The end to a great show. The announcing of two Awards of Harmony one to Jeanne Makela and the other to Denny Wahlstrom! The first time in 33 years that we have given out two Awards of Harmony in one year. Congratulations to both of the recipients on well deserved awards!!

Remember to keep your scripts and try to remember your lines as we will be doing this show again this fall in Gaylord, Minnesota. More information to follow.

Thanks to our two quartets, "Lunch Break" and "Grand Design" for doing such an outstanding job. Standing ovations at both shows!!!

And thanks go out to sound man Chris W. and the DVD Crew for their fine work.

AFTERGLOW ANYONE????



FUN! FUN!! FUN!!!

FUN !!



**2013 Spring Convention
& International Prelims
May 3 - 4, 2013**

**Maranatha Hall
Northwestern
College**

3003 SNELLING AVENUE NO.
ST. PAUL, MN 55113



The headquarters hotel is the
Country Inn & Suites located at
2905 Snelling Ave. No.
Roseville, MN 55113

Wally Brink
Convention Chairman
(612) 254-5800
wbrink@hotmail.com

Calendar

May 3-4, 2013 - Friday/Saturday

Southwest/10,000 Lakes - Int. Pre-Lims

Hilltop - see page 9

May 7, 2013 - Tuesday

Loyola High School Band Room

Regular Practice - 7:00 PM

May 14, 2013 - Tuesday

Board Meeting - 6:00PM

Loyola High School Band Room

Regular Practice - 7:00 PM

May 21, 2013 - Tuesday

Loyola High School Band Room

Regular Practice - 7:00 PM

May 28, 2013 - Tuesday

Christ The King Church

1st Learn To Sing Program 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Regular Practice - 8:45 PM

June 4, 11, 18, 19 - Tuesdays

Christ The King Church

Learn To Sing Programs 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Regular Practice - 8:45 PM

June 9, 2013 - Sunday

Churches - Mankato

June 23, 2013 - Sunday

Churches - St. Peter

July 1-7, 2013

International Convention

Toronto, Canada

July 3, 2013 - Wednesday

"Learn To Sing" performances

Christ The King & St. Peter Catholic Churches

August 14, 2013 - Wednesday

Orange City Iowa Show - 5:30PM

(We will be taking a bus- please plan now!)

More information coming soon

December 1, 2013 - Sunday

Holiday Concert

Mankato - St. Peter

-Thom Schubbe-

thomschubbe@gmail.com

-Byron Norell-

bnjduet@mvtvwireless.com

Other Happenings



The Guys Celebration of Life at Belgrade Methodist Church

If you can believe it, a last minute call came to the chorus for a soloist or a group of guys to sing for the Celebration of Life for a long time Riverblenders supporter "Roberta Doris Wittmers".

Even after being very tired from the show, the guys in the picture above, ventured out

the Sunday after the show (April 14th) and sang three songs. They did an outstanding job! The minister and both of Doris's daughters came by to tell us that we did a great job and were a real hit at the celebration of Doris's life. It was our pleasure to help them out. Jeff Grimmer



RFD at Wells

Later the same day, (Sunday, April 14th), RFD ventured down south to Wells. We performed to about 100 people at a local church for a fund raiser for their Sunday School Programs.

We sang for approximately 45 minutes to a very exuberant crowd. We thought that all of the excitement was for us, but, right after us, Elvis sang and gyrated all over the place to the hoots and howls of the crowd.

We must have done a good job because they fed us after our performance.

It's always a lot of fun to sing for a good cause and a great audience! Jeff Grimmer

Tuesday, April 23, Larry Monson, a member of the International Staff, came to Mankato to help out the Riverblenders. Larry is an old teacher, friend, and mentor of our Director Jacob Ritter.

Larry worked us really hard and pointed out and worked on a plethora of problems that the chorus has. Everything from watching the director to singing in tune was discussed. We were also told that we do sing very well!!!

From the talk down at the Wine Cafe, the guys thought that it was really worth while and it helped the chorus a great deal. **Thanks LARRY!!!** - Editor



Larry Monson and Jacob Ritter

Upcoming Events to Take Note Of

Mark Your Calendars

for the following Sunday's this summer:

June 9th-Mankato by Joel Botten

June 23-St. Peter by Bruce Gray

July 14-Lake Crystal/N. Mankato by Wayne Hughes and Joel Botten

July 21-Waseca/Janesville by Jacob Ritter

August 11-Mapleton Medo by Ron Conrad and Chuck Schubbe

August 25-Mankato by Joel Botten

Other Summer Dates:

May 28th Rehearsal moves to CTK – Got your guest for "Learn to Sing A Capella"?

Mankato Moondogs – ??

July 3rd – St. Peter – Veterans Tribute Concert/afterglow at American Legion

August 14 – Orange City, IA – Bus trip

Even more dates and information on the Newsletter Calendar and the official Riverblenders

Website www.singmankto.com

TAKE A LOOK!

14 Health Benefits of Singing



1. Reduces stress
2. Improves mood
3. Lowers blood pressure
4. Improves breathing
5. Reduces perceived pain
6. Boosts immune system
7. Improves sense of rhythm
8. Promotes learning in children
9. Forges comforting memories
10. Promotes communal bonding
11. Provides comfort
12. Motivates
13. Empowers people
14. Promotes well-being



(the golfing life)

Returning to the Game

Despite health setbacks
Mankato lawyer
Bailey Blethen
worked his way back to
the game he loves.

By Jon Roe

About the time Bailey Blethen, now 75, was turning six, the scary summer illness was polio. Blethen recalls having trouble walking as a first grader and being the target of teasing during a second-grade summer camp when he had to ride a horse rather than walk in order to stay up with the other campers.

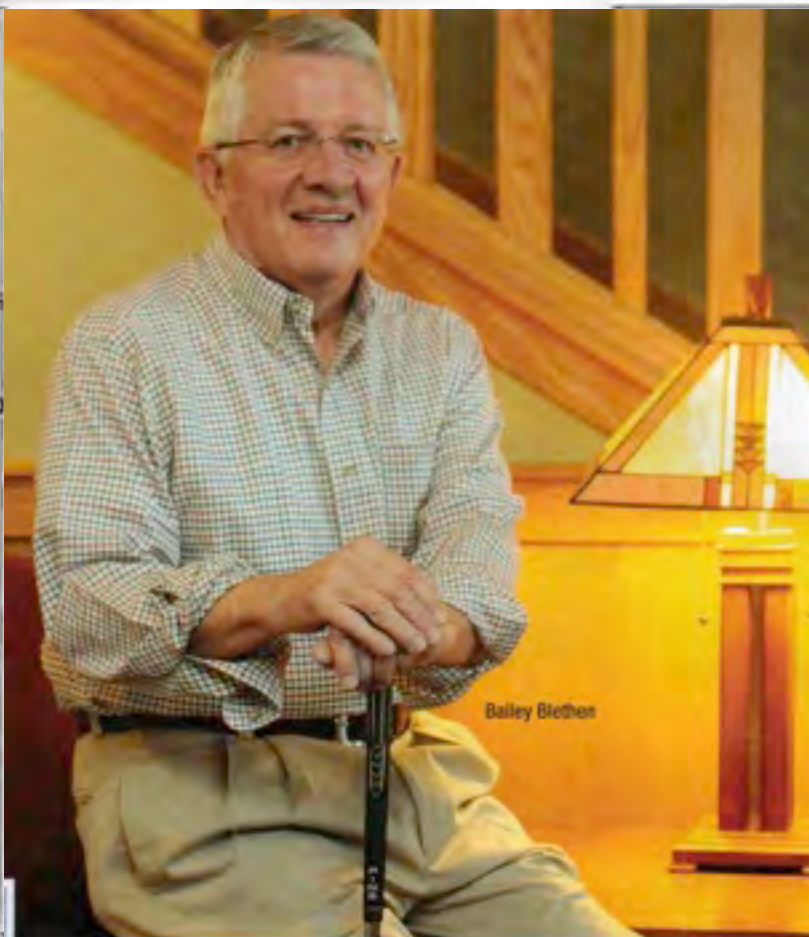
"It was really tough for me to participate with the other kids," Blethen says. "But whenever my parents took me to the doctor to see what was wrong, the doctor would always say that it wasn't polio. That made my parents feel better, but it didn't help me get any better physically."

By the end of second grade, however, whatever had been ailing Blethen had disappeared. And from then on, he spent his early summer years watching his dad play golf, caddicing at Mankato Golf Club and teaching himself to play.

Blethen's high school team won its conference championship three straight years; Blethen took third individually at the state high school tournament as a junior. As a pre-med major at Brown University, he didn't go out for the college golf team—until his senior year, after he had switched majors and started studying American civilizations.

"I didn't do very much the one year I did play," Blethen recalls. "And I didn't play much when I came back home and went to law school. But I did start to practice more about the time I was studying for the bar exam."

Thus began a very satisfactory, if not



Bailey Blethen

"I'd be lying if I said I could play the way I used to. But it's exciting just to be playing again."

heralded, amateur golf career for Blethen. Over the next 40 years, he won six or seven championships at Mankato Golf Club as well as a handful of city championships and somewhere around 30 shortstop tournaments around the state. He was a worthy opponent at The Resorters, competed in numerous State Ams and State Opens, and advanced through local qualifying for the U.S. Open a couple of times.

In 1984, however, Blethen noticed that his legs were giving him problems again. He cut back on his practice routine, even went to riding in a cart some times. "I was playing in a spring tournament at the club, and I didn't know if I was going to make it after 10 or 11 holes," Blethen says. "I just couldn't do the walking anymore."

"The doctors said it was post-polio

syndrome," he says. "The muscles that had been served by the nerves that were affected when I was in first grade just didn't want to work anymore. I was done playing golf for the next 21 years."

In 2004, while visiting a physical therapist, Blethen was advised that a hip replacement might relieve his condition. He had both hips replaced—one in 2004, the other in 2005—and noticed almost immediate improvement. By 2006, he was back on the golf course.

"I'd be lying if I said I could play the way I used to play. I knew I wouldn't get back to that level again. I hit the ball shorter off the tee, the short game has gone to pieces, and my handicap is trending to 15 or higher. But it's pretty exciting just to be back playing again."

Award of Harmony Recipient Jeanne Makela

This mother of 5 comes from a musical family and learned how to play the piano when she was quite young. Then she taught herself how to play the organ using the organ at her church. This was the beginning of her wonderful life with music. Please welcome Jeanne Makela to the stage.

The list of her accomplishments of caring and support is very long! I will mention a few of them.

Church Organist - Since 1970 she has played for almost ever Catholic churches in Mankato until she settled into Holy Rosary Catholic Church in 1984 - she has played at masses and holy day events for over 25 years.

Weddings and funerals - She has over 1000 under her belt - (60 funerals alone in 2012)

Trained/Mentored/ & Worked Musically with-

Cantors

Kid's Choirs

Sunday School Classes

Junior High School Choirs

She has been an accompanist at school vocal contests

Has worked with the Hospice Choir and "Gift of Music"

Performances - These occur every week sometimes as many as 3 in one day!

She has been and continues to be a very busy person!

A few comments that were sent along with her information are:

"She doesn't have the word NO in her vocabulary"

"She is the most dedicated musician I have ever seen or worked with"

"She is amazing! I don't know how she does it all!"

And lastly, a comment from her family, who knows her best -

"Music was a gift from MOM to all of us at home. She is by far the best MOM & Grandmother to her 5 children and 10 Great grand-children. She has brought much love, music, and happiness to all of their lives."

And I believe this holds true to the thousands of people she has served.

Congratulations Jeanne on a well deserved award.

Award of Harmony Recipient Denny Wahlstrom

This gentleman came to Mankato in 1975 and started working for the local TV station KEYC. He continued working there for almost 40 years!

Please welcome **Denny Wahlstrom** to the stage.

Denny became the general manager of KEYC in 1988, taking over from Hap Halligan. He has been lucky enough to work with the same owners for over 30 years - United Communication Corporation from Kenosha, Wisconsin.

He is a great supporter of public service. After the Federal mandated public service law became obsolete about 15 years ago, he and KEYC decided to continue to supply free airtime to a plethora of non-profit organizations in the area!

Denny has been at the helm through many changes at KEYC:

- Mono to Stereo sound
- Analog to digital
- and the addition of a FOX channel

His job at KEYC involved - he just retired - was the hiring of new people, staff evaluation and feedback, staff meetings, handling the national advertising accounts, assisting in programming decisions, managing the budget, was accountable for things that go right and things that don't go according to plan, he was involved with the finalization of plans to create FOX Mankato, and he built an amazing nurturing culture at the station.

Outside of work, Denny continues with his supportive, warm, and giving ways. Several of the positions he has filled are:

- Member of the Downtown Kiwanis Club**, serving on various committees
- Salvation Army** board and was a board director
- Mankato Symphony Orchestra** - board member and chairman
- Minnesota Broadcasters Association** - board chair and member
- MSU Social Behavior Science Department** - board member
- South Central College** - Advisory board
- Church** - Council, Senior Choir, and other activities
- Greater Mankato Cavaliers** - working with Envision 2020

Several comments received:

- "He's very civic minded. He does so much for the community"
- "He has built this amazing nurturing culture" - at KEYC
- "He has a reputation for being a great guy"
- "He tries to purchase locally grown items"

Family - Denny is a great family man! He has a very supportive and positive attitude and a great sense of humor!!

Congratulations to Denny Wahlstrom - Award of Harmony recipient