

**Congrats to 2010
Barbershopper
of the Year
Scott
Gandswindt!**

Expressions!

*A publication of the
Midwest Vocal Express
Male A cappella Chorus*

**Vol. IV Issue 1
January 2011**

UP & COMING!

Guest Night	Jan. 31
Love & the Arts Show-Tosa East	Feb. 12
Coaching—Sean Devine	Feb. 28
Coaching—Kim Hulbert	March 20-21
Coaching—Brent Graham	April 17-18
Division Contest	April 30
Spring Celebration Show-Greendale High School	May 20

Guilt-Free . . . Remarks from Bel Canto Director Richard Hynson

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from Richard Hynson's speech at the MVE Awards banquet held on January 14 at the Harmony Inn. A brief biography of Mr. Hynson appears on page 3.

Hey. Psst. I am going to let you in on a little secret. Are you ready for this? I sing. In public. And I LIKE it!

Have you ever felt that way? Have you felt as if you had to hide the fact or make excuses for loving to sing? Have you felt a little guilty for loving the thrill of performance and the intense, energizing focus demanded in rehearsal? After all, there are so many important, responsible things pressing on you, demanding your time and attention. Why would you 'waste' your time with something as frivolous as singing?

Well, let me tell you why!

For one thing, it makes you feel better.

Choral singing is NOT simply an entertainment alternative, to be compared with social networking, video games, or reality TV. It is a vital, ongoing force for essential wellness, contributing to physical, mental, and spiritual health. Okay, and it's fun!

Recent neurological studies indicate that **music, specifically singing, plays an essential role** in language and emotional development in the human species. A mounting body of scientific evidence suggests that **singing contributes significantly to the**

physical, mental, and social development of babies and young children.

On the other end of the aging spectrum, singing in choruses contributes to the retention of physical, mental, and social skills of seniors. Senior singers report benefits such as enhanced ability to breathe and greater lung capacity, lower blood pressure, improved balance and coordination (resulting in fewer falls) They report fewer visits to the doctor, less use of medication, enhanced concentration, emotional growth and expression, elevated mood, and positive social interaction. Wow! All that from choral singing!

While choral music's effect on the beginning and ending stages of life is being researched, that same effect on humanity's longest life-stage—adulthood—is largely ignored. In fact, society discourages general participation by adults in art and music-making.

Ask a class of kindergartners if they can sing, dance, or paint, and all respond with an enthusiastic "yes!" Ask a group of high school students and a small group will timidly raise their hands while the rest ROLL their eyes. Pose that same question to a class of college freshmen, and the response is ... "Huh? Me?" A similarly sized group of adults in the work force simply don't respond. Why is that?

As members of our American, product-oriented society bent on the need for concrete results,

adults in America are discouraged from participating in art unless they can produce it at an extraordinarily high level, and even make money doing so. While children are encouraged to perform in pageants, plays, and school concerts, and to produce "refrigerator art" that is proudly displayed by parents, adults are mocked for wasting time if they choose to do the same.

By the time most people have reached adulthood, they have lost all personal connection with artistic expression and so find themselves unable to relate to, or even to care about, the emotional impact of art on their lives. Instead, adults work, they take care of their families, and they entertain themselves... generally in front of a screen of some sort. If they do go to a concert, they expect to sit in the dark and passively observe a performance given by an elite sub-class of highly trained, professional artists.

That's where you come in. You have broken society's mold. Psst. You sing. In public. And You LIKE it!!!

You and I know already that singing is good for us over-worked, over-committed adults. Doctors and researchers in ever larger numbers are coming to the same conclusion.

Do you remember when you first started singing as an adult? You probably sang in high school,

Continued on page 3

2010

Award Winners

President's Award

Bo Gibson

Directors Award

Steve Johnson

Rookie of the Year

Mark Trevor Ranum

Do It Award

Steve Johnson

Thank You, Mr. President . . . Remarks from Jim Labelle

It's been another great year to be MVE!

Choosing to skip international this year to focus on improving our singing, repertoire building, and growing membership took a lot of courage, and it is requiring a lot of hard work to succeed.

Several of us attended the Land O'Lakes District Leadership Academy last weekend in River Falls. Despite the -23 temperature, we were inspired by the Chuck Greene seminar: "Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meetings." Members and prospective members, considering whether to renew membership with, or join, a chapter-based organization like ours, desire and look for a variety of Attractive Value Characteristics.

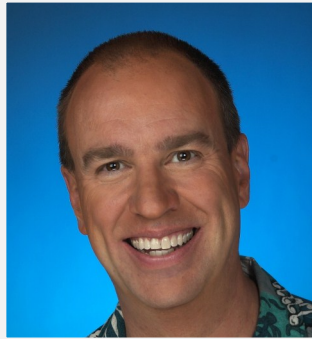
There are eight of these that are so strongly sought after that they are deal-makers. If any of them are weak or only average, they become deal breakers!

The crucial characteristics members seek are:

- Appreciated and sought out for their talents
- Given a highly efficient return on their investment of time, energy and resources

This organization gives all members opportunities for:

- Creativity and participation in imagining new or improved results
- Participative leadership with the power to influence the



MVE Board President Jim Labelle

pace, content and direction of the organization's life

- Skill, talent and knowledge growth

This organization has:

- Astute and trustworthy managers and leaders with a succession plan
- Peer appeal—it's cool enough to invite friends
- Upbeat ambiance, interwoven with fun, humor and positive attitudes

The board, performance team, and entire membership will be examining the way we do what we do to make sure we have a program that guys want to stay with, and guests want to join.

We're already doing a lot of things right, and it's only going to get better.

Brad Charles is back with the MVE, and will give each member a free voice lesson.

There are seven new songs in the pipeline for us to prepare and add to our repertoire.

A variety of coaches will help us all achieve the high quality of performance that we desire.

Our Valentine's show is at a new venue for us, Tosa East High School, on February 12th.

Calls have also come in from two other regional venues we've never performed in for future shows.

Grant and Josh will continue to hold our feet to the fire so that we ring every note, from every man, every time.

BHS Members value chapters that allow them the opportunity for creativity, participative leadership, and growth in knowledge & talent.

We will be holding chapter-wide meetings to devise new ways to promote the chapter, reach prospective new members, and grow our ranks. The next test for this will be our guest night on January 31st.

I challenge each and every one of you to step up with new ideas, take on new tasks, and re-dedicate yourself to the chapter.

I look forward to another year as your president, and will strive, along with the board, to continue to provide an atmosphere that is conducive to our continued success.



Richard Hynson has served as music director of the Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra since 2006. This year also marks Hynson's 23rd season as music director of the Bel Canto Chorus and Orchestra.

Also in demand as a guest conductor, Hynson's past engagements include performances the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, the Skylight Opera Theatre, and the Racine, Sheboygan, and Waukesha Symphony Orchestras. He has conducted the Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra in a Concert on the Square in Madison, Wisconsin.

He also has conducted the popular outdoor music festival, Gathering on the Green, in Mequon, Wis., for the last two summers. Hynson is in much demand locally and nationally as a clinician and has led multiple choir clinics in Boston, Mass.; Lexington, Ky.; Washington, D.C.; and the greater Milwaukee area.

In addition to his work as a conductor and educator, Hynson is a composer. His written contributions include a substantial body of published choral, vocal, and ensemble works, many of which he has recorded with Bel Canto.

and maybe even in college; but then, after graduation life got complicated and you plunged into RESPONSIBILITY.

Then, one day you saw an audition notice, or a friend invited you to a rehearsal, and you decided to try it. Almost at

once, the discoveries began to come. You discovered that, even as an adult, you could still learn something fundamentally new and different, and *enjoy the process*. You found yourself energized by the rehearsals and excited about the performances. You were learning new and challenging things like vowel shapes and tuning. Did you ever think that you would memorize songs again?

You realized that you were experiencing improved physical and mental health benefits; everyone here knows about the exhilaration of the "rehearsal high." You arrive at rehearsal tired, beaten down, maybe even a little crabby. The rehearsal starts... and time flies by! Suddenly it's over, and you are pumped, reinvigorated, and perhaps ready for a post-rehearsal libation with your fellow singers. You feel challenged and motivated, and that positive energy carries over into the rest of your life.

More importantly, while you were making those discoveries, busily expanding your personal envelope by learning good vocal technique and ensemble, you were also working cooperatively and building relationships with like-minded men.

That's the true essence of choral singing. When each brings his best, at the same time submitting to the needs of the ensemble in order to create something beautiful, then a kind of ideal social order is achieved. Not only is the product greater than the sum of its individual parts, but everyone involved is uplifted and enriched.

What else can you call it but life-changing? And this change, this personal transformation communicates to your audience in a compelling, expressive way.

Ladies and gentlemen, singing is not frivolous entertainment. It is important—I would even suggest necessary—to our full development as adults. Don't believe that? Let me offer this as evidence.

You all remember the tragic morning of September 11, 2001. You probably remember exactly where you were and how you first heard about the attacks. But what I really want you to remember is how our country responded. The first act of Congress was not to pass emer-

gency legislation or to meet in hurried special session. No. Congress's first act was to gather on the steps of the Capitol building and sing "God bless America." In New York City and around the country, people gathered at fire and police stations, held each other, and sang together spontaneously.

In the days and nights to follow, churches and synagogues were filled with people who sang hymns and songs of mourning, of hope, and of reconciliation. Concerts were hastily organized. My chorus, Bel Canto, joined other Milwaukee music groups in our community's performance just a few days after the tragedy.

Our first public response to 9/11 throughout the country was to make music together. While the US Military was securing our airspace, we were beginning the healing process by singing.

I'd like to end by quoting from a remarkable speech by Karl Paulnack, a pianist and dean of the Boston Conservatory of Music. This excerpt concludes his welcome address to incoming freshmen and their parents, and it is just as relevant to you. He said:

"I expect you not only to master music; I expect you to save the planet. If there is a future wave of wellness on this planet, of harmony, of peace, of an end to war, of mutual understanding, of equality, of fairness, I don't expect it will come from a government, a military force or a corporation.

I no longer even expect it to come from the religions of the world, which together seem to have brought us as much war as they have peace. If there is a future of peace for humankind, if there is to be an understanding of how these invisible, internal things should fit together, I expect it will come from the artists, because that's what we do..."

That's what YOU do each time you gather to sing together. You promote wellness, harmony, peace, and mutual understanding. Gentlemen, together, one song at a time, we are saving our planet.

God bless America. Thank you.

Midwest Vocal Express

MALE A CAPPELLA CHORUS • GREENDALE, WI

Celebrating over 20 years of Storytelling Through Song!



The Midwest Vocal Express is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts; and a CAMPAC grant from Milwaukee County.

Visitors are always welcome to our Monday night rehearsals at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 6705 Northway, Greendale, Wisconsin. Mailing address : PO Box 543, Greendale, WI 53129

Phone 888.240.4446

Expressions is a publication for the members, family & friends of the *Midwest Vocal Express* Male A Cappella Chorus.

Please direct any comments, inquiries, or content suggestions to Randy.Will@mve.org.

The MVE is the Greendale, Wisconsin Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society dedicated to providing its members, audiences & community with:

- Entertainment Excellence
- Education in this unique American Musical Style
- Altruistic Service

www.mve.org

www.facebook.com/MidwestVocalExpress

twitter.com/MidwestVocalExp



Leadership The MVE Board of Directors for 2011

The Board of Directors for the MVE was officially installed at the annual banquet held on Friday, January 14 at the Harmony Inn.

Their dedication to making the MVE a premier chorus in the Barbershop Harmony Society—not to mention one of the most professionally run—cannot be adequately measured.

Please extend them your congratulations and thanks. They always welcome your constructive suggestions, concerns and contributions.

President
Jim LaBelle

Musical Director
Grant Wilson

Immediate Past President
Larry Lewis

Treasurer
Andre Olivas

Secretary
Fred Graskamp

VP-Music & Performance
Josh Umhoefer

VP-Membership
Tom Weber

VP-Marketing
Matt McClellan

Board Members at Large

Matt Nagle

Mark Trevor Ranum

Brian Younger