

# FROM THE EDGE

A periodic Newsletter of  
the High Country Barbershop Chorus,  
White Mountains Arizona Chapter



Vol. XI, No.5

<http://wmhcbc.com>

June, 2010

## From the President Denny Shankland

Every month, Jerry Schrunk challenges me to write an article for our newsletter. This month I am cheating, thanks to Carolyn



Morrow, Jim Morrow's wife, who thought enough of me to send this to me. It is long, sorry Jerry, but worth the read.

**Together Everyone Accomplishes More**  
**Denny Shankland**  
**President**

### Words of Wisdom about Music

This is an excerpt from a welcome address given to parents of incoming students at The Boston Conservatory on September 1, 2004, by **Dr. Karl Paulnack, Director of the Music Division.**

One of my parents' deepest fears, I suspect, is that society would not properly value me as a musician, that I wouldn't be appreciated. I had very good grades in high school, I was good in science and math, and they imagined that as a doctor or a research chemist or an engineer, I might be more appreciated than I would be as a musician. I still remember my mother's remark when I announced my decision to apply to music school-she said, "you're wasting your SAT scores!" On some level, I think, my parents were

not sure themselves what the value of music was, what its purpose was. And they loved music: they listened to classical music all the time. They just weren't really clear about its function. So let me talk about that a little bit, because we live in a society that puts music in the "arts and entertainment" section of the newspaper, and serious music, the kind your kids are about to engage in, has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with entertainment, in fact it's the opposite of entertainment. Let me talk a little bit about music, and how it works.

The first people to understand how music really works were the ancient Greeks. And this is going to fascinate you: the Greeks said that music and astronomy were two sides of the same coin. Astronomy was seen as the study of relationships between observable, permanent, external objects, and music was seen as the study of relationships between invisible, internal, hidden objects. Music has a way of finding the big, invisible moving pieces inside our hearts and souls and helping us figure out the position of things inside us. Let me give you some examples of how this works.

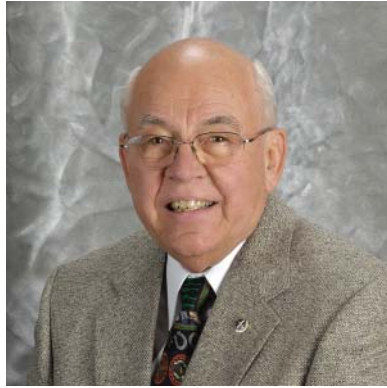
One of the most profound musical compositions of all time is the Quartet for the End of Time written by French composer Olivier Messiaen in 1940. Messiaen was 31 years old when France entered the war against Nazi Germany. He was captured by the Germans in June of 1940 and imprisoned in a prisoner-of-war camp.

He was fortunate to find a sympathetic prison guard who gave him paper and a place to compose, and fortunate to have musician colleagues in the camp, a cellist, a violinist, and a clarinetist. Messiaen wrote his quartet with

"From the President", cont.on page 3

## From the Director: Doc Dockendorf

I want to take another opportunity to congratulate the chorus on the fine job you did on the two songs we presented at the recent Arizona



Divisional Convention. It was rewarding to receive the feedback from the judges and the audience alike, that they enjoyed our performance.

Having said that, of course we have lots of room for improvement, especially in the area of the Presentation Category. Do not feel that there is a big separation from what the judges see and tell us, and what our audience can see at all of our performances. The difference is that our audiences really do not give us constructive feedback. Here, summarized, is what the Presentation Category is looking for and evaluating:

### **Presentation Category**

*“These judges evaluate how effectively a performer brings the song to life. They respond to both the visual and vocal aspects of the presentation, to evaluate the interaction of these aspects in creating the image of the song, as well as everything about the performance that contributes to emotional impact upon the audience.”*

So the Presentation Judge is sitting as an audience member, trained in measuring how effective we are in bringing the music to life, and recording those areas of the music

where we either have done a good job, or areas where we were just singing words and notes with little to no feeling, and little to no positive impact on the audience. Having spent 25 years in the judging area (we used to call it the “pit”), I have seen choruses, not unlike ours, that do not individually have an internal feeling for the music, and included many singers that looked like “automatons” singing with a blank stare, as if they were internally watching the notes and words go by on the sheet of music.

It is the Music Committee’s intention to improve our visual presentation. By the time you read this, you will have seen us recording the chorus on videotape, and showing you what you look like as you sing the songs. On May 11, you sang thru the entire show, with **Chris Stevens** reading thru the script, proving that for the most part you know the words and notes that you are to sing on each of the show songs, so we have two months to make huge improvements in our presentation of the music we are singing. Part of this effort will be to add staging to several of the songs, with costuming, and props that enhance the story we are telling, e.g. the cowboy scene, with the fire and cooking utensils, and dialogue, as well as **Alan Johnson** performing as “Ragtime Cowboy Joe”, and the College scene with tables, portraying the Temple Bar and our college guys (Whiffenpoofs) toasting to Louis, the owner of the bar. But we can’t just depend on “gimmicks” to pull off the believability of the songs; we have to start feeling what it is the song is about, and internalizing the message we are trying to present, by adding, both physically and facially, the emotions we intend to create.

(“From the Director”, cont. on page 3)

(“From the Director”, cont. from page 2)

I have encouraged you in the past to stand in front of a mirror, and sing your part to the songs, while you observe what your face looks like, and making your face show various emotions like, happiness, sadness, surprise, love, tenderness, and laughter. I have to suspect that you have not tried to do this, based on how blank most of your faces are when you are singing. Blank is not an emotion, it is the deer in the headlights look, and all it projects to the audience is that “the lights are on, but no one is home” inside that singer. Start visualizing yourself as an actor while we are on the risers and display an emotion by changing how your face looks. You will find if you give an honest try to make a facial expression believable, you just have to add some head and body to it.

I also recommend that while watching TV, including the news, that you become aware of how important facial expression is to put across the story, and especially watch good singers and visualize how ineffective it would be to have a blank face while they are singing a love song, or whatever else they are singing. Also watch for head and body emphasis that supports the facial expressions.

You can improve your visual presentation, and I challenge you to take this seriously – your fellow singers are depending on you, as is your director.

**Doc**

(“From the President”, cont. from page 1)

these specific players in mind. It was performed in January 1941 for four thousand prisoners and guards in the prison camp. Today it is one of the most famous masterworks in the repertoire.

Given what we have since learned about life in the Nazi camps, why would anyone in his right mind waste time and energy writing or playing music? There was barely enough energy on a good day to find food and water, to avoid a beating, to stay warm, to escape torture-why would anyone bother with music? And yet-even from the concentration camps, we have poetry, we have music, we have visual art; it wasn't just this one fanatic Messiaen; many, many people created art. Why? Well, in a place where people are only focused on survival, on the bare necessities, the obvious conclusion is that art must be, somehow, essential for life. The camps were without money, without hope, without commerce, without recreation, without basic respect, but they were not without art. Art is part of survival; art is part of the human spirit, an unquenchable expression of who we are. Art is one of the ways in which we say, “I am alive, and my life has meaning.”

In September of 2001 I was a resident of Manhattan. On the morning of September 12, 2001 I reached a new understanding of my art and its relationship to the world. I sat down at the piano that morning at 10 AM to practice as was my daily routine; I did it by force of habit, without thinking about it... I lifted the cover on the keyboard, and opened my music, and put my hands on the keys and took my hands off the keys. And I sat there and thought, does this even matter? Isn't this completely irrelevant? Playing the piano right now, given what happened in this city yesterday, seems silly, absurd, irreverent, and pointless. Why am I here? What place has a musician in this moment in time? Who needs a piano player right now? I was completely lost.

And then I, along with the rest of New York, went

“From the President”, cont.on page 5

This is turning out to be quite a year for the **High Country Chorus**. Not only do we have a new web site (wmhcbc.com) and blog (wmhcbc.com/blog) but the chorus has been very busy with service to the community.



Please see the article by **Steve Voller** on pages 8 and 9 for a review of all of these activities. I have included some photos of these events throughout this issue of the newsletter.

And, how about “Most Improved Chorus” and qualifying for District?

*From the Edge* is “your” newsletter, so don’t be bashful. Go ahead, write an article for a future issue. Also, your ideas to improve this newsletter are always welcome!

We are very fortunate to have the many contributors who submit articles and the great photos to our publication. We appreciate you, keep up the good work.

**Jerry**

**Arizona Division  
Most Improved Chorus, 2010  
The High Country Chorus**



**Singing at the Elk’s Car Show**



“From the President”, cont.from page 3

through the journey of getting through that week. I did not play the piano that day, and in fact I contemplated briefly whether I would ever want to play the piano again. And then I observed how we got through the day.

At least in my neighborhood, we didn't shoot hoops or play Scrabble. We didn't play cards to pass the time, we didn't watch TV, we didn't shop, and we most certainly did not go to the mall. The first organized activity that I saw in New York, on the very evening of September 11th, was singing. People sang. People sang around fire houses, people sang “We Shall Overcome”. Lots of people sang America the Beautiful. The first organized public event that I remember was the Brahms Requiem, later that week, at Lincoln Center, with the New York Philharmonic. The first organized public expression of grief, our first communal response to that historic event, was a concert. That was the beginning of a sense that life might go on. The US Military secured the airspace, but recovery was led by the arts and by music in particular, that very night.

From these two experiences, I have come to understand that music is not part of “arts and entertainment” as the newspaper section would have us believe. It's not a luxury, a lavish thing that we fund from leftovers of our budgets, not a plaything or an amusement or a pass time. Music is a basic need of human survival. Music is one of the ways we make sense of our lives, one of the ways in which we express feelings when we have no words, a way for us to understand things with our hearts when we can't with our minds.

Some of you may know Samuel Barber's heart wrenchingly beautiful piece Adagio for Strings. If you don't know it by that name, then some of you may know it as the background music which accompanied the Oliver Stone movie Platoon, a film about the Vietnam War. If you know that piece of music either way, you know it has the ability to crack your heart open like a walnut; it can make you cry over sadness you didn't know you had. Music can slip beneath our conscious

reality to get at what's really going on inside us the way a good therapist does.

Very few of you have ever been to a wedding where there was absolutely no music. There might have been only a little music, there might have been some really bad music, but with few exceptions there is some music. And something very predictable happens at weddings-people get all pent up with all kinds of emotions, and then there's some musical moment where the action of the wedding stops and someone sings or plays the flute or something. And even if the music is lame, even if the quality isn't good, predictably 30 or 40 percent of the people who are going to cry at a wedding cry a couple of moments after the music starts. Why? The Greeks. Music allows us to move around those big invisible pieces of ourselves and rearrange our insides so that we can express what we feel even when we can't talk about it. Can you imagine watching Indiana Jones or Superman or Star Wars with the dialogue but no music? What is it about the music swelling up at just the right moment in ET so that all the softies in the audience start crying at exactly the same moment? I guarantee you if you showed the movie with the music stripped out, it wouldn't happen that way. The Greeks. Music is the understanding of the relationship between invisible internal objects.

I'll give you one more example, the story of the most important concert of my life. I must tell you I have played a little less than a thousand concerts in my life so far. I have played in places that I thought were important... I like playing in Carnegie Hall; I enjoyed playing in Paris; it made me very happy to please the critics in St. Petersburg. I have played for people I thought were important; music critics of major newspapers, foreign heads of state. The most important concert of my entire life took place in a nursing home in a small Midwestern town a few years ago.

I was playing with a very dear friend of mine who is a violinist. We began, as we often do,

“From the President”, cont.on page 6

“From the President”, cont.from page 5

with Aaron Copland’s Sonata, which was written during World War II and dedicated to a young friend of Copland’s, a young pilot who was shot down during the war. Now we often talk to our audiences about the pieces we are going to play rather than providing them with written program notes. But in this case, because we began the concert with this piece, we decided to talk about the piece later in the program and to just come out and play the music without explanation.

Midway through the piece, an elderly man seated in a wheelchair near the front of the concert hall began to weep. This man, whom I later met, was clearly a soldier—even in his 70’s, it was clear from his buzz-cut hair, square jaw and general demeanor that he had spent a good deal of his life in the military. I thought it a little bit odd that someone would be moved to tears by that particular movement of that particular piece, but it wasn’t the first time I’ve heard crying in a concert and we went on with the concert and finished the piece.

When we came out to play the next piece on the program, we decided to talk about both the first and second pieces, and we described the circumstances in which the Copland was written and mentioned its dedication to a downed pilot. The man in the front of the audience became so disturbed that he had to leave the auditorium. I honestly figured that we would not see him again, but he did come backstage afterwards, tears and all, to explain himself.

What he told us was this: “During World War II, I was a pilot, and I was in an aerial combat situation where one of my team’s planes was hit. I watched my friend bail out, and watched his parachute open, but the Japanese planes which had engaged us returned and machine gunned across the parachute chords so as to separate the parachute from the pilot, and I watched my friend drop away into the ocean, realizing that he was lost. I have not thought about this for many years, but during that first piece of music you played, this memory returned to me so vividly that it was

as though I was reliving it. I didn’t understand why this was happening, why now, but then when you came out to explain that this piece of music was written to commemorate a lost pilot, it was a little more than I could handle. How does the music do that? How did it find those feelings and those memories in me?”

Remember the Greeks: music is the study of invisible relationships between internal objects. The concert in the nursing home was the most important work I have ever done. For me to play for this old soldier and help him connect, somehow, with Aaron Copland, and to connect their memories of their lost friends, to help him remember and mourn his friend, this is my work. This is why music matters.

What follows is part of the talk I will give to this year’s freshman class when I welcome them a few days from now. The responsibility I will charge your sons and daughters with is this:

“If we were a medical school, and you were here as a med student practicing appendectomies, you’d take your work very seriously because you would imagine that some night at two AM someone is going to waltz into your emergency room and you’re going to have to save their life. Well, my friends, someday at 8 PM someone is going to walk into your concert hall and bring you a mind that is confused, a heart that is overwhelmed, a soul that is weary. Whether they go out whole again will depend partly on how well you do your craft.

You’re not here to become an entertainer, and you don’t have to sell yourself. The truth is you don’t have anything to sell; being a musician isn’t about dispensing a product, like selling used cars. I’m not an entertainer; I’m a lot closer to a paramedic, a firefighter, a rescue worker. You’re here to become a sort of therapist for the human soul, a spiritual version of a chiropractor, physical therapist, someone who works with our insides to see if they get things to line up, to see if we can come into harmony with ourselves and be healthy and happy and well.

“From the President”, cont.on page 7

“From the President”, cont.from page 6

Frankly, ladies and gentlemen, 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... As in the concentration camp and the evening of 9/11, the artists are the ones who might be able to help us with our internal, invisible lives.”



**Everett, Bob, Larry and Rich**  
sing to  
**Stacey Jamison, Assistant Donor Care**  
**Supervisor, United Blood Services**



**“Crook’s Trail” Quartet**  
Sings at the Annual Blood Drive  
Bill Stephens, Bob Cutlipp, Larry Ken-  
nedey, and Rich Hall



Maybe not from a turnip -but you can get  
blood from a Chorus Director  
Photo: Denny Shankland



**The Belles**  
Sing at the Annual Blood Drive

# THE 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE HIGH COUNTRY BARBERSHOP CHORUS

By Steve Voller, VP of Marketing & P.R.

The White Mountain High Country Barbershop Chorus is celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, and it is proving to be an exciting one. Included below are the highlights so far.

On January 9<sup>th</sup> the 2010 installation of officers' dinner was held at Torreon. Division 5 Vice President **Ted Sayle and his wife Barbara** attended the dinner, and the officers were "sworn in" by the **OK Corral Quartet from Phoenix**. Also entertaining were chapter quartets **Crooks Trail and The Knotty Pines**. The following officers were installed for 2010:



**President - Denny Shankland**  
**VP Membership - James H. Burden**  
**VP Marketing & PR - Steve Voller**  
**VP Music & Performance - Everett Peterson**  
**Treasurer - John Welker**  
**Secretary - Jim Dye**  
**Immediate Past President - Ron LaMar**  
**BOD-at-Large - Steve Pansulla**  
**Ron Monette**  
**Joe Stone**

## Awards for 2009:

**Newcomer of the Year - Steve Pansulla**                      **Spark Plug - Steve Voller**  
**Barbershopper of the Year - James H. Burden**              **Presidents Award - Jerry Schrunk**

On March 13<sup>th</sup> the chorus participated in "A Night of Barbershop Music" at the NPC campus in Snowflake. You may or may not know it, but the Chorus is a scheduled class thru NPC, and they sponsor our Chorus. We are very grateful to them.

On April 15<sup>th</sup> we participated in the **Blue Ridge Talent Show**, to raise money for the elementary school. It is inspiring to see the talent of so many individuals, and potential future barbershop members!

On April 24<sup>th</sup> the chorus participated in the **Far Western District Barbershop Convention/Contest** in Phoenix. 21 members attended, and we took "**Most Improved Chorus**" along with **qualifying for the District Convention in October**. This is the first time we have earned enough points to go to District, and this shows the dedication and enthusiasm of our chorus. Our thanks to our director **Doc Dockendorf** for pushing us to new heights. This is part of our commitment to provide quality entertainment to our White Mountain communities, along with the commitment to our youth. 3 of our high school youth participated in this year's contest. **James Mark "Jark" Burden, Donnie Pansulla, and Corey Spencer**. We are welcoming more youth to audition for our group.

We just completed a **successful blood drive for United Blood Services on May 1st**, donating more than 19 pints of blood from the community, for the community. The quartet **Crooks Trail**

performed songs at the event, as well as **The High Country Chorus and Mountain Belles**. Members also sang at the **Elks Car Show** the same day. I think some people just showed up for the cookies and brownies. Good thing singing burns up so many calories!

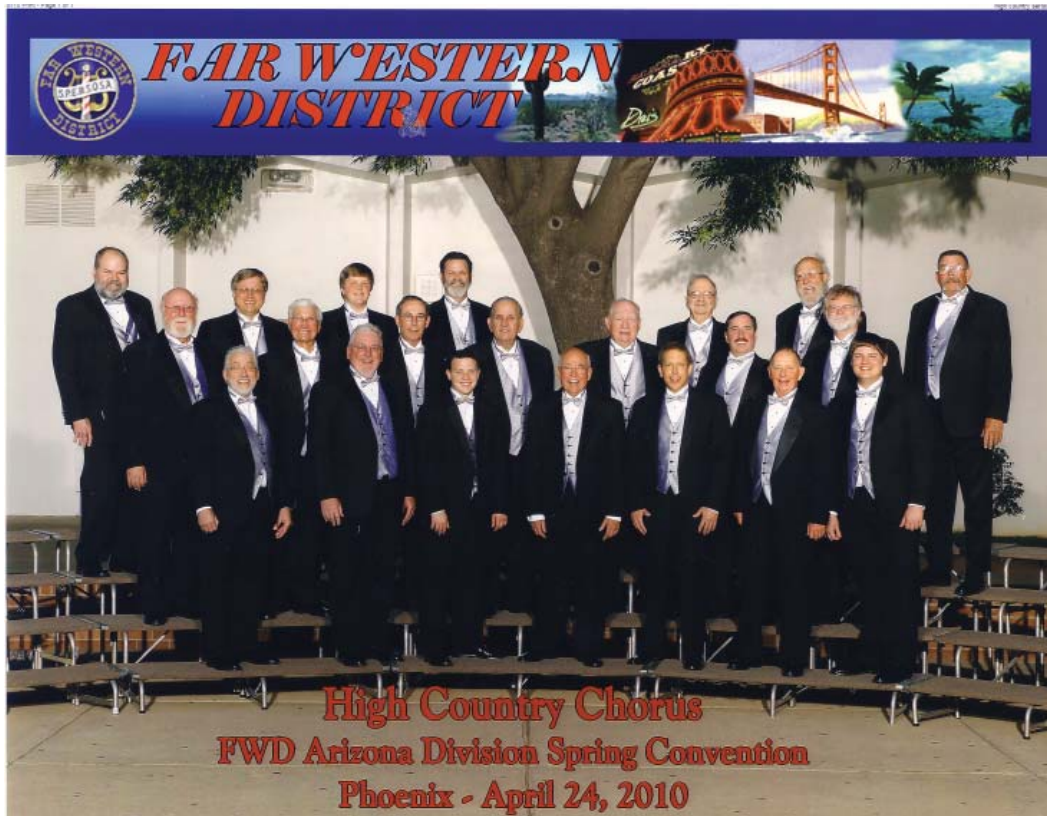
This past weekend we had our **road cleanup on Wolford**. There was record attendance, and over 25 members and wives helped to pick up trash. It is a shame to see how many people throw cigarettes out the windows of their vehicles, especially since fire season is upon us. A special thanks goes to **Jerry Schrunk** for taking photos and providing coffee and doughnuts for the event. **David Wheeler** could not get enough, and kept picking up trash around the parking lot, long after most people had left. I think I saw him leaving with an empty bag, to go somewhere else and start again...such dedication!

That night we had our **semi-annual party at Doc's**, complete with all the food and drink you could consume. No party is complete without impromptu singing, I am sure to the delight of the neighbors.

Upcoming events include the **Show Low Parade on July 3<sup>rd</sup>**, and our **annual show on July 17<sup>th</sup> at 2 & 7 p.m.** This year's show is called "A Decade of Harmony" and will feature a tribute to our past shows as well as some new songs.

Please remember we are available for other functions such as birthdays, anniversaries, Mother's Day, car shows, ribbon cuttings, and the like. For more information on our events and our chorus in general, please log on to [www.wmhcbc.com](http://www.wmhcbc.com). The web site includes photos and other interesting information, so take a moment to look us over!

Steve



Contest photo courtesy of Warren Wong Photography

## **Birthdays & Anniversaries**

### **JUNE: BIRTHDAYS**

Larry Kennedy .....May 15  
Richard (Rich) Hall..... ..June 23

### **JUNE: ANNIVERSARIES**

Ron and Kathy Montez .....June 11  
Jim and Noni Dye .....June 21  
Dan and Dawn Lewis .....June 29

### **JULY: BIRTHDAYS**

United States of America .....July 4  
Bob Koons .....July 12  
James Mark "Jark" Burden ...July 27  
William "Bill" Stephens .....July 31

### **JULY: ANNIVERSARIES**

Steve and Regina Countryman.....1st

**My short-term memory is not as sharp as  
it used to be.**

**Also, my short-term memory's not as  
sharp as it used to be.**

### **FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS!**

**Except that one where you're naked in  
church.**

**Money isn't everything,  
but it sure keeps the kids in touch.**

**I want to die while asleep like my grand-  
father,  
not screaming in terror like the passen-  
gers in his car.**



## **New Web Site and Blog**

**Check them out at:**

**<http://wmhcbc.com>**

**<http://wmhcbc.com/blog/>**

**Photos and stories are being transferred  
to the new site as time permits.**

**Previous site:**

**<http://spebsqsafwd.org/wmac/>**

### **FWD, White Mountains Arizona Chapter: High Country Chorus 2010 Officers**

<b>President</b>	<b>Denny Shankland</b>
<b>Immediate Past President</b>	<b>Ron LaMar</b>
<b>VP Music &amp; Performance</b>	<b>Bob Cutlipp</b>
<b>VP Marketing &amp; PR</b>	<b>Steve Voller</b>
<b>VP Membership</b>	<b>James H. Burden</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Jim Dye</b>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<b>John Welker</b>
<b>Board Members at Large</b>	<b>Joe Stone</b>
	<b>Steve Pansulla</b>
	<b>Ron Monette</b>
<b>NPC Representative</b>	<b>Everett Robinson</b>

**<http://wmhcbc.com/shop/>**

**<http://wmhcbc.com/blog/>**

**<http://www.spebsqsafwd.org/wmac>**

<b>Director</b>	<b>Doc Dockendorf</b>
<b>Asst. Directors</b>	<b>Alan Beste</b>
	<b>Jim Murphy</b>
	<b>Denny Shankland</b>
<b>Music Librarian</b>	<b>Joe Stone</b>
<b>Sunshine Chairman</b>	<b>James H. Burden</b>
<b>Bulletin Editor</b>	<b>Jerry Schrunk</b>
<b>Web Master</b>	<b>Jerry Schrunk</b>
<b>Chorus Photographer</b>	<b>Conrad Monroe</b>
<b>Chapter Historian</b>	<b>Larry Kennedy</b>

## Road Clean-Up May 15, 2010, And - Chorus Party



Chorus Party Photos were taken by Denny Shankland, and a slideshow can be found at:  
<http://wmhcbc.com/blog/?cat=19>

High Country Barbershop Chorus  
 c/o Jerry Schrunk, Newsletter Editor  
 PO Box 3897  
 Show Low, AZ 85902

**FROM THE EDGE** June., 2010

Calendar of Events				
Date	Event	Time	Uniform	Comments / Location
Notice - Update Mar., 2010	Rehearsal Hall changed to the White Mountains United Methodist Church	7 PM		261 N. 5th St., Show Low, AZ
June 8, 2010	Music Committee Meeting	6 PM		Rehearsal Hall
June 22, 2010	Chapter Board Meeting	6 PM		Rehearsal Hall
July 3, 2010	Show Low Parade	TBD		Show Low July 4th events will be held July 3
July 13, 2010	Music Committee Meeting	6 PM		Rehearsal Hall
July 14, 2010	Technical Rehearsal for Show	7 to 9 PM	Casual	Show Low H.S.
July 16, 2010	Dress Rehearsal for Show	7 to 9 PM	1st half attire	Show Low H.S.
July 17, 2010	Annual Barbershop Show	2 & 7 PM		Show Low Auditorium
July 27, 2010	Chapter Board Meeting	6 PM		Rehearsal Hall
August 10, 2010	Music Committee Meeting	6 PM		Rehearsal Hall
August 24, 2010	Chapter Board Meeting	6 PM		Rehearsal Hall
September 18, 2010	Woolford Road Clean-Up	8:30 AM		Date to be confirmed
September 18, 2010	Chorus Party	TBD		TBD
Oct. 7 - 10, 2010	FWD Convention <a href="http://www.fwdconventions.org/2010fall/">http://www.fwdconventions.org/2010fall/</a>			Marriott Headquarters Hotel, Bakersfield, CA
December 6, 2010	High Country Chorus in Concert	6:30 PM	Class A	Shephard of the Pines Methodist Church, Heber/Overgaard