

# FROM THE EDGE

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



Vol. X, No. 5

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

May, 2009

## From the President

Ron LaMar

What a great time we had at the convention. For listening pleasure we heard the Phoenix chorus do a wonderful set and again at the show another great performance.



The Tucson chorus really came up with beautiful songs and deserved the most improved award. Seeing Jim Porter was also a plus. My congratulations to the **Pine Tones** for their novice win. Then Saturday night we got to hear all the top quartets in a more relaxed show at the afterglow, and those at our table enjoyed blending a few songs too.

OK. So now that the convention is over, we need to really focus on all the aspects of putting on a great and profitable show for July 11. Just to learn the songs is only part of the job. We need to build sets, sell ads, sell tickets and generally all pull together to make sure that things are as tuned as they can be. **Mick** has chairmen for all these things and a few others, and they will be looking for everyone's pitching in to "make it happen".

I would like you (yes you, the guy reading this) to consider yourself personally

responsible for the success of each of the things that have to be done, and then stepping up where there is a need. We pride ourselves on being a group that cares for one-another, and now is a time to demonstrate that.

As Nike says, "Just do it!"

**Ron**

### FWD, White Mountains Arizona Chapter: High Country Chorus

#### Officers - 2009

President	Ron LaMar
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VP Music & Performance	Denny Shankland
VP Marketing & PR	Steve Voller
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NPC Representative	Everett Robinson
<a href="http://www.spebsqsafwd.org/wmac/">http://www.spebsqsafwd.org/wmac/</a>	
Director	Doc Dockendorf
Asst. Directors	Alan Beste Jim Murphy Denny Shankland
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Sunshine Chairman	James H. Burden
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Web Master	Jerry Schrunk
Chorus Photographer	Conrad Monroe
Chapter Historian	Larry Kennedy

**From the Director: Doc Dockendorf**



**V**owels: If you have noticed the past few weeks during the warm up, I have started to work on the development of uniform vowel sounds for the

chorus. The reason this is important is, that when even a few members of the chorus have a different vowel formation target shape, it will not allow a chord to “ring”, even if everyone is singing the correct notes.

This exercise, and the ones that will follow, were given to us by **Chris Hebert**, a singing judge, who evaluated us in 2006 at the Division Convention. He noted at that time, that the chorus was not matching vowel sounds, and felt that we needed to work on them to be more consistent. I started to follow up, but unfortunately, my good intentions fell by the wayside. This year, I plan to focus on them so that we can improve this very important aspect of proper vocal production.

There are twelve basic vowel sounds, as listed below (The bolded words should be considered the ‘core’ sound for the ones that follow, as they have a better overtone structure, and will add ring to the sound).

**Have** – Hind - Heart

**We** – Sit – Late – Men – Sun

**Mute** – Moon – Full – Urge

**Long** – Go – Joy – Now

Say these vowel words slowly out loud and note the subtle differences in the

shape inside the mouth.

aah	Have
ahh	Heart
ee	We
ih	Sit
a	Late
eh	Men
uh	Sun
ooh	Moon
oo	Full
ur	Urge
o	Go
aw	Long

The first exercise, that I have been using, incorporates the use of Bubbling (lip trill), as well as use of the Nnnnn sound, which is an “airy ‘n’ sound. Bubbling relaxes the vocal apparatus, and allows lots of air to go through the vocal cords without stress. I urge each of you to practice Bubbling at home. If you play around with it, you will find that to do it requires breath support. Once you learn how to do it, practice just moving as much air as possible. It should also help strengthen your breathing.

On a final note (pun intended), at the start of the year, in the January “From the Edge” newsletter, I made the following statement:

*“As your director, I have a personal goal to improve my directing abilities, and I challenge each of you to take a personal goal to become a better singer. Strive to make a small improvement each week, and by year-end, you will have made fifty incremental changes.”*

(From the Director, continued on page 3)

(From the Director, continued from page 2)

We are in 2009 week 17 of 50. Have you consciously thought about how you personally can make an improvement in your singing ability? Denny has been working with us on Intonation (singing in tune), singing together, synchronization, singing softly with control, with his clever use of “itsy-bitsy, teenie-weenie, yellow polka dot bikini...”

Additionally, I have worked on breathing, posture, vowels, etc. So, please do a personal assessment. Ask yourself: Am I becoming a better singer? What do I need to work on to improve? What are my weakest points, and what do I have to do to strengthen them?

Denny also challenged you to the 100% rule, i.e. 100 % of the notes and words are correct for each song you sing. I hope that you take his challenge seriously. Together we can make beautiful, entertaining music. Just a little improvement each week. Sounds easy doesn't it?

Doc

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**“The next time you begin to think you are all powerful, try ordering someone else's dog around.”**

**I wondered why the baseball kept getting bigger. Then it hit me!**

## **From the Sunshine Chairman - James H. Burden**



### January:

**James H Burden 01;  
Warren Schluter 15;  
Steve Countryman 28;**

### February:

**Steve Pansulla 26;**

### March:

**Jim Morrow 06;  
Steve Voller 11;  
John Graham 14;  
Bob Cutlipp 29;**

### April

**SPEBSQSA, 11<sup>th</sup> 1938  
Robert McDonald 11;  
Alan Johnson 12;  
Mick Mitchke 13;  
HCBCorus of the White Mountains 18;  
9 years old;  
Wayne Jain 24;  
Richard Murphy 26;**

### May:

**Alan Beste 06;  
Joel Empie 15;  
Jerry Schrunk 28**

**Happy  
Anniversary  
to Mr &  
Mrs Everett  
Robinson,  
March 24th**



## Update from Tom Pennell:

As planned (except for one delay), I was admitted to John C. Lincoln Deer Valley (N. 27th Ave. in Phoenix) for the AAA repair on March 26. Dr. Hillmann went to work and replaced my bulging aorta with “a non-remarkable piece of plastic” about 9 inches long. This is pretty serious surgery and I awoke in the IC unit and spent three days recovering from the initial shock.

I was transferred to a regular room on Monday the 30th, and they let me go on Thursday April 2nd. We came home to Show Low that day, and I promptly awoke on Friday the 3rd unable to breathe. Congestive Heart Failure was the diagnosis and I had to go back to Phoenix and get re-

admitted to the hospital. I recovered enough from the CHF to be allowed to come home on the 18th.

I’m getting along pretty well now and have even gone back to work at my little part-time job.

As most of you know, my computer is on the 2nd floor of the garage, so you can assume that I’m navigating the stairs OK.

Many thanks to all of you for the get-well cards, visits and phone calls. That stuff really helps when you’re down and out.

FYI: My plastic aorta implant isn’t exactly new - my father had one installed in 1953! - He lived until 1968.

**Tom**

## The High Country Chorus



Michelle Pansulla was able to capture this photo of the chorus during the “stage walk on” at the contest. Formal pictures were taken with the chorus in their tuxedos, but they are not yet available for purchase. (Thanks Michelle)

## At Contest 2009



### The Pinetones Win the Novice Quartet Trophy at Contest

Everett Peterson, Tenor: Lloyd Lange, Lead: Denny Shankland, Bari: Doc Dockendorf, Bass

### Lloyd Lange amazes the judges and astounds the audience:

When Lloyd held the last lead note to *How Deep is the Ocean* (an “f”) for what seemed like “minutes” to your editor, audience members were heard to gasp “Breathe - Please.”



### Composition 4

Tenor: Ballin Durfee, Lead: Joel John, Bass: William Sullivan, Bari: David Sullivan



Here is another photo by Michelle Pansulla, where Alan Beste is directing the chorus during our contest performance. See, we really do have tuxedos.

**Photos from the Contest Week-End**  
supplied by the James H. Burden Family and Donnie Pansulla



**Update from John and Susan Graham:**

John and Susan are getting settled in Missouri. John is getting accustomed to driving in Missouri (photo 1) although the traffic there (photo 2) is much heavier than it is in the White Mountains.



Thanks to Susan for sending us these photos.



*FROM THE EDGE* May, 2009

Calendar of Events				
Date	Event	Time	Uniform	Comments / Location
April 28, 2009	Chapter Board Meeting	5:30 PM		Practice Hall
May 12, 2009	Music Committee Meeting	6 PM		Practice Hall
May 14, 2009	Singing Into Summer BRES Talent Show	Warm-Up 6:30 PM	Class B	Blue Ridge Auditorium
May 16, 2009	Woolford Road Clean-Up	8:30 AM	Grubbies, Hat, Gloves	Back of WME Theater
May 16, 2009	Chapter Party at the Doc's	5:30 PM		The Doc's Home
May 26, 2009	Chapter Board Meeting	5:30 PM		Practice Hall
June 9, 2009	Music Committee Meeting	6 PM		Practice Hall
June 19, 2009	Blood Drive	Noon to 5 PM		White Mountain Bible Church, Show Low
July 4, 2009	Show Low 4th Parade			
July 11, 2009	Annual Show, "Sentimental Journey"	2 & 7 PM		Show Low District Auditorium

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