



May, 2016
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The Starting Gate

Highlights of the issue:

- 2016 District Spring Convention
- Visit by Circle City Sound
- Thunder Gulch
- New Members
- Hallelujah
- Officers for 2016

The Thoroughbred Chorus: Professionally Trained Volunteer Voices

Music Director: Andrew Wheaton, Master of Music, Choral Conducting

2016 Cardinal District Spring Convention

South Bend, Indiana – March 18th thru 20th

The rules regarding quartet competition in the Barbershop Harmony Society gave the attendees a rare treat – **Forefront** in competition. [Editor's comment: **Drew Wheaton**, tenor; Kevin Hughes, lead; Aaron Hughes, baritone; Brian O'Dell, bass] There were a total of fourteen quartets in the first (semifinal) round of competition. [Ed: Instant Classic was the mic tester.] Besides exquisitely entertaining their audience, Forefront's éclat set a new high for scoring in a "preliminary" contest: 1,102 and 91.8 in the semifinal; 2,198 and 91.6 in total. [Ed: The "rules" above is the stipulation that ALL quartets (even a double-silver medalist) must compete in a preliminary contest to qualify for singing at the ensuing International Convention.]





Left to right: Drew Wheaton, Kevin Hughes, Brian O'Dell, Aaron Hughes



Left to right: Drew Wheaton, Kevin Hughes, Brian O'Dell, Aaron Hughes

2016 Cardinal District Spring Convention (continued)

The Rooftops, the champion from the Cardinal District 2015 Fall Convention, placed third with a total score of 1,891 (78.8). You will remember that the tenor of The Rooftops is Erek Gillespie, a member of the Thoroughbreds.

The chorus competition featured five choruses. The champion is **Circle City Sound**, scoring 953 (79.4). Our neighbors from Lexington (**The Kentuckians**), were only competing for evaluation. They scored 813 (67.8), which would have put them in third place. New Thoroughbreds Steve Burke, Steve Brodersen, Brandon Metts and Steven Arthur sing with The Kentuckians.

Hands Across the Ohio

The Circle City Sound chorus made a huge, magnanimous gesture of brotherhood on Monday, 18th of April. Forty of them (led by their Director Theo Hicks) arrived at Jim Miller Hall (by chartered bus) just after the start of The Thoroughbreds weekly warmup. They came to encourage us in our quest of a podium finish in the International Chorus Competition in Nashville, in July. We all were encouraged greatly by their genuine expression of affection and even financial support. Theo presented Drew with a check! They mounted the risers and participated in our warmup.

Our spirits were buoyed by their loud applause (and whistles) as we completed our contest ballad. Theo congratulated The Thoroughbreds that our unified sound was “A” Level and proceeded to coach us on enhancement of “telling the story”. The improvement (through careful enhancement of emphasis on key words) was manifest to all The Thoroughbreds. **Thank You! Theo.**

After we performed the “up tune”, they treated us to another generous blast of applause. Drew put us through three more of our newer songs and then Circle City Sound performed two of theirs (to our immense enjoyment). Their rendition of Shenandoah was deeply moving.

During the break, we had opportunities to meet and greet several of our very amiable new brothers. What a great bunch of guys! [Ed: The Thoroughbreds have more oldsters; Circle City Sound’s eldest, Frank (short for Franklin), is only eighty-four.]

Then we were all treated to a pair of performance songs by the 2015 International Champion Quartet, Instant Classic. **Wow!**

Finally Circle City Sound and The Thoroughbreds gathered together on the risers to sing three more songs; Drew and Theo performing tag-team directing.

After some brief announcements, a sumptuous repast (prepared by Fuzzy Roth, with help from Pat Conroy, Whit Nall and James Cole) was served to all; followed (for dessert) by a marvelous cake brought by Circle City Sound.

[Now the backstory, with appropriate perspective from Troy Lovett]

Let's start with our golden years: The Cardinal District Representatives to the International Convention were The Thoroughbreds (1994-1997, 1999-2001 & 2005, with Director Jay Hawkins); Louisville Times (an "elitist" chorus, siphoning off some great singers from The Thoroughbreds -- 1997-1999); Banks of the Wabash (Terre Haute, Indiana 2002-2004 & 2006); Kentucky Vocal Union (another "elitist" chorus; first in Elizabethtown and now Kentuckiana -- 2008, 2009, 2011, 2012 & 2014); Circle City Sound (2010, 2011, 2013 & 2015). Since Kentucky Vocal Union is not competing currently, Circle City Sound had emerged as the dominant chorus, finishing thirteenth in the 2015 International Competition.

Since Louisville and Indianapolis are the largest cities in the Cardinal District, our choruses are correspondingly large. The natural result would be an interstate rivalry in District competition. Circle City Sound graciously skipped the Cardinal District Chorus Competition in October of last year (the qualifying competition for entry into the International Convention Competition in July, 2016) allowing The Thoroughbreds to win all three trophies and a spot in this year's International Convention Competition. **Thank Y'all! Brothers.**

Under Drew's deft, tireless training, The Thoroughbreds are back! Our District Fall Convention combined score was 944 and 78.7, while Circle City Sound scored 953 and 79.4 in this year's District Spring Convention.

So now the two great choruses in the Cardinal District are conjoined. How did this develop? Drew started the explanation on Monday evening:

"At first it hurt a lot [Instant Classic edging out Forefront for the Gold by eleven points out of nine thousand], but as we became friends with Instant Classic, I realized that this was the right result, as it brought us together."

Theo and Drew have become close friends and both wanted our choruses to become close. Circle City Sound coming to encourage us is a magnificent start. We need to continue to build this relationship: perhaps by joint efforts (within the Cardinal District) to encourage and build up other chapters; all in the great cause of increasing public appreciation for Barbershop Harmony.

For reference:

Instant Classic: lead, Theo Hicks; tenor, Dave Zimmerman; baritone, Kohl Kitzmiller; bass, Kyle Kitzmiller

Forefront: tenor, **Drew Wheaton**; lead, Kevin Hughes; baritone, Aaron Hughes; bass, Brian O'Dell

Our New College Quartet

Late last month, we enjoyed the first audition of our newly-formed College Quartet. To accommodate college students (who might find it difficult to travel to district conventions for qualification competition), the Barbershop Harmony Society has allowed college quartet competitors to earn a spot at the International Convention by submitting a demo video to a panel of judges. We were treated to their filming/recording of the demo video for **Thunder Gulch**.

[Troy Lovett says that their choice of the name for their quartet continues the tradition of the Thoroughbreds to adopt names associated with horse racing. **Thunder Gulch** was the winner of the 1995 Kentucky Derby.]

Thunder Gulch: tenor, Sam Firkins; lead, Josh Nielsen; baritone, Nico Palania; bass, Steven Arthur.

As they say in Texas, **We're proud for yuh!**

Meet Two New Thoroughbreds

Get to Know Steve Burke

Steve was born in Washington, D.C., grew up in Silver Spring, Maryland, then moved to Lexington, KY, during his high school years. He earned a bachelor's degree in Communications & Marketing from the University of Kentucky. During college Steve worked at Marriott Griffin Gate Resort, where he "fell in love" with the hospitality business and decided to make a career of it. After many years in hotel Sales & Marketing with Renaissance brand, Steve joined HelmsBriscoe as Regional Vice President and is approaching his 20th year with this company. HelmsBriscoe is the global leader in procurement and site selection for the convention and meetings industry.

Alongside his beautiful bride of 30 years (Rhonda), Steve raised two daughters who are now both in college. He has a broad appreciation for music, ranging from rock-n-roll to classical, and also enjoys golf, tennis and table tennis. As with many of us, his pre-barbershop musical experience was church choir singing. Six years ago his friend, Steve Brodersen, invited him to a rehearsal at The Kentuckians chorus in Lexington. He has been captivated by barbershop harmony ever since; especially tagging and quartet singing! Currently Steve sings Bass for These 4 Guys quartet and also is a regular participant in Indiana Harmony Brigade. Steve has volunteered his talents as a Board Member of The Kentuckians Chorus, serving a term as President, and was also Convention Chairman when the Cardinal District Convention was held in Lexington in March 2014. Steve was motivated to join The Thoroughbreds chorus specifically for the opportunity to perform at the 2016 International Convention in Nashville, which he considers a "Mountain Top" kind of experience!

Get to Know Paul Forrest

Paul was born (September, 1939) in Los Angeles, California. Two years later, his sister was born while they were living in Fort Worth, Texas. The family moved to Columbus, Ohio, then to Florida and to Seattle, Washington where he entered the first grade of public school. Before Paul completed the sixth grade, the family had moved four more times: Manhattan Beach, California; Evanston and Skokie, Illinois; Bloomington, Indiana. He entered the eleventh grade and finished high school in Montclair, New Jersey.

He earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois. [Ed: Gee! the same city twice.] He earned his Medical Doctor degree from Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana. [Ed: Bet that was a fun four years.] He served a one-year internship in Wayne County, Michigan.

Next Paul Joined the United States Army; choosing the Special Forces. Two years of Airborne School were spent at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The next year found Paul at Fort Gulick, Panama [Ed: then the Canal Zone] learning Spanish and Scuba Diving. Then he saw **action**; being deployed (for a year) in the Republic of Vietnam.

Returning from the war zone, Paul completed a one-year General Surgery residency in Fresno, California. Next he completed a four-year residency (**Neurological Surgery**) followed by twenty years of “practice” (**Neurological Surgery**) in Sacramento, California. [Ed: Wow!]

In Sacramento, Paul sang with the **Sacramento Capitolaires** chorus and the **49ers** quartet. He attended Harmony University circa 1985. Moving to Louisville (in 1995), he joined the **Thoroughbreds**; also singing with the **Friends O’ Mine** quartet (with **Mike Burdette**, **Jim Burgess**, and **Eddie Murphy**).

In 2005, Paul began a nine-year stay in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

Paul returned to Louisville in 2014; rejoining the Thoroughbreds in March of this year.

Hallelujah!

[Hebrew Aramaic or Chaldee]

Praise to Yahweh or Jehovah

[English or American]

A poetic paraphrase of Lyrics by Leonard Cohen
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I've heard there was a secret chord
Which David played that pleased the Lord,
But You don't really like my music, do Yuh?
It goes like this: the fourth, the fifth,
The minor fall, the major lift,
The baffled king composing Hallelujah.
O Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

It may be I've been here before.
I know this room, I've walked this floor.
I used to live alone before I knew Yuh.
There's Your flag on the marble arch,
Yet love is not a vict'ry march,
It's but a cold and broken Hallelujah.
O Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

I'm certain there's a God above,
But all I ever learned from love
Is how to shoot somebody, who outdrew yuh.
It's not a cry you hear at night,
It's not someone who's seen the Light,
It's just a sad and lonely Hallelujah.
O Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

The Starting Gate

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The Starting Gate is published periodically by the Louisville #1 Chapter, member of the Cardinal District of the Barbershop Harmony Society

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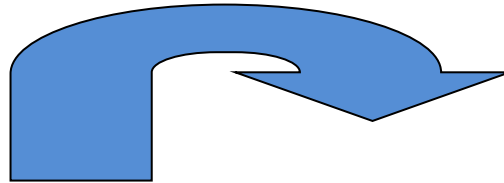
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About Our Organization...

We are members of The Barbershop Harmony Society, S.P.E.B.S.Q.A., Inc., Cardinal District, based in Nashville, Tennessee. The society celebrated its 75th year of existence in 2013. Our chapter is celebrating its 66th year of existence.

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