



THE GENESCENE



Volume 2, Issue 4

The Chorus of the Genesee

May, 2007

KEITH'S THOUGHTS AT LARGE



My decision to leave the chapter was not an easy one, as I've had a blast the last three years with you guys. From day one you welcomed me into the family, and that's very hard to walk away from. I hope that I can come back to visit and still be part of the family.

To hopefully stop any speculation, my decision had absolutely nothing to do with the past contest's results. I had already made up my mind by then, but didn't want to say anything to the chorus in case it might cause a distraction going into contest.

Please give your next Music Director the same courtesy and respect that you gave to me. It's not an easy job, and the director can use all the love and support you can offer.

The Music Team is already hard at work on the "Where do we go from here?", and they have some wonderful ideas regarding craft sessions, individual vocal help, learning music, and much, much more. There are some great things coming down the pike that will keep you all moving forward. Please support them in this endeavor by working your tails off!

And don't forget that when something musically is not working, you need to look to yourself first before casting stones! You are, after all, the

only one in charge of your personal space.

One of the things that makes the CoG so strong is that it's a chapter first, and then a chorus. Please don't ever lose sight of that.

Watching guys hang out after chorus rehearsal talking and singing is very cool. That shows a great chapter spirit in my mind.

I had hoped to take the chorus back to International, but that obviously didn't happen. Sometimes I feel like I let you down, but then I think that if my purpose and legacy to the chapter and chorus was to remind you that it's okay to have fun, make fun of yourself and work hard at the same time, then I'm okay with that. Take your fun seriously, eh?

Somebody else is going to have to be in charge of making up words and fracturing the English language.

Please don't hold the next director to the "shoes optional" thing, okay?

Finally, thank you for a wonderful 3 years, all your hard work, all your laughter, and all your love and support.

Yours in Song..... *Keith*



Show Notes

Allen Weitz

As you are aware, showtime is rapidly approaching! I am happy to say that I feel with the advertising spots in the papers and the radio spots on 93.3 FM, we could sell out! As of our last rehearsal, approximately 700 tickets have been sold. We have only have 200 seats left. These are balcony seats, but I guarantee you the auditorium is set up marvelously and acoustically to make these seats great!

We'll be selling *Hot Air Buffoons'* new CD and t-shirts. They have been ranked 10th by their international qualifying scores in their district.

All we have to do now is a last push to sell, sell..... ads and tickets. The two Tuesdays prior to the show we will be running thru the script and staging. I encourage all chorus and quartet members to attend if you plan on singing in the show. Remember what I said at the last couple of rehearsals. We need to sing at our highest personal levels... ***for that person in the audience who has never seen or heard us before.***

The *Chorus of the Genesee* meets each Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m. at Harmony House, 58 Main Street, Webster, NY. Visitors may call the *Barbershop Hotline* at (585) 265-9540.

2007 Chapter Officers

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- Music Director.....Keith Langdon

Let's get Psyched

A note from Coach

At the time of this writing we have brought in \$2100 worth of ads for our ***Big Sing***. I'm so excited with the response. Guys who have not been active in years have taken ad materials and questioned me about same!! New guys are also trying to help! Why not get in the swim yourself? The worst thing that can happen is rejection, and I'm sure you've all experienced this before.

I've set a goal of \$8000 again this year, and it's almost all profit! Be sure to get your ticket vouchers to your customers as soon as possible since tickets are going fast!

Community Chorus

Jack Ernisse

- Thursday, May 24: Shire-Culverton Assisted Living.
- Thursday, June 28: Summit at Brighton, part of the Jewish Home complex. This will be our first time there.
- Thursday, July 26: St. Ann's Home.

Letter from Jack Zonneville

I would like to thank everyone who sent me get well cards due to my recent hip replacement. It is so nice to be remembered. I have finished outpatient therapy and am doing quite well. We expect to be home on April 22 after having spent a great winter in Florida. We surely didn't miss the snow. *Jack*



More Thoughts from the Bobservation Post

Bob Lewis

Where were you for the potluck dinner on April 10? I believe there were a few more attendees, but we missed **you!** The food again was wonderful and a good time was had by all. Only two more dinners left till the summer break. The final potluck (in June) is always fun because you bring your own meat and a dish to pass.

I thought we won the contest at Geneva. I will have to admit the winning package was great. Congratulations Binghamton for a job well done. Watching them grow in numbers and talent has been an exciting thing to witness.

Our next event is the Annual Show. It looks like ticket sales are going very well. A sell-out house, **Wow**, would that be great! Len and his team are doing a terrific job keeping track of ticket sales. This being our first time for reserved seating, has been a real challenge and Len has certainly accepted and conquered the challenge. Ads are starting to come in and Coach has given us a challenge we actually could meet. Keep working and Coach's goal will be surpassed.

Oh, yes! Thanks, Gennys, for the recipe in last month's *Genescene*. Keep them coming. All of us like to try something new when we have friends over. Isn't that the time to try something new?

As I write this article, the snow has finally disappeared; the 75° temperature came and left yesterday, but so far, no more snow! Fred and June are down South to visit their daughter, Judy, so you will have to put up with me for a week or two behind the bar till Freddie returns.

Harmony House is still busy. We have an active committee that keeps our home away from home attractive, clean, and full of activities from the outside communities. Want to volunteer a few hours to help? See Brian or any of his committee.

The following was sent to me by a dear friend in northern Michigan. It was to commemorate Julie Andrews 69th birthday, at Radio City Music

Hall for an AARP benefit. One of the musical numbers she performed was *My Favorite Things* from the *Sound Of Music*. Here are the lyrics she used:

Maalox and nose drops and needles for knitting,
Walkers and handrails and new dental fittings,
Bundles of magazines tied up in string,
These are a few of my favorite things.

Cadillac's and cataracts, and hearing aids and glasses,
Polident and Fixodent and false teeth in glasses,
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches with swings,
These are a few of my favorite things.

When the pipes leak,
When the bones creak.
When the knees go bad,
I simply remember my favorite things.
And then I don't feel so bad.

Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads for bunions,
No spicy hot food or food cooked with onions,
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot meals they bring,
These are a few of my favorite things.

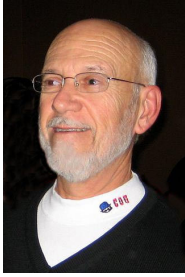
Back pains, confused brains, and no need for sin-
nin',
Thin bones and fractures and hair that is thinnin',
And we won't mention our short shrunken
frames,
When we remember our favorite things.

When the joints ache,
When the hips break,
When the eyes grow dim,
Then I remember the great life I've had,
And then I don't feel so bad.

Isn't it amazing how easily you can hear the tune in your head as you read the words? Well, I think that's about it from here. We have a lot of work to do, not only for the show, but for the next contest. Keith, keep telling us what is wrong and how we can improve. I know it isn't easy, but keep the faith. I do believe "You can teach an old dog new tricks."

Musical Minutiae

Dave Kester



In January of this year we learned about Dorothy Fields, the composer/lyricist who rose from her early successes as "Mills Music's fifty-dollars-a-night girl" to later write *I Feel a Song Coming On* in 1935. It was mentioned that she had collaborated with the most fertile musical minds of the Tin Pan Alley era, including her ten year association with the great Jerome Kern. That same year, their songs for the 1933 hit musical "Roberta" were reprised in the film of the same name with Irene Dunne and Fred Astaire taking the lead roles. This musical was considered Kern's last triumph on Broadway before he assigned his talents to motion pictures.

1936 was described by music historian Sigmund Spaeth as a "musically off year," but it found Fields and Kern joining up again to write two great songs for the film *Swing Time* starring Ginger Rogers and that nice little dancing guy, Fred Astaire. The songs were *A Fine Romance* and *The Way You Look Tonight* which won the Academy Award for Best Original Song. Both numbers were sung by Astaire as John "Lucky" Garnett while sitting at the piano. Penelope "Penny" Carroll (played by Rogers) was busy washing her hair in an adjacent room and feeling anything but beautiful at the time. Dorothy Fields later remarked that the melody, upon first hearing it, moved her to tears and she was thrilled to provide the lyrics: "The first time Jerry played that melody for me I had to leave the room because I started to cry. The release absolutely killed me. I couldn't stop, it was so beautiful."

By the way, did you know that Fred Astaire, while known more for his dancing than his singing, was actually the composers' favorite vocalist? The reason... he didn't change anything. He sang 'em the way they wrote 'em. Let that be a lesson to all you self-styled arrangers out there in barbershop land. As Mike Morgan says, "give the composer his due."

This song was also popularly performed by Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Michael Bubl , Rod Stewart and as a duet between Bing Crosby and his wife Dixie Lee,

as well as in many other vocal and instrumental releases. It became a hit for *The Lettermen* in 1961. As recently as last year, pianist Bradley Joseph performed his own arrangement of *The Way You Look Tonight* on his album *Piano Love Songs*. The song was in the movies *Chinatown*, *My Best Friend's Wedding*, *Father of the Bride* and Woody Allen's *Hannah and Her Sisters*.

Jerome David Kern was a giant in the field of popular music. He wrote around 700 songs and more than 100 complete scores for shows and films in a career lasting from 1902 until his death in 1945 at the age of sixty.



When one thinks of Kern, they immediately think of *Showboat* and his collaboration with a young Oscar Hammerstein II which produced timeless songs like *Old Man River* (every bassos dream song) and *Can't Help Lovin' dat Man of Mine*.

Jerome Kern died of a stroke on November 11, 1945 after having collapsed in front of 450 Park Avenue in New York. He had been overseeing auditions for a new revival of *Show Boat* and was due to compose the score for the musical *Annie Get Your Gun*. Following his death, the task was passed to Irving Berlin. At the time of Kern's death, MGM was filming a fictionalized version of his life, *Till the Clouds Roll By*. This movie has a wonderful ending with a young Frank Sinatra singing *Old Man River* in fine form.

Although Kern generally wrote for musical theatre, the harmonic richness of his compositions lends itself well to the jazz mode, which typically emphasizes improvisation based on a harmonic structure. Many of his melodies have been adopted by jazz musicians and have become standard tunes. These same attributes make them excellent material for the barbershop style.



The Prez Sez.....

Bill Wise

The Spring Convention has come and gone and the results are in. We had 50 members on the risers. Thanks to all who could participate. After a performance we tend to reflect on how we did. I think you have to ask yourself, "Could I have done a better job?" Only you can answer that. A performance is just a moment in time . . .

By now you should know that Keith is stepping down as our Director. A director search committee will be created and the process will begin. Thanks, Keith for a great run. We appreciate everything you've done for us. The CoG wishes Keith, Dawn and Joe continued success in whatever path you choose, and the doors of Harmony House are always open should you make the trip. The NYS map puts Phelps right in the heart of "sheep" country. Can you imagine replacing a director who is bald (sort of), shoeless (all summer), and sings Bari (kind of)? Who said barbershopping isn't fun!

COG Business –

Director Search Committee:

It took a while, but I "tracked" down the procedure that was used the last time. Everyone I met with agrees with the fact that the process used was a good one and we should follow this plan again. I shared this information with Ken Bissinger, who, in turn, passed it on to the Music Team. There may be a difference of opinion on how to proceed with this important project, but, like all good organizations, we can work it out!

House of Delegates Meeting (04/15/2007) Issues/Discussions –

Dwindling Convention attendance:

Approximately 200+ sang on the risers with auditorium attendances set at around 450+. The District has about 800 members. Lack of atten-

dance equals less money for Seneca Land projects.

Hotel Accommodations:

The Convention Committee does a great job "making our convention life" easier. When they booked rooms, they "blocked" a whole floor for barbershoppers. A designated "singing" floor can't be used by non-barbershoppers. Unused rooms translated to "lost hotel revenue" which makes it a little more difficult to set up the next convention.

Smoke Signals:

There is a move a foot, within the Seneca Land District, to put the *Smoke Signals*/Directory on the internet as a cost saving measure. The savings mentioned were in the 4K range. There are pros and cons to this approach. The cost savings are significant for the district. The added expense for district members would be significant to print off fifteen or more pages (I like hard copies) and takes time and money. There are a number of people who are not on the internet, would not receive timely information, and would have to rely on other people. I am not in favor of this option, but with declining convention attendance and declining membership over all, it is an issue that needs attention.

In closing, I would very much like to take a Tuesday evening, after the show, and spend an hour or so to have a general discussion regarding CoG matters. We haven't done this in a while. My policy has always been, and will continue to be, an Open Door policy where you ask me questions or voice concerns and I address them the best I can. The best way that I can think of is to openly discuss ideas with everyone having a voice. I'm looking at May 22 as prime time to do this. I'll pick the time slot and you ask the questions. Let's put a little more harmony in Harmony House.

Cream of Caramelized Onion and Roasted Shallot Soup

Nancy Porcellio, Al's girlfriend

I made this soup for the CoG Soup and Caroling night. It was a big hit and many asked for the recipe. It can be a little expensive and certainly isn't reduced calorie so I've included some substitutions if you'd like to try them. I haven't.

16 shallots, peeled (or try pearl onions)
 1 T Olive Oil
 3 ½ lbs onions, sliced thin
 ¾ cup (1 ½ sticks) unsalted butter (or try margarine)
 2 T (packed) brown sugar
 2 cups chicken broth
 1 cup beef broth
 ½ cup cream sherry (or cooking sherry)
 3 cups heavy cream (or try fat-free half and half)
 1 T dried thyme
 1 T dried rubbed sage
 3 T fresh thyme (optional)
 2 T chopped fresh parsley
 ½ tsp Tabasco (red pepper) sauce

Toss shallots w/ olive oil and roast on baking sheet at 375 degrees until browned, turning often, approximately 30 minutes.

Meanwhile melt butter on med-high heat in a 4 qt. soup pot and add onions and brown sugar. Cook until onions are deep golden brown – stirring often – approximately 50min.

Add shallots, sherry and dried herbs. Cook 5 minutes. And then add broth. Simmer 25 minutes. Add cream and simmer until soup thickens –about 10 minutes.

Add fresh herbs and pepper sauce and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Enjoy!

Using the Breath for Musical Effect

(It's more than just oxygen...it's part of the musical experience.)

Kevin Keller, music judge/ coach

There are a number of things that make a group "musical." One of the primary tools is the **delivery of the breath**. Yes, the *delivery* of the breath. *The breath is the most important part of each and every phrase; more important than any note that you sing.* Furthermore, the breath concludes the musical phrase rather than starting it.

When the breath is the most important part of the phrase **and** it concludes the phrase, you must energize the end of the phrase to raise the musical value of the breath. You will also sustain the energy through the phrase and build it, as opposed to plodding along and falling into chord worshipping (whether you intended to or not!). This reinforces the lyrical message of the song. Musically, you can sing louder, softer, faster, slower, more/less color, more/less texture. Just about anything you believe will work actually will work. You manage your breath better, because less air is expended needlessly at the beginning of the phrase. You improve your synchronization on attacks and releases. When the breath is "ordinary" (re: a place to get air), all that you can do is exactly what you were doing with dynamics, texture, color, tempo, etc. This is not musically appealing!

Take one of your repertoire songs and perform this exercise. Sing 32 bars where the breath is ordinary, a place to get air. Then sing those same 32 bars and focus on making the breath the most musically interesting part of the phrase. See what results you get and which you like better.

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