

## **“A Senior Perspective”**

**by**

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Well, here we go again. These weeks sure pass quickly... especially when one is on the go as we are. Just got back from Jacksonville where your Heart Of Florida Chorus competed in the Sunshine District Competition among all choruses in Florida that chose to compete. I'm happy to say that we performed well coming in 5<sup>th</sup> overall and Co-Champions of our AAA Category, along with the Miamians from... where else but the huge and infamous metropolis of Miami. We're proud of all the guys who helped us achieve the win.

The exciting part of the trip was listening to the fantastic quartets who were in competition. 20 quartets participated and it was a nail-biter. In my short stint of attending the Sunshine District competitions never have I witnessed the tremendous quality of pitch, blend, musicality, and stage presence as I did this trip. The goal of these yearly competitions is to determine those choruses and quartets who will represent Florida in the International Contest held annually in July. This year it will be held in the nation's official Music City, Nashville, TN. Four quartets came out of Jacksonville with a ticket to the big dance in Nashville. Quite an honor for the quartets and district as well. Two of the International Qualifying quartets from the district have appeared as guests on our annual shows.

The top quartet was “The Rounders” out of Ft. Lauderdale and their harmony production and ringing chords had the entire audience on their feet several times whistling and clapping in appreciation of their talent. They finished 6<sup>th</sup> place in the International Competition last year and are expected to move up this year.

The fun part of the trip was after the competition was over we spent the next 6 or 8 hours wandering from hospitality room to hospitality room eating and drinking the hosts' food and beverage. After that the evening consisted of roaming to and fro, finding a stairwell, elevator or a corner of the hallway where we could sing to our heart's content. Both Friday night and Saturday night saw myself other members

of our chorus not turning out the lights until well after 2:30 am. The average person doesn't understand why we do what we do... and sometimes we don't understand either... but it's like we're all searching for that perfect chord that will ring like none other. Once we've heard one... we've got to find another, and so it goes. You singers out there would love it.

The facility in which the contests are held is a fantastic edifice and Jacksonville should feel very proud of it. The same evening (Friday) we were holding the Preliminary Barbershop Quartet competition in the 1,500 seat Jim & Jan Moran Theater listening to close harmony tunes of "Georgia," "Hello My Baby," "Railroad Rag" and other Barbershop songs, the folks across the hall in the 1,800+ seat Times-Union Center for the Performing Arts were listening to the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra performing a couple of lively tunes written by our good buddies Rachmaninoff and Tchaikovsky. Truly, it is a center for the Performing Arts... of all genres. Let's hope the VPAA here in the Villages are successful in making the same dream come true for a like facility.

I'd like to leave you with a joke that probably won't be understood by anyone but other Barbershoppers. One must understand the uniqueness of a Barbershop baritone and what they bring to this hobby we enjoy. They are much maligned, many say deservedly so, but the part they sing definitely takes someone with a cranial capacity only hoped for by most of us. Of course, we all know that with increased brain-power there comes eccentricities that us mere mortals up the walls. The story goes that a terrorist organization had taken 91 baritones hostage and demanded \$100 Million ransom... and if their demand wasn't met by day's end, they would start releasing one baritone every hour until the money was paid.

You guys have a great week and keep watching for all the exciting happenings from our 50<sup>th</sup> High School reunion that will be taking place during the penultimate weekend this month.

By the way, I'd like to wish a belated Happy 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Bob Vincuilla, tenor in the quartet in which I sing, "Aged To Perfection." May you have many more.

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