

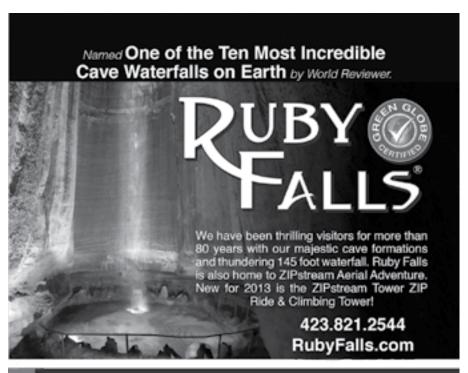
# The Choo Choo Chorus

**Presents** 

## **Celebrate Harmony**

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the Barbershop Harmony Society

GPS Auditorium, August 17, 2013, 7:00 PM





#### **WELCOME**

Welcome to Celebrate Harmony! The Choo Choo Chorus has put together a show that will entertain all ages, always our first goal, but we also hope to share with you the rich heritage of the Barbershop Harmony Society and the history of our unique style. The Society has played a large part in the lives of hundreds of Chattanooga-area men over the last half-decade and we have entertained thousands.

You will find brief histories of the Society and of the Choo Choo Chorus in this program and I encourage you to read them, but barbershop singing's impact is difficult to measure in years, milestones, and member counts. Each man has his own story of how he came to the hobby and how it has improved his life. Singing close harmony is great fun, but our chorus members are more familial than our three hours per week rehearsal would lead you to believe. We know whose wife is sick and who just had a child or grandchild; who is moving away and whose birthday it is. Barbershoppers are good people, so it is no surprise that many of us have found and lost close, long-term friends standing on some simple risers in a room on 8th St. Congratulations on 75 years of harmony, Barbershop Harmony Society, but know that the harmony I am celebrating tonight is the balance this group has offered me of friendship, charity, and adrenaline-pumping close-harmony acapella.

Thanks for coming and we hope you will enjoy yourself while we Celebrate Harmony!

-Wally Edmondson, President, Choo Choo Chorus (website: choochoochorus.org)

IN MEMORY OF DAVE COLLINS (1944-2013)







# THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

Over the past 75 years, hundreds of thousands of men have shared their passion of music, singing and friendship. We are, quite simply, the largest all-male singing organization in the world.

On Saturday night, April 11, 1938, twenty-five men gathered at a hotel in Tulsa, Oklahoma, at the invitation of two of them to sing in barbershop quartets. As more and more singers appeared in the next few months, Owen C. Cash and Rupert T. Hall founded the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc., abbreviated SPEBSQSA, a playful poke at the government agencies whose initials and regulations still plague us.

The style of "barbershop", now written as one word, began around 1900. It is not really four-part harmony, but rather, three parts harmonizing to a known melody, unaccompanied by instruments. The lead sings the melody and is joined by the bass, the lowest part, and the tenor, who sings consistently above the lead. The baritone, ranging above and below the melody, puts in the last note. There is usually one harmonizing chord on each melody note, although sometimes one or more voices add more notes. Often musical rules of time, expression, and word theme are sacrificed to create variety and pleasurable tension in order to delay the reaching of the expected chords.

With headquarters now in Nashville, the "Society," as Barbershoppers refer to it, has grown into a pastime for almost 30,000 men in the U.S. and Canada, as well as for affiliated groups in Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, and other countries. A few hundred choruses and over 2,000 quartets perform regularly in and near their communities, and often compete against each other beginning at the District level, and then at the International level. Chattanooga is part of the Dixie District. Recently the Society has changed its name to the Barbershop Harmony Society.

#### ABOUT THE CHOO CHOO CHORUS

Fifty-one years ago (May 17, 1962) the Chattanooga (Rock City) Chapter became a charter member of what is now the Barbershop Harmony Society.

The Rock City Chorus performed their first show on July 14, 1962 at the new Chattanooga High School auditorium. The Knoxville Smokyland Chorus and Knoxville Sweet Adeline Chorus and the Atlanta Peachtree Chorus along with four quartets, including Dixie District Champions, The Dignitaries, also performed that day.

In 1975 the chorus name was changed to The Mountain City Chorus and in 1982 the name was changed finally to The Choo Choo Chorus. The Chorus has had as many as 62 members in 1963 and as few as 12 members in 1970 and currently has 43 members.

Of ten different musical directors beginning with Dick Clem, our current director, Paul Blazek, has been director for the longest time (26 years). Thirty-two chapter quartets have competed for Dixie District honors over the years but only one quartet, the Chattanooga Shoe Shine Boys, has ever won a Dixie District Quartet Champion ship (1981).

From its inception the chorus has been busy singing in the Chattanooga area. With two contests each year, an annual show, a Christmas show and singing in the community, the men get their barbershop "fix" and provide audiences with lots of entertainment opportunities. With performances ranging from entertaining at a nursing home or retirement center to singing the National Anthem at sporting events to performing with the Chattanooga Symphony to various outdoor events, even providing strolling quartets for the Riverbend Festival, the chapter provides ample chances for men to indulge the inner "ham" while making people happy. An added benefit is health improvements as the result of singing - we've had men performing with us into their 90's!

The vision for the future is continued efforts for preservation of barbershop music, entertainment of patrons, help for service projects, and continued friendship with fellow barbershoppers.

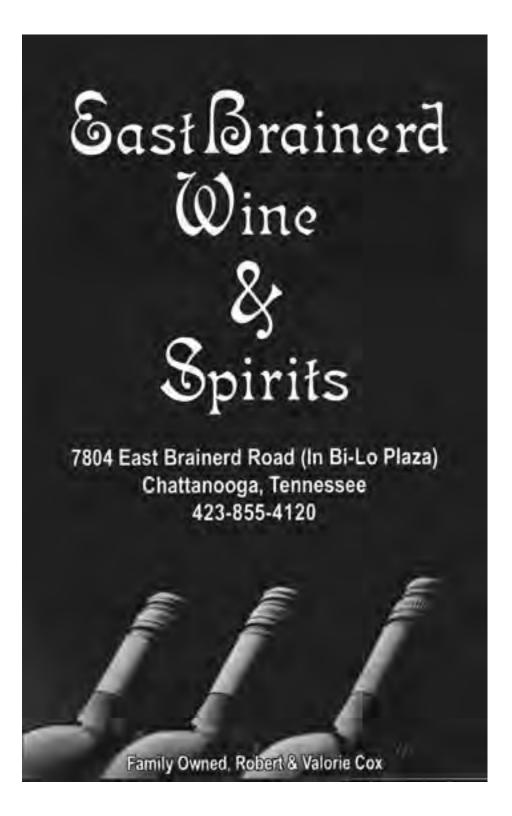


#### **CHOO CHOO CHORUS MEMBERS**

Paul Blazek
Lebron Brock
Beau Christian
Pat Crowe
Frank Delaney
Cameron Druyor
Wally Edmondson
Erby Erwin
Gary Fisher
David Fleury
•

Brooks Gist
Steven Grubb
Charlie Holder
Tom Keegan
JW Kirk
Benny Malone
Brandon Middlebrooks
Richard Poole
Rich Ptacin
David Rack

Daniel Randolph Marcellus Scott Bill Slack Wilbur Strickland Jesse Trigg Chet Tschetter David White Wendell Whitmire Chuck Wilson Steve Wixson



#### **OUR CHORUS DIRECTOR - PAUL BLAZEK**

Paul Blazek celebrates 26 years as our Director. Paul was born in Chicago, Illinois. He moved to Nashville in 1965 and then to Chattanooga in 1977. He and his wife Lindy have four children, Mary Kathryn, Melissa, Megan, and Matt, and grandchildren Maddie and Caleb. Matt and son-in-law David Grass have sung with the chorus at various times.

Paul joined the Nashville chapter in 1976 and sang in his first barbershop contest at the Cow Palace in San Francisco International that same year. He also competed with Nashville at '77 Philadelphia International and '78 Cincinnati International, and has recently rejoined the Music City Chorus at International in Philadelphia '10, Kansas City '11, and Portland '12.

He has been a member of several quartets: Round Mound of Sound (Nashville), Backstage, Stage II, Four Guys, and Honchos (Chattanooga.) Paul has attended Harmony College many times, attended the first Director's College in 1990, and many Society-sponsored schools over the years. He was Director of Tullahoma, TN chapter in 1984-85, assistant director of the Chattanooga chapter in 1985-86, and director of the Chattanooga chapter since 1987. He is currently on the Dixie District Board of Directors as VP, Financial Development. In his spare time, Paul is database administrator for TXI Systems, Inc.

#### ASSOCIATE CHORUS DIRECTOR - CHUCK WILSON

Chuck Wilson, a native Tennessean, moved to Chattanooga in 1968. He sang in choruses and quartets, and joined our chapter some 20 years later. He was the baritone for Classic Harmony Quartet. He attended Director's School and is a certified BHS Director.

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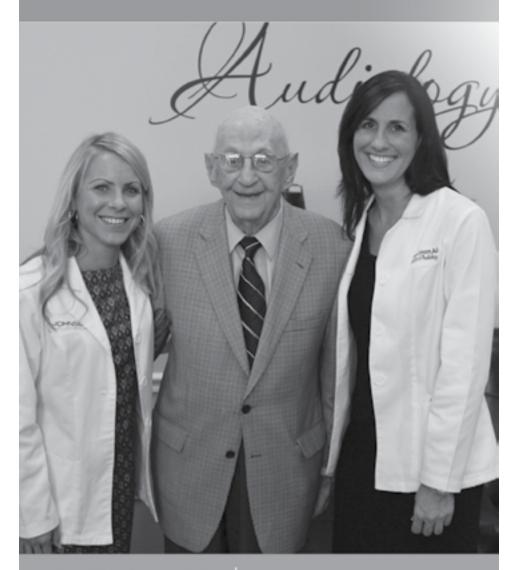
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#### THE CHOO CHOO CHORUS PRESENTS

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National Anthem (Chorus)
Celebrate Harmony (Chorus)
You're The Flower of My Heart, Sweet Adeline
(Quartet and Rock City 4)
Wait Till The Sunshines, Nelly (Chorus)

Waiting On The Robert E Lee (Silver Sound)
Hello, Mary Lou (Chorus)
When She Loved Me (Chorus)
I'll Fly Away (The Chattanooguys)
Ten Feet Off The Ground (Chorus)

Let Me Call You Sweetheart (Chorus)
Lida Rose/Will I Ever Tell You (Rock City 4)
Chattanooga Choo Choo (Chorus)
There is Love Wherever There is Song
Celebrate Harmony - Reprise (Chorus)

#### **INTERMISSION**

Armed Forces Medley (Chorus)

I Love To Hear That Old Barbershop Sound (Silver Sound)

Just a Little Street (The Chattanooguys)

Cross The Mason Dixon Line (Rock City 4)

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Lunch Break began singing together during the summer of 2007 at Harmony University just for fun during their lunch break hour, and haven't stopped since. Combining humor, youthful energy, and good old fashioned barbershop harmony, Lunch Break brings a unique brand of entertainment to audiences of all ages.



**Shane Scott,** tenor, is a preacher and professional talker. The quartet's self proclaimed "comedic genius" lends his mighty pen free of charge to the quartet as he crafts parody lyrics still resonating in the funny bones of all who are blessed to bear witness. Shane resides in Mount Pleasant with his wife Kristi.

**Eddie Holt**, lead, croons a melody as best as he can while adeptly dodging the advances of his many legions of fans. While Eddie is a webmaster for the Barbershop Harmony Society, avoiding the limelight and protecting his personal space is really his full time job. Eddie lives in Mount Juliet with his wife Laura and their two children, twins Owen and Olivia.

**KJ McAleesejergins**, baritone, is the newest staff member at Harmony Foundation International where the gift of harmony is the mission and Youth In Harmony is the goal. KJ and his lovely wife Emily serve in the National Guard on weekends jamming with their band, and there's no way to satiate his appetite for ranch.

Mike O'Neill, bass, lives in Hendersonville with his wife Jenny and three daughters Katelyn, Kylie, and Kelsey. Mike enjoys a close head shave as much as anyone. Mike works for the Barbershop Harmony Society as well, and travels the land far and wide unleashing his voluminous directorial training skills on unsuspecting choruses and quartets the world over.





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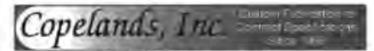
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