



The ECHO June 2004



The monthly chapter newsletter of the Alexandria Harmonizers

Who Are We? by Bill Aarhus

The excitement and buzz surrounding *The Harmonizers'* package for International is growing and we can feel something extraordinary "in the air." **Cindy Hansen** reminds us that our goal is nothing short of the Gold. **Mike Everard** encourages us to win in Louisville for Maxine.

But who are we?

There are as many answers to that question as there are men on the risers. And for the upcoming weeks, I'll take the approach offered by **Cindy Hansen**. Just ten minutes on the internet and I found the man I will honor in Louisville.

Ramon Chacon - a musical name, if ever I've heard one, grew up a migrant farm worker in the 1950s. He was born into a family of migrant workers, and spent his childhood "covered in peach fuzz, dirt and sweat with pesticide in his nose and teeth." Reminiscent of "When 'taters need sprayin'..." I thought, so I read on.

Not having resources for entertainment, Ramon and the other children played with whatever they found. He watched as his younger brother of ten years picked up a blasting cap from the ground, which exploded and left his sibling with only seven digits and one eye. In the life of a migrant worker, not even child's play was safe.

Most striking were the parallels of the migrant community to this hobby we love. The migrant community was very close-knit - looking out for each other, realizing they were the only ones who would. Ramon said that he learned the importance of living a life for the community, instead of the individual, as he learned self-discipline. I could not help but think of living a life for the individual as being the very definition of our friend "Lazy Bones."

Ramon remembers watching cars pass by the fields as he worked and wishing he, too, could just drive away - much as we leave that life behind at the end of the package. For Ramon, this dream became reality. Since then, Ramon has passed the fields in his car, looking at the young boys picking, and he wonders if they wish they were him.

Today, he is Dr. Ramon Chacon, Professor of History at Santa Clara University. And, so I emailed him and he responded. Stay tuned to find out what happens next.

In the meantime, if you wish to share your identity for Louisville with the Harmonizer family, please send your story to The Echo editor at BobCaldwell@Email.com soon, then look for it in the next edition.



Do More In '04

While there have been many recognitions in '04 for doing more, and all worthy recipients, your editor thinks that **Bob Wachter** deserves special recognition. Since January, Bob has been gradually working his way through the chorus giving vocal assessment and individual coaching (commonly referred to as *Harmonizer U.*) on how we can improve voice production as part of our approved chapter management plan. At the time of this publication more than 90 members had been exposed to at least one session. While Bob has conducted similar training at his home for a very long time, since the beginning of the year he has been conducting these sessions as a breakout of the chorus rehearsal. Bob has big shoulders and an even bigger heart to take on this task. Some time grab one of his big hands and shake it vigorously thanking him.

The Class of 2004

Surely you've noticed the flow of "new blood" into the ranks for The Harmonizers this year. This year's class includes some of the finest singers and otherwise musically talented men to join the chapter in some time. For example, allow me to mention at least a couple that come to mind instantly (some are in my quartet, *7th Street*). **Scott Risley**, new bass section leader, is a Pioneer District Quartet Champion. **Ben Luttge**, tenor, is an accomplished pianist with a degree in music from the University of Florida. Several others of this class were barbershoppers in other chapters so arrived prepared to sing serious barbershop with the Harmonizers. At least four of these men competed at the recent division quartet contests and all qualified for M-AD quartet contest in October. Join me in welcoming these and others in the Class of 2004 as they strengthen our ranks in Louisville: **Ron Dionne, John Dowd, Paul Grimes, Carrol Kinsey, Lew Klinge, Ben Luttge, Lou Manfre, Chuck Powell, Scott Risley, Dennis Ritchey, Larry Shelton, Bill Stewart, David Vernon, and Eric Wallen**. Oh, yes, and guys, do not forget to keep your bears and rabbits with you all the way to Louisville. If you are caught without, the penalty is \$1.

Quartet Men Strut Stuff by Jeremy Richardson

A special congratulations to the 31 Harmonizers in 14 quartets who represented our chapter in the recent Division contests! In addition to **RIPTIDE!** and **Phat Cats** representing the Harmonizers at International in July, the quartet **MADIX** with new Harmonizer, **Joe Eckert** on bass, will lead the M-AD representatives in the Collegiate Contest.

Iguanas in Flight (Sawyer, Colosimo, Lewellen)
Bachelor Party (Garling, Tepe, Rub, Reynolds)
Limited Edition (Nessler, Azzam, Yates)
Young Guns (E. Wallen)
Hark! (Plaag, Hoseth, Cox, Vernon)
7th Street (Luttge, Caldwell, Eckert, Yates) [Pictured on stage]
ENTOURAGE (Matuszewski)
Mercury (Sutton, Aiuto, Schwartz, Louis)
Four in the Morning (Geipel)
Four Good Measure (Cotton)
66 West (Ray Johnson)
Virginia Ham (Fuller)
Carousel (Kousen, Pence, Fuller, Huber)



After Yankee Dime who qualified for International and gets a bye to the fall quartet contest, this is how our quartets rank going into the fall competition: Iguanas In Flight (Southern Champs) 1st, Bachelor Party 4th, Limited Edition 9th, Young Guns 12th, Hark! 17th, 7th Street 18th, Mercury (retired) 20th

Monthly Newsletter Revived by Bill Aarhus

This edition of *The Echo* is the first *The Harmonizers* have seen since November 2003. For many, many years “Ye Editor” of *The Echo* was **Wilbur Sparks**, a leader of our chapter, District and the Society. In July 2002, **Scipio Garling** had taken over the quill during Wilbur’s prolonged illness. Late last year Scipio asked to be relieved and The Harmonizers have been without a monthly newsletter since that time and our committee has been searching for a replacement

Recently **Bob Caldwell** has agreed to try his hand as our new Echo editor. In December 2000, Bob joined the chapter when he took a job with ATS in McLean. His lovely wife of ten years, Sharon, “holds down the fort” in Midlothian near Richmond while Bob commutes to northern Virginia weekly, works four days and returns home most weekends except when there is something important on the Harmonizer calendar. Besides quartetting, Bob enjoys spending time at their summer weekend getaway at Lake Gaston on the VA/NC border.

An avid quartetter, Bob is familiar to most for his participation in Southern Division Champs *Treasure Chest* and *City Slickers*. Recently we have seen heard him leading *Encore!* and now *7th Street* who qualified for District in the recent division competition. A surprise to me was that Bob was **The Virginians’** newsletter editor for more than two years until he accepted the job in NoVA. He had taken over when **Tom Pearce**, P.R.O.B.E. Bulletin Editor of the Year left the chapter to barbershop closer to home in Charlottesville. More than three years later The Virginians are still without a monthly newsletter editor.

Please assist Bob in this endeavor by providing input and/or articles for *The Echo* at his request and in a timely manner. If you have suggestions for articles of interest for the newsletter Bob has said, “My email box is always open.” That’s obvious by the flow if humor and other info into the Hamonizers-Personal Yahoo Group.

In Tribute To Maxine by Jack Pitzer

In a word, Maxine Millard was class. She could laugh, take a good joke from the guys and help the ladies serve a tea. She cheered louder than any of the 10,000 at International conventions for our quartets and her beloved *Harmonizers*.

She walked the walk when it came to support of the chapter and our music. She lived her motto, “If it is to be, it is up to ME!”

Maxine was “connected” throughout the city with political, military, governmental, social and business folks. She was our contact with Willard Scott and Ed Walker. She helped gold medal quartets find a place to rehearse in the DC area. Who could count how many senior citizens she visited during the last few years. And how many of them came to the Harmonizer shows because Ms. M made it possible.

She loved to shop and loved to share. She loved to sing and talk about it. She loved meeting people and then not forgetting them. She smiled and made you want to do it too.

Her example is one to emulate and follow.

Ada & Glen Stearns

(1937 on farm outside Arapahoe, NE)

“Our oldest daughter, Virginia, graduated this June down the road there, 8 miles from the farm, at Edison High School. She rode here bicycle back and forth even through the winter. We were right proud of her, too. Not only was she was the first farm girl in the family to graduate HS but she did it with honors, I tell ya. Finished 3rd in her class of 33 seniors, she did. More’n that, she was a hard worker and got herself a scholarship to pay 1/3 of her tuition, room and board, for four whole years over to the university.

It wasn’t to be though. The drought hit us bad this year. Wiped out our entire crop. There won’t be no education for our Virginia with barely enough food on the table to feed the family. If it weren’t for the fish in the Republican River runnin’ through Arapahoe we mighta gone hungry this summer.

Hasn’t been any easy life for Virginia neither ‘cause when she was just four her sister, Marie, was born on Christmas Day 1923. My first wife, Mayme, died three weeks later from the scarlet fever contracted during the birth. She’s buried in the cemetery there just north of town. Ada, my third wife helped me raise the two girls and their older brother, Dallas. My second wife, the city girl I call her, well, she din’t last long out here in the Dust Bowl. Shoulda had better sense than to marry her, though she did love my girls.

Speakin’ of that boy of mine, he ain’t nearly the worker Virginia is. Got a taste of the lazyiness, that boy. Spends mosta his time loungin’ in the shade. Might have to find him a job down at the town garage if he’s ever to earn his keep. He does like tinkering with the tractor.

No more time to be talkin’ to you, sonny. There’s crops to be replanted and them bugs ain’t gonna just fall off the vines. Got to hook up this here plow to that mule in the barn over there. Come back when I got more time to talk. There’s plenty stories to tell.”

*Virginia Stearns Caldwell, born Nov 1919, Edison, NE – died April 2000 in Richmond, VA and is buried in Arapahoe NE. The story above is true. My mom never did get her education. A few years after HS while working in a diner there in town she met my father, a US service man from VA in the Army during WWII, just passing through. He married her and brought her back to the east coast where she raised five upstanding citizens. In Louisville I will represent my grandfather, **Henry Glen Stearns**.*



From The Calendar

Not a complete calendar, that is available in the Harmo-Gram weekly.

Jun_11-13 Chorus Retreat for Louisville Competition (Greg Lyne & Cindy Hansen)

Jun 17-20 Harmony College East, Salisbury, MD

Jun 29 (no chapter meeting)

Jun 27-Jul 4 International Convention, Louisville, KY

Jul 6 Hospital Singout (no chapter meeting)

Jul 17 Harmonizers Family Picnic

Jul 22 Fort Ward Park Show 7:30

Jul 24 Ocean Grove, NJ Performance

Aug 1-8 Harmony College, St. Joseph, MO

Aug 6 Market Square Show, Alexandria, VA

Aug 14 Chorus at DC United Soccer Game

Aug 31 Dog Days of August, Manassas, VA

*Editor’s Note: Articles not otherwise attributed are written by your editor. While this edition of **The Echo** is a short three pages, expect your next one to be much more comprehensive and just FILLED with your stories of the man you will represent on stage in Louisville because you are going to send those to me. Right? Pictures are welcome especially if available in .jpg format. If not, I have access to a scanner.*