

# Travel the Road to Wildwood for District!

Welcome to The Echo's Wildwood issue! Inside we've got:

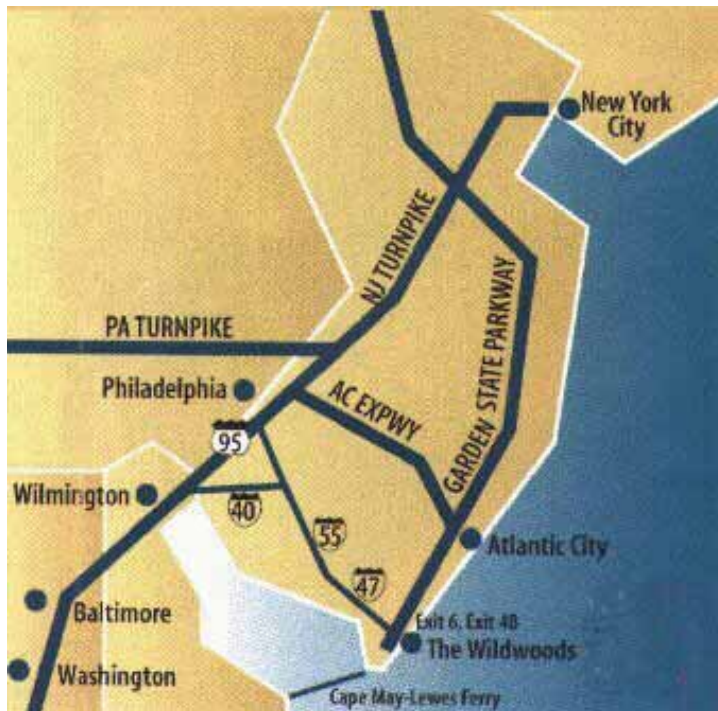
Reminders from John Thompson of how to plan for District;

Tips from Dean Rust on polishing your performance on the package;

Inspiration and gossip from Gary Bibens on the upcoming competition;

Interesting details on the recent history of the city of Wildwood and its new convention center;

and a breathless moment from Jack Pitzer on our first District contest win.



But that's not all! The 411 on Dog Days from Bob Wachter, our new CD from Bill Ward, the Board's innovative CLIIC CLAAC program from its originator Mike Calhoun, Scott's dinner celebration from Mike Everard, and a special exclusive: Scott Werner's farewell address to the chapter he's been with for 38 years.

Enjoy this issue of The Echo!



### Scott Says Farewell

On August 16th, Linda and I will be on our way to our new home. Although we are looking forward to it, we will miss the many friendships we made here in Virginia, particularly in The Harmonizers. Thank you all for the wonderful send off, both on the 20th and Tuesday, July 30, my last Tuesday night as your Musical Director. Thanks, too, for the wonderful notes and letters you wrote. I am humbled by your support and love.



I know you will give 100% to Terry and Will during this Interim period. Continue to be proud to be a Harmonizer and work at being the best you can be.

God bless you all. Come see us in Florida.

Love,  
Scotty

### Highlights from Scott's Celebration

Two hundred people were seated in Westley Hall when Scott and Linda Werner entered to a standing ovation to begin the evening's "salute and testimonial" celebration. Up on stage were a gathering of Scott Werner fans. Scott turned to emcee Mike Everard and said, "Looks like a roast to me!"

First up was his daughter, Pam Fultz, and presented the family side of our director, to sidesplitting effect. Jack Pitzer enlightened the audience with stories of Scott's administrative talents as two-time president. John Adams came from North Carolina to reminisce about all the years he and Scott sang in their two joint quartets, and John Hohl joined the festivities, sharing stories on the quartet life, the road, and the international stage. Traveling from Pennsylvania, Mike Riordan, who was president in 1970 when Scott first became our director, shared his memories as did former associate director Mike Wallen.

Freddy King sent a warm message, while Scott's former boss, Maxine Millard told some great stories of his day's as a federal employee in the Geological Survey. Golf buddy Bob Bowman added more than his two cents about Scott's other pasttime!

A number of gifts and presentations from the chapter followed, culminating in the golf cart given the Werners to transport them around their new retirement community.

### Family News

As we went to press, we learned that Harmonizer Jim Pyle's father died last week. The chapter will be sending a condolence card, but if you know Jim personally, give him a call and let him know we're thinking of him in his time of loss.



### A Moment in Harmonizer History: Our First District Win

by Jack Pitzer

Not many members on the risers today were there the first time the Alexandria Harmonizers won their first district contest. But that was a milestone in the chapter’s history that propelled us to where we are today.

Mike Everard shared with me some remembrances about that event.

“We went to Ocean City in 1977 and we were all excited because we thought we had a chance to win. We had been fifth in 1975 and 1976 but it was pointed out by Dave Wilt that we were only 100 points out of first place the previous year, even though we came in fifth. We went there and we did the two songs ‘I Tore Up Your Picture When You Said Goodbye’ and ‘No Wonder I’m Happy.’

“At the end of the contest, they announced from the stage, as they always do, the top choruses. And from the fourth place on they announced Dapper Dans as fourth. Well, the Dapper Dans had been district champions the year before. Next were the Pine Barons from Cherry Hill announced as third. And then announced as second place was Dundalk. We didn’t know if we were going to be fifth again or even sixth and they announced the Alexandria Harmonizers as the 1977-1978 district champs.

“I still remember the Dapper Dans coming across the auditorium – some of them actually jumping over chairs – and I thought they were going to mow us down. In fact they were there to congratulate us as new district champs. From my own personal standpoint, believe it or not, the Friendship Fire Company [Mike Everard’s quartet] had a paid job that night at 5:30 for the Firemen’s Association that was meeting in Ocean City at the same time. Then we raced back to do our evening recognition as district champs.

“The next morning at 10:00 I got a knock on my door from Bill Sando, the

chapter president. He said, ‘Let’s take a walk down the beach.’ We did. He said, ‘It’s time to put your money where your mouth is. You’re the man with the plan; you’re the chairman to take us to Cincinnati [site of the 1978 International contest]. Between Jack Pitzer and I and a couple of others we had created the togetherness dinner, the victory breakfast, the wine and cheese party, etc. at district level and now we were going to take those traditions to International.



“The night we won I think we stayed up until 5 a.m. The winning of the district in 1977 was our first big breathless moment for the chapter. It took the chapter 25 years to go from 1953 to 1977 to win the district. An overnight success took a quarter of a century. And it took another 25 years to be at the top of the international level.

Mike said that he was program vice president in 1975 and he was frustrated since he had won district contests twice with his previous chapter, Davenport, IA. “The Alexandria chapter was a good solid 9<sup>th</sup> place chorus. When I moved here, I had to decide what chapter to join. Fairfax won district in 1972 and I thought I had joined the wrong chapter.

“In 1975 I had come up with a 10-point talking paper to improve the chorus. The board thought it was too much – they didn’t want to work that hard. That paper is what Sando remembered. I said if we ever get to International, we might be a one-shot wonder so these were the things we should do. He said ‘You’re it.’ So I became chairman to go to Cincinnati in 1978.”

**continued next page**



### Moment, continued

Mike also reminisced about one of the songs used to win the that contest: “When we did ‘I Tore Up Your Picture When You Said Goodbye,’ Alan Durick was standing on stage right holding up a piece of paper during rehearsals taped together to look like a torn photograph. When we went to International, that didn’t work. We needed a picture. We asked people to give us some old pictures and Maxine Millard gave us an envelope filled with old pictures. Bill Cody and I got together in a band room at Manassas High School where we doing a show and we went through them and found a picture of an old fashioned girl. It turned out to be Maxine’s Aunt Alda, who was 90 years old at the time and living in Denver. She was 18 at the time the picture was taken. For several years when we sang that song we used that picture. We once sent a telegram to her telling her we used her picture – a picture of Victorian innocence.”



## Back to Visual Basics!

by Dean Rust, head of visual presentation

I recall a Darryl Flinn coaching session in the 1980s where he started by saying: “Gentlemen, this is a pitch pipe.” His point was that we achieve excellence only by constant attention to the basics of good barbershopping. Geri has imparted much advice and teaching to us over the years in visual artistry. The result has been a steady improvement in our performing skills – leading to appreciative audiences around the country and to success on the competition stage. But, as we all know, it is important that we continue to get better. We need to be more consistent and to bring a high level of emo-

tional involvement and precision of movement to every song. I believe every member of the chorus is committed to improvement. How do we do it?

At times this will require work outside Tuesday night – particularly when trying to reinforce a new visual package or preparing for competition. **But, more simply, much can be accomplished by seriously practicing the visual basics every Tuesday night during chorus rehearsal.** Not enough chorus members do this consistently; some of us are too casual about our visual performance during rehearsals. I assume none of us would sing at rehearsal without attention to back resonance, vowel integrity, full support, and sustained and energized phrases – among other key vocal skills. Well, why then would you allow that rehearsal performance to be sub-par overall by neglecting basic visual skills.

There are different ways to practice the basics of visual performance on Tuesday night ([see list on the next page](#)). We can start by doing a “visual” warmup while doing our vocal warmup. Prepare to perform; adjust that attitude; do the warmup in good performing posture.

The Harmonizers offer us amateur singers the opportunity to do something as a team that virtually none of us could do alone – to be among the best in the world. Wow! I enjoy being a part of this group, not only for the friendships and fellowship, but because of its strong commitment to the artistic performance of our form of a capella music. I feel fortunate to be part of a process that translates the imagination of writers and arrangers into a performance that touches the emotions of our audiences.

Portland is behind us, but it’s still “Up to Me.” Bring to the Chapter meeting a strong desire to improve your visual performance each week. If you pay attention to the basics as you rehearse, you will achieve that goal. Please bring your comments and questions to the visual team. Your quad leader is there to help. We’ll do our best.



## Visual Basics List

1. The start of a song is very important. **Be in the proper stance with your weight slightly forward. Press as you start.** Prior to singing, your emotion should provide a hint of the lyric line to come. If you start right, you have a better chance of sustaining strong emotion throughout the song and of getting and keeping audience involvement.
2. **Stay involved through the song;** don't allow yourself to be distracted or to show less emotion during rests or when not singing words. **Stay with the prescribed focals.** Wandering focals or eyes undermine visual unity.
3. Allow your face and body to **show ranges of emotion consistent with the lyric.** You need to know the story for each song and tell it from the heart. **Relax, be natural; don't tense up.** Use your shoulders and upper body when it makes sense. **Keep your body energized.**
4. **Be aware of others** next to you on the same row when executing choreography. Be aware of others in front of you on focals. Attention to these factors will help to promote a unit look.
5. **Make more of an effort to perfect the focals and moves.** We'll try to provide constructive suggestions for improvement out front. Followup with questions off the risers to your quad leader or to me. You can't bring full visual artistry to a song without knowing "cold" the focals and moves. The power of the choreography to convey meaning is much greater when done with a sense of confidence and accurate timing. Conversely, lack of synchronization in movement can serve as a distraction and negatively impact the audience.

## Our New CD!

It's been 5 years since the Harmonizers released **Live on Stage**. Since then, they have won another gold medal (Atlanta, 1998) and two bronzes in Nashville (2001) and Portland (2002). Many other new songs have been added to the repertoire and we discovered some old ones that had never been recorded.

The committee throughout all this consisted of myself as producer, Ken Fess and Bill Cody as M&PVP, Scott Werner, Terry Reynolds, Chuck Hunter and Geri Geis. They adjudicated the songs, suggested the order, and approved the final master. Chris Beuchler joined later, adding much needed administrative organization to the group. Scip Garling provided the theme for the cover art, the actual photograph being shot by Chuck Botts on the patio of Chuck Hunter's Georgetown townhouse. The inside photograph is from the Atlanta performance.

Triple Disc of Fredericksburg, Virginia, was the production company, the same that produced the **Live** album. Only now, they only do CDs, so no cassette tapes were made. Production was slated to be finished in time to have the disc at the Harmony Marketplace in Portland. Some last minute problems getting the rights to the songs delayed us by two weeks. That may have been a blessing in disguise for Triple Disc. I took two discs to their office, one with the music, one with the production files. You guessed it – they made a thousand CDs of pictures, word files and spreadsheets. They have promised to replace them by mid August.

We hope at that time you pick up your copy from Chris Beuchler on a Tuesday night or at one of our shows. Happy listening.

The Welcome Song  
 Gospel Medley  
 Blue Velvet  
 Kiss the Girl  
 I'll Walk With God  
 Puttin' on the Ritz  
 If You Were the Only Girl in the World  
 Alexander's Rag Time Band

Moments to Remember  
 Hooked on Classics Medley  
 When You Wish Upon a Star  
 Old St. Louie  
 Battle Hymn of the Republic  
 In the Wee Small Hours of the  
 Morning/Always  
 Steppin' Out Medley



## Plan for Wildwood!

by John Thompson, District Competition Chair

District Competition in Wildwood, New Jersey during the weekend of 4 October through 6 October, 2002 is a *NEW* beginning for The Alexandria Harmonizers, a *NEWERA*. The Chorus will be given the chance to achieve *HIGHER SCORES* on the District level and this can be achieved if each and every one of us give 200% of everything that we have to give to our highly-capable Interim Director, Terry Reynolds.

### If you plan to compete, you need to sign up and buy a ticket.

If you are planning to be on the competition stage, first of all you **need a ticket** in order to compete. Please sign-up to let us know that you intend to compete with the chorus and how many tickets you need. The price for the convention ticket is \$25.00. The chorus will then arrange to buy the tickets in one big 'Harmoblock'.

### If you plan to just watch instead, you still need to buy a ticket.

If you are not competing with the Chorus but want to have a seat within the HarmoBlock, please let us know on the sign up sheet.

### Make housing arrangements.

The chapter will arrange housing in a common hotel for any Harmonizers going to Wildwood. Bob Ulibarri is heading this effort and has already sent out sign up information. Please think about your roommate or accompanying friends or family, decide on who and how many are in your room and contact Bob as soon as possible.

### Sign up for the Togetherness Dinner

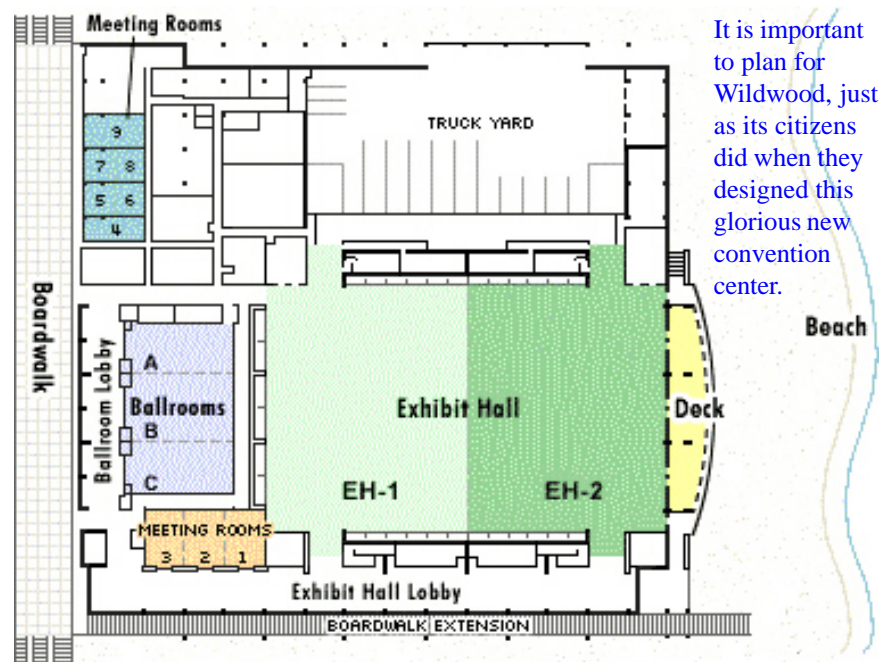
This is a family gathering Saturday, October 5, and a great time for everyone to get together after the competition. Please sign up for the event when the sign-up sheet and the rest of the information comes out.

### Will there be a Hideaway for chapter and family?

Tentatively, having the chapter rent an extra suite as a *Hideaway* is being discussed and is a great way for the chorus and family to have a place to unwind. Snacks and drinks will be available

So **SIGN UP EARLY, GET YOUR TICKETS**, the Togetherness Dinner, the Hideaway, **GIVE 200%** for the MAD District Competition.

### It's Great To Be A Harmonizer!!





# So, What Is Dog Days?

by Bob Wachter

About fifteen years ago the Bull Run Troubadors started an annual meeting with choruses in Northern Virginia. Participants included small choruses from Winchester, Fauquier County, Montgomery County, D. C., and Fredricksburg.

The first meeting was advertised as a free concert at the Manassas Armory, and 500 people showed up. The next year, area Barbershoppers and their families were to be the primary beneficiaries because there was no advertising to the general public. For the next two years the event was held at the All Saints School meeting hall. Everyone brought light snacks. It is reported that Biff Gaut took over the Troubadors in time to Direct at two Dog Days events at the church, and that the August weather and the lack of air conditioning in the church converged and the “Dog Days of August” gathering became simply “Dog Days”.



I am told that “Dog Days” hosts decided to meet each year on the last Tuesday in August so the Harmonizers can entertain and enjoy a party on one of their regular meeting nights.



*The Buckhall Fire Station.*

The Harmonizers sang at least once in the un-airconditioned church facilities which proved to be an endurance test for singing in a steamy environment.

By a stroke of good management and wisdom the meeting location changed to an air-conditioned facility at the Buck Hall Fire Station (7190 Yates Ford Road, Manassas), but the name “Dog Days” stuck. Our chorus has sung at “Dog Days” for all of my ten years in the Harmonizers.

This demonstration of good will and good fellowship has become a central part of the continuing success of the event. Our performance is considered the high point of the evening. The more of us who partici-

Although there are no hot dogs at Dog Days, light refreshments are always provided.



ate, the more the members of neighboring chapters enjoy the show. It has become a proud tradition.

So for the sake of solidarity with our local fellow barbershoppers (and for fun!) let’s all sing at “Dog Days”!



## Show and Tell

Just about everything in Wildwood, N.J. has been touched by "Doo Wop."

The term describes the distinctively kitschy flair of the town's 200 motels, which were built in the 1950s and 60s. Reflecting the popular cultural themes of the era, the motels have Hawaiian and Polynesian designs, Space Age accents or rock 'n' roll details.



The charred entrance is all that remains of Dracula's Castle, destroyed by arson on Jan. 16.

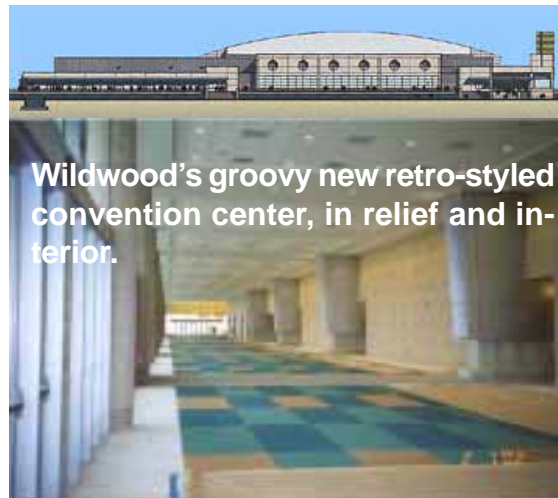
In the last decade, the recently reburbished motels have sparked the town's renaissance. Wildwood redecorated City Hall in "Doo Wop" and added purple and red cement to downtown sidewalks for a fantastical touch. As this once-dilapidated seaside town opens a mammoth new convention center and applies for a listing in the National Register of Historic Places, Wildwood has made a remarkable turnaround. "Wildwood has redefined itself," said Mayor Duane Sloan, who was born and raised in the town. "Six or seven years ago, it was down on its luck. Now we're in a position where we're moving forward very rapidly and the price of real estate is rising very rapidly."

In the post-war period, Wildwood became a major destination for families drawn to the town's boardwalk, amusement parks and lovely beach. Passing motorists were lured off the road by flashy neon signs. Despite its unique structures and seaside location, the town fell into decline by the 1980s.

But a little over a decade ago, Jack Morey and other residents founded the Doo Wop Preservation League and raised money from local organizations to preserve the historic structures and use them to promote the town. Architects at Yale University, the University of Pennsylvania and Kent State University



were brought in to survey the area and make recommendations. With most of the hotels renovated, the town hopes to fill its 12,000 rooms with groups from the new convention center. "The convention center was the catalyst for the economic development we're seeing now," said Sloan. "Once the plans were unveiled, they sparked a lot of interest, and now that it's completed, it's an asset to our area." He said the town is trying to extend the tourist season into the spring and fall.



Wildwood's groovy new retro-styled convention center, in relief and interior.

The waterfront convention center has 75,000 square feet of exhibition space and concert seating for 7,000. The center expects to add about \$7 million a year to the local economy. "The convention center is really just a big box and boxes aren't cultural," said Morey. "They allow tourism to congregate but they are not drivers of tourism." The optimism that has accompanied the center has brought plans for condos and for a convention center hotel, according to Morey. Mayor Sloan said that though dozens of condos are being built the town is careful to zone for open space to ensure that Wildwood does not "sacrifice the aesthetic to the development of the town." "We're very cautious with how we're going about development," added Sloan.



## So, What is CLIIC/CLAAC?

by Mike Calhoun

What the hey is a CLIIC/CLAAC? Before answering that question I would first like to comment on why a CLIIC/CLAAC?

At the board retreat last fall we unanimously agreed that the member was our most important asset and was in fact our internal customer. The chapter is a totally volunteer membership organization. Each of us pays dues to belong and we invest valuable time and resources in the activities of the chapter.

Given that fact, we determined the #1 issue that the entire board should address was [Creating a Customer/Member Service Culture](#) in the chapter. While the chapter can't be all things to all people at a minimum leadership must know and exceed the needs and interests of a vast majority of the members to insure the wholehearted participation of each one of us in all chapter activities. The member is the key to achieving chapter goals and to success in every endeavor.

The first step was determining what we had to do to create a customer/member service culture. These included the following:

- Our first concern must always be “what are we doing to meet and exceed the members needs and interests?”.
- Embrace the customer/member service concept without reservation and recognize that it is EVERY leaders responsibility.
- Consistently back up our words with our actions.
- Treat every member as if he is the most important member in the chapter.
- Work tirelessly to break down all vestiges of “we and them”. Being a team means more than just words.
- Listen empathetically to every and all comments and if possible give a considered honest response to questions and concerns. There must be no secrets.

- Recognize that it was essential for the leaders in the chapter to be visibly, constantly and sometimes irrationally committed to the concept. This required leaders to demonstrate a caretaker quality and operate in a manner that encourages confidence, trust and loyalty.
- Create a proactive program to clearly demonstrate the chapter's commitment to customer/member service— CLIIC/CLAAC (Chapter Leadership Inspiration & Information Committee/Chapter Leadership Attitude Adjustment Committee).

Board members and two additional chapter members were assigned five chapter members who they would speak with on an ongoing basis to discuss chapter activities. The primary objective of these contacts is to:

- Give every member the opportunity to provide input.
- Answer all questions and address all concerns they could.
- Insure the member that his concerns and input would be taken seriously.
- Follow up on everything and attempt to successfully address all concerns.
- Insure that the member knows and understands what is happening.
- Underscore how important each member is.

In presenting this program to the chapter at the beginning of the year I noted that regardless of what some people might think that all wisdom and knowledge did not reside with the leadership. We are eager to get inside your frame of reference, to see issues as you see them and understand how you feel. I also underscored several things.

- If you so desired your input would be confidential.
- While we would welcome your participation in solving a problem or addressing an issue it was not required. No one will ask you to chair a committee.
- Leadership is genuinely trying to know and understand how you feel about what we are doing and how we are doing it.
- We are committed to carefully listening to what you have to say.
- We want your week in and week out experience as a Harmonizer to be the best it possibly can be.



# Writing the Next Chapter

by Gary Bibens, Chapter President

I would like to pose a question to each and every one of you reading this...

**What do you want the next chapter in the Harmonizer history book to say?**

Our long-time director and friend is preparing to start the next chapter of his life, and we have the opportunity of writing the next chapter of ours. What would you like it to say? We can become the best chapter we can be by working hard, perfecting our craft and striving for that fifth Gold Medal, or we can become complacent and rest on our past accomplishments. I don't think anyone in the Chapter wants to become complacent, so it's up to each one of us individually to make sure that doesn't happen.

We have several performances coming up in the next few months, Market Square, St. Mary's County, and our Fall Extravaganza to name a few, but this year more than ever we need to focus on the Mid Atlantic District competition in Wildwood, NJ. You're probably asking why I think we need to put more emphasis on Wildwood..... We'll let me tell you what I think.

This year we will be under a microscope. Our friends, the judges, and especially other chapters will all be watching us to see if we skip a beat, to see if there might be a possible glitch in the Harmonizer machine. Maybe now is the time that the chain will finally break and another chorus will take our place as the MAD representative to Montreal.

One chorus that will want to give us a run for our money is Five-Towns College in Long Island. They competed for the first time in a SPEBSQSA contest and came in first with 943 points, beating Easton by 19 points. Pretty impressive with only 20 guys on stage. (8 of them being from the college quartets 4-Be-We and Draw Four). Do we have another Northern Lights to look out for? Maybe! And let's not forget Big Apple, Richmond and Easton.

We can't let our guard down. We need to show them that we are better than ever and under the direction of Terry Reynolds, the Harmonizers are still the best chorus in the Mid Atlantic District!

## Next Issue

**Membership is a life or death issue.**

