



The Central States District of the  
Barbershop Harmony Society

# The Serenade

Volume 72

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## Socialize, Perform, and Improve Homeward Bound still serving purpose after 40 years

**Don Fuson**

*Member, Homeward Bound Quartet*

The Homeward Bound quartet was formed in 1986. It represents some of the elements of why we are quartet barbershoppers. We like to socialize. We like to perform in front of community audiences. We like to get coaching, especially at CSD Conventions. We like to strive to do "just a little better" than the last time.

Over the years, we have had to replace parts because of moving away, because of health, and also because of sharing the grief of a loss of two active singers.

Currently, there are eight registered members in Homeward Bound, and we gather current and some former singers, along with spouses and friends, each holiday season for a dinner.

We have some of the same challenges that your quartet may also have -- slow to take the time to tightly learn the correct spots and lyrics, so we can improve the fun factor of performing.

Through the years, we have collected some shirts that draw attention:



Our performance venues have included a Singing Valentine or two, many mid-sized (20-40) member audiences, and even conventions with over 500 audience folks for the National Anthem. In 2025, with eight members, we formed two "new" quartets

(Singing and Having Fun - senior; Mo-Kan-Do - senior/novice) so all eight members could participate at the Fall CSD Convention, and continue to work with the feedback judges to knock off some recurring "rough edges." It is strange that they tell us things that we already know to do to improve! We have enjoyed



performing for church groups, retirement groups, and for several German "Adventdienst" services for the German military officers and families at Fort Leavenworth, in the chapel on post built in 1840.

In 2013, one of the foursomes became your CSD Senior Quartet Champs, a moment on stage that we enjoyed and hope to gain again with a new combination of four singers.

We originally had to bring in the additional singing members because of work, travel, and even conflicts with BHS International meetings. We needed a backup that knew our songs. In each case, we helped the new singer have more fun, and continue our individual journeys in encouraging Barbershop Harmony in our expanding communities of influence.

# Trailswest Chorus spreads holiday cheer

**Mark Perry**

*President*

*Trailswest Chorus, Olathe, Kan. Chapter*

On Tuesday, December 12 2025 the Trailswest Chorus spread some holiday cheer singing at Cedar Lake Village in Olathe KS to a very appreciative audience. This has been an annual event for the last few years which we really enjoy.

They heard songs like Carol of the Bells, Christmas Time is Here, Go Tell it on the Mountain along with some Old favorites like Jingle Bells, The Christmas Song and one of our Quartets doing a great rendition of You're a Mean one Mr Grinch. The hour long show ended with Have Yourself a Very Merry Christmas and We Wish you a Merry Christmas.



We want to continue with the concept of providing more singers with the opportunity to do public performances, re-learn singing techniques, bring new songs to the stage, have fun, and get out to share some harmonies with our various audiences.

## DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE GUYS?!?

*Hint:* Four of them are proud (if old) members of CSD. And they are celebrating a major anniversary this year. Watch for details in the next issue of Serenade.



# CSD leadership aims efforts toward support of local chapters



**Brett Randolph**

*CSD President*

Focusing on nurturing and celebrating the rich tradition of barbershop music in the Central States District, the CSD Board and Program Administrative Team met early in January to develop goals for 2026 and beyond. Each effort aims to strengthen the CSD community, enhance resources, and ensure a vibrant future for

singing. Here's a glimpse of what is planned.

To support chapters in their recruitment and retainment efforts, later this year, the CSD website will house multiple resources available for members to use. These tools are designed to help attract new members and keep current members engaged.

It is important for chapters to be able to grow and develop in their skills as singers through coaching. To assist with that, a list of coaches will be available on the CSD website to chapters across the district. This initiative aims to provide tailored guidance and mentorship, helping each chorus reach its full potential. Experts will be available to share their knowledge, inspire creativity, and foster excellence in singing.

Effective marketing is crucial for spreading the joy of singing and growing community. That's why marketing resources will also be accessible on the CSD website later this year. These materials will assist in crafting compelling messages to reach wider audiences and elevate the visibility of chapters.

To streamline communication and bolster public relations efforts, a dedicated marketing contact for each chapter will be established. This liaison will be another link between the chapter and the district to share the good things occurring at the local level and

to share district happenings, ensuring a cohesive and effective outreach strategy district-wide.

Continuing the commitment to music education, CSD will host a chorus director workshop in South Dakota this year and are looking to host one in Nebraska in 2027. These workshops are invaluable opportunities for directors to enhance their skills, share best practices, and network with peers. We encourage all directors to participate and take advantage of these enriching experiences.

A strong financial foundation is essential for sustaining CSD's mission. Therefore, a campaign to secure donations and sponsorships throughout the barbershop world and in the communities where we are hosting events will be launched this year. Your participation and support will help fund educational programs, events, and resources that benefit all members. We invite you to join us in this endeavor and contribute to the legacy of the Central States District.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of the Central States District, a milestone that we plan to celebrate! We will commemorate our rich history, honor our founding members, and reflect on the countless voices that have called CSD their home district. Stay tuned for special events and celebrations.

To foster the next generation of singers, we will begin to develop relationships between our chapters and local colleges and universities. These partnerships will create pathways for young singers to engage with our community, ensuring the continuity of our singing tradition.

As we embark on these initiatives, we remain committed to our mission to bring people together in harmony and fellowship to enrich lives through singing. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to the Central States District.



# Extreme quartetting brigade returns to CSD this summer!

Founded in 2025, Brigade on the Range's second annual rally will take place June 19-20, 2026, in Salina, KS. Brigade provides the opportunity for a full weekend of round-robin quartetting and friendship-building. This brigade welcomes all singers.

Brigade presents a great opportunity for anyone looking for their next big barbershop challenge. Participants fully memorize 11 songs so that the quartetting can be focused on gelling with your ensemble and having fun performing the songs. All participants are expected to be fully prepared (i.e. accurate memorization) on their part. We provide an award for those who sing with everyone else on the other three parts, so we can promise that you will have absolutely ample opportunities to sing.

We will hold a public concert featuring the assembled brigade chorus and our headlining quartet, Verse, an International quarterfinalist mixed quartet from Colorado, on Saturday, June 20, in Salina.

Registration includes digital copies of all your sheet music, learning tracks, two evening dinners, and your shared hotel room with one other participant.

The soon-to-be-rebranded Wyndham Garden Inn in Salina, KS is right off Interstate 135, exit 92. The hotel is visible from the interstate.

As of January 25, 2026, over 30 people from 13 states have already registered. Join the movement! Apply at [BrigadeOnTheRange.org](http://BrigadeOnTheRange.org).

If you have any questions, you may reach out to [brigadeontherange25@gmail.com](mailto:brigadeontherange25@gmail.com), or contact President Michael Tate ([mbvintage@yahoo.com](mailto:mbvintage@yahoo.com)) or Show Chair Andrew Barber ([andrew.barber@doane.edu](mailto:andrew.barber@doane.edu)) directly.

There are 14 other brigades around the country and the world. If the timing of Brigade on the Range does not work for you, but you would like to participate, we invite you to go to [harmonybrigade.org](http://harmonybrigade.org) and check out



the other brigades. Lone Star Harmony Brigade (DFW area, early March), Northern Pines HB (Twin Cities, early May), Great Lakes HB (central Michigan, late May), and Indiana HB (Indianapolis, early November) are the four closest brigades to CSD (all three are men's brigades). There are three other mixed brigades altogether in the U.S. (New England, Atlantic, and Pacific - i.e. Phoenix), one in the U.K., and one in Germany. Other men's brigades include North Carolina HB (the original brigade!), New England HB, High Sierra HB, and Atlantic HB.

Treble Harmony Brigade takes place in the eastern United States, rotating locations. Harmony University generally includes brigade as a course option (mixed brigade).

Brigade on the Range is officially affiliated with BHS and is a registered 501 (c) 3. Donations are tax deductible. Donations help with scholarship fund, facility rental, and other operating costs.

PayPal: <https://www.paypal.com/biz/profile/brigadeontherange>

- If donating by PayPal, please include an extra \$5 to cover the fee

Venmo: @BotrTreasurer

- Name on the account is Wendell Keith
- Last 4 digits of phone number: 9628

Zelle: @brigadeontherange

# CSD on display at Missouri music educators conference



**Stephen True**

*Missouri/Arkansas State VP*

The CSD sponsored a booth at Missouri Music Educators Association (MMEA) annual conference in January. The idea was brought forth by Bradley Sheeley of the Metro Kansas City chapter who also volunteered to run the booth. When asked how it was received, he said several college teachers asked about resources to get barbershop started in their programs, other teachers expressed wanting youth events, some suggested a barbershop session at the conference in the future. Sheeley also hosted two 2 tag sessions and participants couldn't get enough. All in all it was a very successful week for getting barbershop out into the Missouri communities. Thank you to Brian Bellof (Metro KC), Topher Otake (Columbia), Chris Elliot (Columbia) for volunteering their time at the booth, and Duane Lawson for working with Steve Scott at BHS to get brochures and music to hand out.



# CSD LEADERS UNITE!



**Don Fuson**

*Membership*

Welcome to each of the newly elected, or otherwise appointed, chapter leaders in new/recurring/continuing roles for 2026. Learning more about leadership, guiding the overall chapter structure and goals, and encouraging other committees to continue to plan and execute is what each leader must do.

With the recent Leadership Academy held in January by CSD, it is always a good review to look at a general calendar for the year. The "Business of Barbershop" document outlines some general things that should be on each chapter's planning calendar. Many of those issues are repeats from the previous year, but we can always involve more members (getting them trained) on those events, and improving plans to have things run smoother.

Now is also the time for various chapter reviews. What are your major events for the year? Chapter Shows? Community outreach, and then community outreach some more? Every member involvement in some chapter function or event? Supporting the music team to bring better singing skills to each

member? Encouraging the homework on the part of each member to learn music faster, so that the "interpretation of the story" becomes stronger, and is NOT just a last minute item.

But what about changing member expectations of what the weekly meetings bring, what the chapter means, and what musical product you want to bring to your audience? These items often need a review via a chapter member survey. It then begs some more meeting time to properly review the feedback and some priorities that the survey would give you. The chapter president should make sure this kind of collection and feedback review is done.

And, for some, the bigger elephant in the room ---- Who is willing and interested in learning about my role during the year, so that succession planning (elections, appointments) can be made to keep the chapter strong?

Every member is a LEADER. The current chapter leader roles must reach out and listen to those around us, and find out what skills and leadership traits others have, and help develop future opportunities for those members to grow and be even more successful in the role that you might have right now.

As always, reach out to any CSD leader with ideas, questions, or quandaries during the year. We are here to help, to ask about options, and to help push through any initial barriers to get things moving ahead to benefit the chapter and all of its members.

## **Chapter Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers**



*Leadership Training Available On-Line*

*If you missed Leadership Academy, or want to refresh your chapter leadership skills, to better serve your chapter and chorus, visit*

*<https://members.barbershop.org>*

*On the BHS Member Center login page, searching for "Chapter Training" takes you several options. Select "Chapter Officer Training" to arrive at online training modules for Chapter President, Chapter Secretary and Chapter Treasurer. Get trained.*



# Central Standard Endowment Gala

The Muehlebach Suite at Boulevard Brewing

3-13-2026

6 PM



*Open Bar, Kansas City's Finest BBQ, Silent Auction and premier acapella music*



Join Central Standard for an unforgettable evening of music, community, and celebration as we launch our inaugural Endowment Fundraising Gala.

This special event marks the beginning of a dedicated endowment designed to support Central Standard's long-term educational initiatives and community outreach across the Kansas City metro.

Unlike annual operating funds, this endowment is built for lasting impact—funds are invested and protected to ensure barbershop harmony continues to thrive for years and decades to come.

As a special incentive, the first \$10,000 donated during the gala will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling the impact of early gifts.

This evening is perfect for supporters of the arts, friends, family, colleagues, and anyone excited to celebrate barbershop harmony while helping build something truly lasting.

**Date:** Friday, March 13

**Time:** 6:00–10:00 p.m.

**Location:** Muehlebach Suite at Boulevard Brewing Company

**Tickets:** \$100 (attendance limited to 200 guests)

Your ticket includes:

- Open bar from 6:00–9:45 p.m. (Boulevard beers, seltzers, house wine, soft drinks, and coffee)
- Buffet dinner catered by Joe's Kansas City BBQ (vegetarian options available)
- A keynote address from Kevin Keller, President of the Barbershop Harmony Society Board
- Inspiring stories and a look ahead at how the endowment will expand Central Standard's educational and community impact
- Silent auction or raffle

**Visit the Central Standard Facebook page to learn more.**

# The Recruits: Making a lasting impact



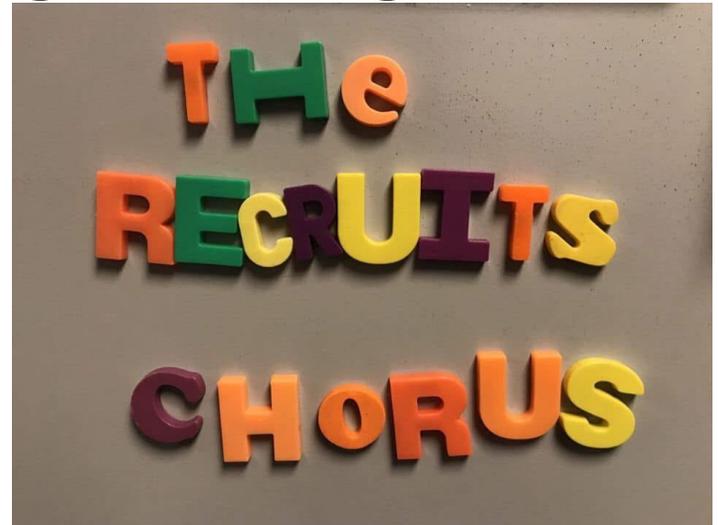
**Eric Dalbey**

*Co-Director  
The Recruits Chorus*

of singers age 30 and under (at that time, 30 was the age designated as “youth”). The chorus was originally started to get younger singers excited about barbershop and to use the BHS opportunities of competing at the Midwinter you chorus contest to draw in more singers.

If The Recruits Chorus were a person, they would just now be learning how to drive, but that doesn’t mean their impact on the barbershop community has been small. In it’s short 15 years of existence, The Recruits Chorus has built quite the resume.

In 2012, The Recruits Chorus was founded as an all-male youth chorus comprised



Originally under the direction of Jonny Moroni, the chorus was open to any singer under the age of 30 from the CSD area and rehearsed every other week in Columbia, Mo. The chorus was made up of singers from Columbia, St. Louis, and Kansas City singing in the chorus. In 2014, the chorus won the International Youth Barbershop Chorus Festival.

The chorus saw some changes in 2017 as Charlie Kinnison took a brief stint as the director before passing the torch to Jason Malloroy. In addition to the director changes, the chorus made the decision to transition from an all-male chorus to a mixed chorus to have a broader reach to attract more singers.

In 2018, The Recruits Chorus had the honor of being the very first mixed chorus to register with BHS for their Everyone in Harmony Initiative.

The chorus saw a new director with a familiar face in 2018 as Eric Dalbey took the helm until 2024.



Once the Ambassadors of Harmony rebranded as HarmonySTL in 2022 and The Visions of Harmony was established, The Recruits became a place where they could not only foster young talent, give singers an experience to sing with their peers, and refine their leadership skills, but also build a pipeline for those singers who age out (now, at the age of 25) by giving them the opportunity to continue singing with either the Ambassadors or the Visions.

In 2024, Keegan Eich joined Dalbey and the two now co-direct the chorus.

After St. Louis' International Convention, The Recruits Chorus will have qualified and competed at five consecutive International Chorus contests; placing as high as 13th place in 2024 and scoring as high as 85.1 in 2023. Dalbey said he believes they have been the only 25 and under youth chorus at those contests!



# CSD Member Spotlight



**Ron Mays**

My name is Ron Mays and I'm a baritone.

I began my musical adventure during my time in high school where I was involved in a mixed choir group and band. I was also part of a men's sextet at this time.

In 1972, after a lot of coaxing, I attended a men's barbershop chorus guest night.

I was completely

overwhelmed by the sound of the Chorus of the Plains from Hastings Nebraska and even more impressed by a quartet called Three Lads and a Dad. They went on to become the 1982 International Champions known as the Classic Collection.

After being an active member of the Chorus of the Plains for six years, we moved to Kearney, Nebraska and I transferred my membership to the 1733 Chorus. I was with that group for a total of six years, five of them as the Show Chairman. I became involved with my first quartet called the Rainbow Reunion. Yes, we really admired the Kermit the Frog song Rainbow Connection when we named ourselves.

We moved once again in 1986 to Lincoln, where I quickly became a member of the Lincoln Continentals an a quartet called Snapshot.

During my time with them, I was involved in Chapter offices servings as President, Vice President, Show Chairman, Membership Chairman and Chorus Manager. I was Chorus Manager for 25 years. In 1988, our Choir Director, Dale Comer, served as Contest and Judging VP for CSD. He encouraged me to begin Emceeing (MC-ing) CSD contests. After Dale resigned his leadership roles, he was proceeded by Jim Bagby. Jim

managed to keep me busy with Emceeing for the next 30 years for both spring and fall contests. I continued to Emcee more chapter shows in Nebraska, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and South Dakota. These shows always seemed to feature quartets like the Gas House Gang, 12th Street Rag, Three Men and a Melody, Special Touch and many others. I really found my niche Emceeing these shows and it was a real treat to be surrounded by so many talented people.

In 1998, I received a call from Lud Einiss who was the CSD President at the time. He recruited me to become the first CSLT-VP aka Chapter Support Leadership Training Vice President for the Central States District. This position connected me with many more chapters in the district.

I celebrated 50 years in 2024 as an active CSD member. I am still involved with my Chorus and my current quartet County Four. Even though I no longer Emcee shows or serve in leadership roles, I do enjoy the reason why I became involved as a barber shopper, singing. I will continue to do this as long as there is air in my lungs and a song in my heart, or my wife let's me, whichever comes first.



# Where it all began

*The following is an excerpt from "The Founding of the Society" by Society Historian Grady Kerr. The complete article is available at [barbershop.org](http://barbershop.org).*

In the late 1930's, the family unit was still very musical, with pianos in most homes and singing (harmonizing) still a popular pastime. The love of close harmony existed even though it was no longer the most popular music of the day.

In 1938, men harmonizing together had not completely died out, but it was becoming rarer and certainly much less popular than 30 years before.

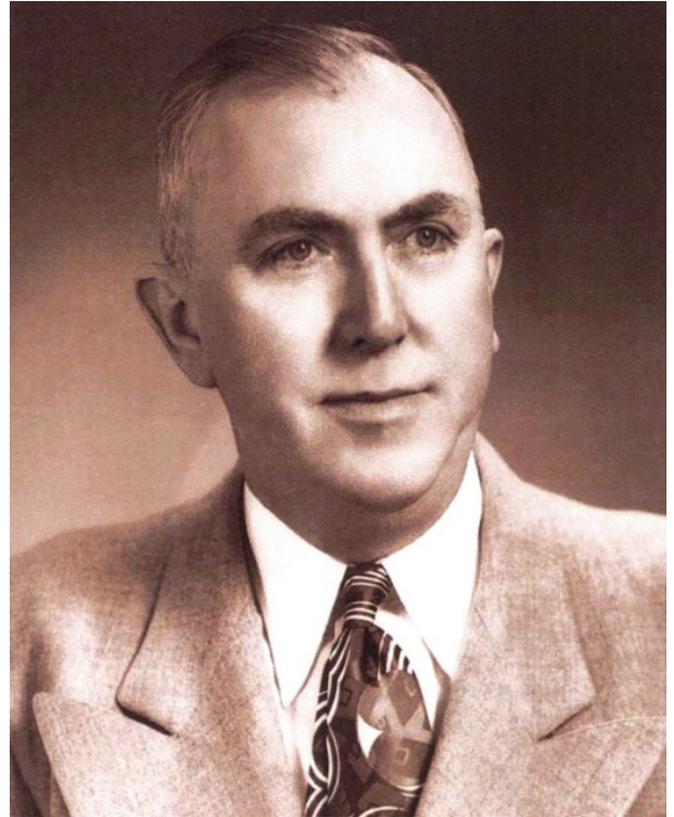
O. C. Cash was really only interested in getting a few guys together to sing. There was no grand plan, no grand scheme. He and acquaintance Rupert Hall had a chance meeting in Kansas City several weeks before and discussed forming a Song Fest. On his return to Tulsa, Cash drafted an invitation and mailed it to the 14 singers he knew might show up and encouraged them to bring guests to the Tulsa Club - a high class place and popular destination for special dinners, weddings and meetings.

The date was set for Monday, April 11 at 6:30 PM. Hall, a member of the opulent, rich oil men's Tulsa Club, had arranged for the meeting to be held on the Roof Garden (up on the roof - in open air - under the stars). (The Tulsa Club still exists and is located on the northwest corner of 5th and Cincinnati. Built in 1923, it stands 11 stories tall. It's across the street (due north) from the Stanolind Oil Building where Cash worked. Closed for many years, it has escaped demolition many times. Its future is still in doubt.)

Cash states that he had invited 14 men and 26 "crashed the party". They sang and harmonized to some old songs for several hours with several breaking off into quartets as well.

Apparently some Tulsa club members on the floors below complained of the "noise" so the next week, April 18, they met at the Hotel Tulsa (3rd and Cincinnati). 70 men showed up at this second meeting, showing there was interest in this idea and maybe an early indication of the future growth.

By the end of May, the newly formed group began meeting at the Alvin Plaza Hotel (7th and Main) and hosting 75 to 150 men each week. What would later be known as the Tulsa # 1 Chapter would continue to meet at the Alvin for 37 years.



*Above: A photo of Owen Clifton (O.C.) Cash, the founder of what would become the Barbershop Harmony Society.*

*Below: The Roof Garden at The Tulsa Club in Tulsa, Okla. where the first meeting was held.*



# Midwinter Gold for CSD



## Carter Combs

### *CSD Contest & Judging*

from multiple chapters across the district including Springfield, Kansas City, St Louis, and others. Notably, they are the first all-voice ensemble to ever win gold in any BHS international competition.

CSD was well represented by our Seniors Quartets also. In their 4th return to the Midwinter competition, Jazz! (Pamela Mallard, Diane Durham, Tawny Brown, Diana Schweitzer) finished 10th overall, besting their Fall qualifying score by a full 2 points. First-timer Radio Days (Brad Doeden, Donn Updegrove, Michael Verga, Greg Yarnell) finished a respectable 17th place in a packed field, while also improving on their qualifying score.

And let's not forget about the youth ... not just one, but TWO NextGen Junior choruses, and THREE quartets! Nicholas Franssen's Oriole Legacy Chorus from Augusta

At the BHS Midwinter Convention in Pasadena in January, CSD's own Ozark Overtones were crowned as the new International Seniors Chorus Champions! Under the talented direction of Jeff Veteto, the 48-person group posted the highest score ever recorded for a Seniors Chorus: 77.4! Chorus members came



High School in Kansas won Plateau A. The Bear Tracks chorus from Wichita Northwest High School, directed by Michael Mays, placed 2nd in Plateau AAA. Both choruses earned a festival rating of Outstanding.

The Psychoacoustics quartet from Wichita High School placed 9th in the NextGen Junior Quartet, with an Outstanding rating. Spinal Chords, from Wichita High School, and Serenada, from Augusta High School earned ratings of Excellent, in the highest scoring Junior contest since the shutdown.

12th Street Rag was seemingly Everything, Everywhere, All At Once. Officially there to sing their swan set after winning Seniors Quartet gold last year, they were pressed into service on multiple occasions as mic-testers, mic-coolers ... you name it, they were probably there. CSD's newest Hall of Fame honorees were entertaining, gracious, and ubiquitous throughout the week ... everything we've come to expect from one of our favorite and longest-tenured quartets.



# Spring Convention coming to Lenexa/Overland Park in April



**Doug Brott**

*CSD Director of Events*

judges and coaches. Some classes will also be scheduled depending on time and instructor availability. The Harmony Platoon is back where you can sing in Random Quartets and see who can win. The Singing Contests will be the Quartet International Prelims and the Seniors Chorus International Prelims.

2026 Spring Convention and Contest will be held in Lenexa, KS, April 10-11. The Headquarters Hotel and Venue is the Radisson Hotel - Lenexa/Overland Park and is very easy to find located at I-35 and 95th Street in Lenexa, KS. We will once again have Quartet and Chorus Coaching opportunities with some of our expert



All the information and registration links can be found on the CSD Website, [singcsd.com](http://singcsd.com), where veteran attendees will see we have a New Registration System. We hope you will find the system much easier to work with. Be sure to read all the information to understand the process. Get your registrations and reservations done early because we expect the hotel to fill up fast. You don't want to miss this one.

## S.D. Choruses turn the calendar and prepare for Valentines Day



**Cliff Huot**

*South Dakota State VP*

The Sioux Emperians plan to spread love and good tidings on Feb 14th.

Tri Valley sang the national anthem prior to the Sioux Falls Stampede hockey game on Jan 3. They will provide some barbershop entertainment for the Wakonda nursing home Feb 2. Tri Valley continues to work towards the celebration of their 75th show on April 18 featuring Storm Front and 3 and ½ Men. The local quartet of The All Nighters will provide messages of love on Feb 14.

We are still in the early planning stages of a SD barbershop clinic to be held Aug 1.



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