

The Key-Note



Official Publication of Harmony, Incorporated
An International Organization of Women Barbershop Singers

Harmony, Inc.

2023-24 • Volume 57



Fierce

2023 Harmony Queens

**HARMONY,
INC.**

Empowering all women
through singing,
education, and
friendship.

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**president's
message**

The Key-Note is truly our annual “yearbook” — and what better time to be reading it than right now? It’s the type of retrospective that most of us haven’t experienced since high school or college, when yearbooks were so important in recording a snapshot of the culture and experiences we shared with classmates.

I have had the benefit of seeing an advance copy of this issue, and what great memories of IC&C 2023 it has conjured! I won’t provide many spoilers, but you are going to love this – and I guarantee that after reading it, you’ll be eager to make new memories in Louisville.

Heartfelt congratulations once again to **Fierce**, our 2023 quartet champions who have represented Harmony so well this year. Kudos to our championship chorus, **A Cappella Showcase**, for so generously sharing your talents and demonstrating incredible commitment (to each other as well as to your audiences.) So many special award winners are profiled here – what a wonderful depiction of some of Harmony’s “finest.”

Last but not least, our yearbook beautifully captures one of the very special aspects of Harmony — we have contests, not competitions. Every single singer featured in these photos went on stage to do her very best — not to beat someone else, but to feel proud of her own accomplishments. Here’s to celebrating what makes this such a special organization!

Enjoy this wonderful trip down Memory Lane, and I hope to see you in Louisville.

Yours in Harmony,

Gaye LaCasce

International President

editor's note

Hello, Harmony! It’s a pleasure to greet you all, again, as editor of **The Key-Note**. We hope you enjoy this 2023-24 issue.

Every day, I am reminded of what a very special organization Harmony, Inc. is. It’s a sisterhood of strong women who have come together to make music. And along the way, we are empowering all women, with the support of our friendship and through education in both singing and leadership, to lead extraordinary lives. My time with Harmony has changed me — for the better.

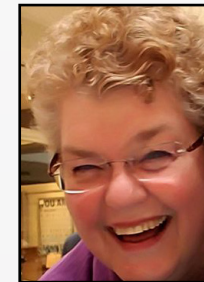
How about you?

I am blessed to have the very capable assistance of the rest of the Marketing & Communications Team and the Corporate Office. These ladies spent many hours proofing and correcting this issue. Be sure to thank them, please, — as I do — for the time and commitment they bring to our Harmony, Inc. communications.

Yours in Harmony,

Roxanne Powell

Editor, The Key-Note

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Harmony has a **GRAND TIME!**

2023 INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION & CONTESTS

By Anne Bureau, Director Marketing and Communications

Why go, what's all the hype?

IC&C 2023 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, last November, was truly a magical experience with four days of singing, education, fun, excitement, powerful performances from choruses and quartets from around the continent — everyone gathering under one roof, sharing the same 'ultimate' barbershop experience.

If you have never attended our International Convention and Contests, I am hoping that after reading this interview with Melinda Brunson, there will be no doubt in your mind as to why you should go and what all the hype is about.

Q: How long have you been a member of Harmony,



Post contest, the medalists parade the hall to the applause of the crowd.

Inc., Melinda?

A: Since 2012, Anne.

Q: Were you assigned a specific duty at IC&C this year?

A: Part of my job as PR coordinator was creating video clips. I went around the events and recorded candid videos of what was going on.

Q: Looking through your lens, what was your convention highlight?

A: The most rewarding part for me was getting to see

how everyone else experiences their own contest. Normally when I attend, I'm focused on my quartet or my chorus and don't get to see anyone else. This time, I was part of everyone else's experience. It is truly life enriching to see it unfold. I got to meet people who have been around for decades, and some, it was their first experience. I didn't expect to see such love and support for each other and for this organization.

Q: Can you describe some of those emotions?

A: I followed my friends, Ellen, and Katie from The Shop Tarts quartet. The huge emotional highs and the lows were incredible, right up until the finals. One of

See **GRAND**, continued on next page

their members thought they had totally lost it for everyone else in the semifinals. She was so upset about her performance that she could not get past herself. They of course made it to the finals and then when they were announced as third place medalists, it was like all the encouragement in the hallway, all the supporting each other along the way was immediately brought to an indescribable peak of emotion. That is what I witnessed. So much joy bundled up into just a few precious moments.

Q: What other great moments did you experience?

A: I met California Note Catchers Director Kayla Rodgers who rarely attends convention due to distance. She describes her experience directing a common song on stage for everyone, as an amazingly overwhelming warm feeling. I thought, "Wow, how inspirational is that!"

Q: Were you able to connect with the Minor Chords?

A: I did and what a great experience that was! It was amazing to see the youth drinking it all in. It's very emotional to see how much our music connects with 8-, 10-, 12-year-olds as they embrace everything that is presented to them. It's

important to highlight that this is the place where they meet lifelong mentors. It's a life changer, and they happen to represent our future!

Q: Did you meet any non-competing members at the convention?

A: Yes, I did. Many I spoke with attended. Even though their chorus didn't qualify, or they were a non-competing associate member, they all wanted to be there to support their friends on and off stage and share the experience. They describe it as one of their highlights of the year, to be able to connect with friends who they only see once a year, their extended families.

Q: What were comments from folks who attended education classes?

A: A few new members from my chorus wanted to experience everything so they sought out education classes. They had some very real AH-HA moments of why this barbershop thing works. The talent of the folks teaching these classes is top notch. It's amazing how much there is to learn and how much people are willing to give during these weekends!

It's the family reunion you WANT to go to, not the one you HAVE to go to!

— Melinda Brunson

Q: Did your chorus find time to bond and spend time together, and how does it affect your members?

A: That's a big thing for us. When we go to any convention, we always make time for each other. We also encourage our members to connect with other people — they see us all the time. We want them to meet others in the organization and

create lifetime friendships and bonds like so many of us have. Our members have embraced it, and it has changed their lives. Harmony, Inc. members are so approachable which makes it easy to make friends, including Harmony Queens. These champs are humble, caring and giving and will do anything to make you feel welcome.

Q: How would you describe Harmony, Inc. to someone who doesn't know us?

A: It's more than just a singing organization, or a name on the page, it's truly an extended family of people who share the love of singing, who love barbershop harmony, and who want to come together and feel connected with others and share

their passion for the music with a group of kind and caring people.

Q: How would you describe the convention to someone who has never attended or doesn't think it's worth their time?

A: It's a unique experience. It's more than singing — it's education, it's experiencing performances you would never normally see, and you meet people from other Areas you would not have normally met. The abundance and variety of talent and people we bring together under one roof is magical. It's not only a contest, it's truly an INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION. You meet people from across the world, and you discover the true culture of the organization. You can be a member of a chorus for five years and not know what we're all about. I told a few members of my chorus that it's the family reunion you WANT to go to, not the one that you HAVE to go to.

Q: Any last words of wisdom?

A: Before I knew Harmony, Inc. existed, I never expected that I would love and want to be part of an organization so much. I'm glad I found it and love everything about it.

ENVISION IT, EMBRACE IT,
AND THINK BIG!





Meet Fierce Tenor Kelly Peterson

Kelly Peterson is a native of Chesterton, Indiana, and has been involved in music all her life. Her parents were in a band together, and many of Kelly's early years were spent running around with the kids of the other band members during rehearsals. Throughout her school years, she sang in choirs and played a variety of instruments in orchestra and band, but it wasn't until many years later that she discovered barbershop.

The United States Army sent Kelly's husband Erik to Fort Sill in Lawton, Oklahoma in 2008. There, Kelly was introduced to the barbershop world through the **Lawton Harmony Chorus** of Sweet Adelines International. Another set of orders took the Petersons to eastern Kansas, where Kelly met Fierce's lead, Susan Ives, while singing with **Topeka Acappella Unlimited Chorus**. During those years in Kansas, Kelly dove into quartet

singing, reaching 10th place at the 2017 Sweet Adelines International Quartet Competition with **Pizzazz!** shortly before joining Harmony and establishing **Fierce**.

Kelly became an out-of-town charter member of **St. Louis Vocal Project** in late 2018 while living at Fort Moore (formerly Fort Benning), Georgia. Upon moving to Virginia, Kelly joined the local SAI group, **Greater Richmond Chorus**, and Area 3's **Bella Nova Chorus**. She loves the education she receives from each of these unique groups, but the highlight of her experiences in each of these groups is the sense of community and shared purpose.

After 23 years of active duty service, Kelly's husband retired to Richmond, Virginia, where the couple lives now with their daughters, Madelyn (20) and Abigail (15). Kelly spent most of those Army years caring for their chil-

dren, volunteering, and doing part-time administration work for churches. In 2019, Kelly accepted the position of Corporate Assistant for Harmony, Inc. and was recently promoted to Executive Director of the organization.

In her spare time (when she has any), Kelly loves to read, game, mountain bike, paddleboard, and walk her dog. She also loves exploring the Richmond area looking for amazing food, live music, and craft beer. Her absolute favorite thing to do in the barbershop world is singing tags, so if you see her around, ask her to sing one with you!



TOP: After nearly 20 years as a military spouse, Kelly finally got to ride in an Abrams tank with her husband, Erik, while they were stationed in Georgia.

MIDDLE: In typical Fierce fashion, the quartet made a bold choice to add Devil Went Down to Georgia to their repertoire, showcasing Joy's dramatic flair and Kelly's years of classical training on the violin. Fun fact - there are few real differences between the violin and the fiddle besides playing technique.

BOTTOM: The Peterson family (Madelyn 20, Abigail, 15, Erik, and Kelly) smiles for the camera.





Meet Fierce Lead Susan Ives

Susan Ives lives in Tecumseh, Kansas, and is a retired music teacher of 37 years. She has been a member of Sweet Adelines for 42 years and is a Master Director of **Topeka Acappella Unlimited** where she has been directing for over 25 years.

Susan has two SAI international quartet championships: She earned crowns with the 1998 Champions. **Classic Edition.** and the 2010 Champions. **Zing!** In 2019, she was the SAI National Association for Music Educators (NAfME) award recipient.

In 2018, Sandi Wright invited Susan to an Area 4 contest and she fell in love with Harmony that weekend. With the help of Kris Wheaton, and Joy Suellentrop, Susan asked her former quartet mate, Kelly Peterson, if she'd like to sing in a Harmony, Incorporated quartet....and the rest is history.

Most recently she has joined the HI judging program and is in her second year as a judge candidate in the Singing Category. Susan wants to help other singers and give

back to the barbershop community through the judging program. "The Singing Judges in Harmony are phenomenal individuals. They have a LOT of heart and love for all of you. I am proud to be associated with them," she says.

An interesting tidbit about Susan is that she is in her fifth decade of quartet contests. She started her quartet competitive life in 1982. She was no stranger to the stage as her minister dad and minister mom had her harmonizing with her brother and singing in front of a congregation by age four.

In her non-singing life, Susan was a high school and collegiate gymnast, was graduated from high school in Wyoming, Michigan (a suburb of Grand Rapids), loves to garden and play golf with her husband Scott, has two adult offspring, and has two adorable yorkies.

She absolutely LOVES the people and her time spent in Harmony. You have all been so welcoming, loving, caring, and are quickly becoming another family to Susan. Here's to many more years ahead in Harmony.

TOP: Susan and Dixie enjoy an outing to view the Kansas state flower - Sunflowers - in a field near the Ives' home in Tecumseh.

BOTTOM LEFT: Susan and Scott

BOTTOM RIGHT: Susan lines up a drive





Meet Fierce Bari

Joy Suellentrop

To say that barbershop is the reason for Joy Suellentrop's existence would be an understatement. Her parents met at a rehearsal for the **Southern Gateway Chorus** in 1985, and the rest is history. Whether it was the tape of barbershop music being played as she was born, or the many barbershop conventions that acted as family vacations throughout her childhood, Joy has always fully engrossed herself in this little "hobby" that we share.

When she was three months old, Joy went to a party at Jim Miller's house, where she met his granddaughter, three-year-old Kris Hawkins. Throughout their lives, Kris and Joy grew closer and closer, even though Joy lived in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Kris lived in Louisville, Kentucky. They were the maids of honor in each others' weddings and even had the joy of being pregnant at the same time in 2021! After having been in four other quartets together, they were lucky enough to find themselves with Susan and Kelly to form **Fierce!** When Joy and Kris sang with **Spot On** (2013 Harmony Queens), Joy found that Harmony, Inc. was her new barbershop home.

As if she was repeating her parents' story, Joy met her husband Matt at an **Ambassadors of Harmony** chorus rehearsal, and moved to St Louis to be with him just

two months later. Matt is an Administrative Judge for BHS, the President of the Central States District, the tenor of BHS quartet semi-finalists Fleet Street, former Music and Performance VP and 18-year member of the Ambassadors of Harmony, and co-chair of the St. Charles Chapter's youth in harmony camp called Acappellooza. To add to the barbershop chaos in their household, Joy is not only the baritone of Fierce, but she also sings with the BHS chorus, **Visions of Harmony** and is the Convention Chair for the Central States District.

At some point, Matt and Joy thought it would be smart to add two other people to the mix. They welcomed their first baby boy, Dean, into the world in February of 2022, and Liam came along shortly after in September of 2023. Matt and Joy feel most fulfilled when taking on more tasks than any normal person would, and showing their boys that you can do things for yourself even after parenthood.

Joy works in Accounts Payable at Eyecare Partners, and enjoys raising her two beautiful boys. There is not much time for other activities, but through the love and support of her amazing husband and sons, Joy is living the best life she could have ever dreamed of.



TOP: Besties since childhood, Joy and Kris were the maids of honor in each others' weddings.

BOTTOM: Matt and Joy are parents to two little charmers, Liam, 1, and Dean, 2.



Meet Fierce Bass Kris Wheaton

Kris Hawkins Wheaton is a fourth generation barbershopper from Louisville, Kentucky. She joined her first chorus, **Pride of Kentucky** (SAI), at the age of 13. As a member of Pride of Kentucky she competed on the international stage eight times, placing as high as third.

Throughout her teenage years, Kris sang in a couple of chapter quartets but didn't make it to the quartet competition stage until the age of 22. In her first competitive quartet, Kris earned two regional championships and four International appearances with **Lucky Day**.

In 2012, Kris joined Harmony, Inc. and has had an incredible journey! Her first HI quartet, **Spot On**, was honored to win the crown in 2013. She was a charter member of **Bluegrass Harmony**,

she sang in a quartet with her mom, and became the director of Bluegrass Harmony in 2019. Under her direction, the chorus has won the Jerry Dunlop Award and MacIntosh Award (twice)!

In addition to singing bass in Fierce! and serving as musical director for Bluegrass Harmony, Kris currently sings bass in **Presto!** quartet (SAI) and is a baritone in the newly chartered BHS chorus **Great River Voices**.

Believe it or not, there is more to life than singing for Kris. She has worked at the University of Louisville as a Lead Facilitator at the Early Learning Campus for over 13 years. She has been married to Drew for 15 years, and loves sharing her barber-life with him. Most importantly, Kris is mom to Xander, 7, Nate, 5, and Vera, 3!



TOP: Drew and Kris Wheaton with Nate, 5, Vera, 3, and Xander, 7.



BOTTOM: The Hawkins Family (Back Row L-R) Drew, Jay, JJ, Talitha (Middle Row L-R) Kris, Kathy, Jack (Front Row L-R) Nate, Vera, Xander, Robyn



CONGRATULATIONS, 2023 Quartet Medalists!

2nd Place **Roulette**



3rd Place **The Shop Tents**



4th Place **High Gear**



5th Place **Intonations**





EnJOY! • *ScotianAires/Seaside A Cappella*
Judy Robichaud, Jennifer Cleveland,
Sue Kember, Jane Fritz

CONTINENTAL CRUSH
Nickel City Sound/Associate
Tracey Larder, Claire McMartin,
Stacy Hugman, Anne-Miek de Nijs



Audience Entertainment Choice Award
DAPHODYLS

Sisters of Sound & Unaccompanied Minors
Scarlett Gunasekera, Hanan Geda,
Daphne Gunasekera, Olivia Fontana



BLUE PHOENIX
*Lake Ridge
Legacy Chorus*
Rilea Lombardy,
Tina Lowe,
Beth Miller,
Shanno Wilson



VIVACE!
*Northern Blend Chorus
& Associates*
Donna McKay,
Amy DePerna,
Lorie Autote,
Jessica Nasto



INDEPENDENT LADIES
*Coastal Voices/ Vocal Moxie/ Sisters of Sound/
Atlanta Harmony Celebration!*
Judy Rector, Tiana Sandh, Julie Noon,
Trayce Elenteny



FOUR SHORE • Seaside A Cappella
Jennifer Green, Jackie Barkhouse, Terra Lee Kelly, Suzanne Rudolf



LIP SERVICE
Northern Blend
Ali James, Jodi Castello, Mary Ann Wert, Tara-
lee Lashway



ZEST
Crystal Chords & Harmony Falls
Karla Terry, Brooke Robinson,
Ann Wilcox, Jessica Rhodes



**TAKE 4
MIC TESTERS**

St. Louis Vocal Project
Melissa Van Housen,
Chacey Steen, Kristin
Drummond-Mance,
Wendy Spilker



MOSAIC • Bluegrass Harmony/Coastal Voices/
White River Sound/ One Voice
Pam Ringo, Deb Thistle, Krista Pickens, Sue Pelley



ESCAPADE • Niagara Frontier Chord Authority
Juli Yendall, Barb Yendall, Carol Mason Zeffiro,
Betsy Faye Walits



LIFE'S A PITCH • Women of Note
Jane Thie, Ashley Lang, Sherri Avery, Amy Harker



ROADTRIP
A Cappella Showcase
Katie Ritz,
Gabrielle Maas,
Diane Nicholson,
Sandy McCreary



LIFE IS GOOD!
A Cappella Showcase
Denise Keleher,
Karen Hosler,
Wendy Kurvits,
Julia McGregor



ONYX
A Cappella Showcase
Kelly Thomas, Amy Chop,
Michelle Odendahl, Jenn
Haines



SUBLIME • Area 4 Associates
Rachel Lundbrg, Emily Oppen-
huizen, Sherry Berkley, Andrea
Simpson



SOMESING
A Cappella Showcase/Skyway Connection
Mary Gareau, Nicole Negus, Andrea Binnington,
Sarah Patterson



SWEET ADDICTION
Area 4
Kathleen Harris,
Carol Christiansen,
Brenda Krueger,
Mindy Juedes



SERENADE
Sisters of Sound
Cindy Hunt,
Shannon Shelton-Muller,
Katie Rosenblad,
Diana Anderson



SOLFIRE • Bella Nova
Allyn Lloyd, Erin Cassidy, Rachael Storey-Chase, Emily Faalasi

SWAG
Toronto Accolades/ A Cappella Showcase/ Music City/Associate
Christine Yorke, Grace Kahle, Wendy Shibata, Susanne Hasulo



SWEET LIFE • Sounds of the Seacoast
Samantha Wiggan, Andrea Bossie, Wendy McCoolle, Karen Rourke



TONIC
ScotianAires
Mickey Melanson, Marion Fraser-Pritchard, Cathy Hunter, Adele Merritt



VIOLET SKY
St. Louis Vocal Project
Samantha Flock, Emma Brunner, Susie Slavney, CoCo Corman

CONGRATULATIONS, 2023 Chorus Medalists!



2023 CHAMPION CHORUS

A Cappella Showcase

Area 5 • Milton, Ontario

Director - Jordan Travis

2023 SILVER MEDALIST CHORUS Bella Nova Chorus

Area 3

Herndon, Virginia

Director - Richard Lewewllen





3rd PLACE MEDALIST
New England Voices in Harmony
Area 2
Nashua, New Hampshire
Directors - Renee & Samantha Tramack



4th PLACE MEDALIST
St. Louis Vocal Project
Area 4
St. Louis, Missouri
Director - Sandi Wright



5th PLACE MEDALIST
Seaside A Cappella
Area 1
Bridgewater, Nova Scotia
Director - Judy Comeau

Atlanta Harmony Celebration • Area 6
Norcross, Georgia
Director - Kathy Stone



Bluegrass Harmony • Area 4
Louisville, Kentucky
Director - Kris Wheaton



Capital Chordettes • Area 5
Ottawa, Ontario
Director - Sean Mueller



Coastal Voices * Area 6
Fort Myers, Florida
Director - Pam Ringo

Covered Bridge Harmony • Area 4
Greencastle, Indiana
Director - Sara Stone



Crystal Chords • Area 3
Corning/Elmira, New York
Director - Chris Dunbar



Harmony Magic • Area 4
Central Indiana
Director - Janet Foster



Liberty Belles • Area 3
Lansdale, Pennsylvania
Director - Anne Bureau

2023 International Chorus Contestants (alphabetically)



Montreal City Voices • Area 2
Montreal, Quebec
Director - Steve Gilson



Music City Sound • Area 6
Nashville, Tennessee
Director - Jennifer Cooke



**Niagara Frontier Chord
Authority • Area 2**
Amherst, New York
Directors - Ron Mason
and Carol Zeffiro

**Nickel City Sound •
Area 5**
Sudbury, Ontario
Directors - Martha Walli
& Jennifer Huss



[Official Scoring Summaries for 2023 Chorus Finals](#)

Rochester Rhapsody • Area 3

Webster, New York

Director - Sue Melvin



ScotianAires • Area 1

Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

Director - Sue Kember



Sing Niagara • Area 3

St. Catharines, Ontario

Director - Derek Stevens



Sisters of Sound • Area 6

Clermont, Florida

Director - Tiana Sandh



Sounds of the Seacoast • Area 2
Portsmouth, New Hampshire
Director - Wendy McCoolle

The Barre Tones, Inc. • Area 2
Barre, Vermont
Director - Carol Hollenbeck



The Thousand Islanders • Area 5
Brockville, Ontario
Director - Stuart MacMartin

Unaccompanied Minors • Area 6
Clermont, Florida
Director - Tiana Sandh





Valley Voices • Area 1
Kentville, Nova Scotia
Director - Adele Merritt

Village Vocal Chords • Area 4
Glen Ellyn, Illinois
Director - Lynn Randall



White Sands A Cappella • Area 6
Pensacola, Florida
Directors - Jeff Buehler

Women of Note • Area 2
Hudson, Massachusetts
Directors - Nanda Landers & Maria Gabriella





2022 Champions Northern Blend Chorus from Watertown, New York, under the direction of Katie Taylor, served as mic-testers for the contest.



The International Chorus, composed of Chapter and Associate Members representing all of Harmony, led by champion director Katie Taylor, served as mic-coolers.



Support Harmony's future

The melody lingers on ...

What is the 1959 Society? It's a community of thoughtful Harmony, Incorporated supporters whose generosity will ensure that Harmony, Inc. continues to grow and nurture barbershop singing and singers.

At the 2023 IC&C, we inducted the first group of individuals into the 1959 Society. All of those honored had informed us of their intention to remember Harmony, Inc. in their estate plans.

The 1959 Society, Class of 2024, will be invited to receive their society pins at this year's IC&C. If you wish to support Harmony's future, we welcome you to join this important group. Complete this brief form regarding your plans – we don't ask for dollar amounts, just for your intention! You may do this anonymously if you choose, but we'd love for our members to be able to thank you appropriately.

If you have already included Harmony in your will, please let us know. We understand that such generosity is not a request for recognition but rather a desire for your support to continue after your time on stage has ended.

Harmony, Inc. is honored to accept gifts of money, bequests, required minimum IRA distributions, and trust designations. If you are considering remembering Harmony in your will, please discuss your plans with your professional financial advisor or attorney and then let us know.

Join the 1959 Society, Class of 2024

[1959 Society Commitment Form](#)

[Harmony, Inc. Donation Form](#)



2023 Chorus Champion A Cappella Showcase leaps to the prize

24

By Susanne Hasulo

What an absolute thrill and honour it was to be recognized as Harmony's International 2023 Chorus Champions in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It's such a wonderful validation of our journey over the past year – the progress we've made to become better singers, musicians and performers, the obstacles we've overcome, and the bonds that we continue to form and strengthen among every amazing person in our chorus.

Looking back over the past year, our progress can be measured in small steps as well as giant leaps. We took those "small" steps forward during our weekly rehearsals, which were spent learning and fine-tuning specific skills, drilling down on the smallest of details in each of our songs to elevate our overall performance.

More importantly, however, those small steps helped us to collectively take a great leap forward

and shift our mindset to a "bigger-picture" approach about how we communicate and connect with our audience.

Guided by Director Jordan Travis and Associate Director Amy Patterson, we spent this year focusing on: how can we create more emotional intent when we sing, inject more purpose and more character in every phrase? Rather than singing individual notes and executing choreographed moves, how could we internalize this way of thinking and make it our default, and better communicate the emotional and musical message of each song so that it resonates with our audience.

Thankfully, we had several performances over the past year where we enjoyed communicating and connecting with different

audiences on a deeper level, such as our spring show, where we were thrilled to have our 2022 HI Quartet Champions, Take 4, as our special guest.

Other performances included being part of the lineup of performers at the BHS Ontario District Pep Rally, a concert and art exhibition hosted by a local arts school, entertaining guests at a volunteer appreciation dinner, and capping the year off with our *Holiday Spectacular* Christmas show which we co-presented with the Harbourtown Sound mens' chorus and featured soloist, Tim Waurick!

In addition to our amazingly talented Jordan and Amy, we are incredibly grateful to have also been guided on this journey

towards better communication by extraordinary coaches Steve Tramack, Cindy Hansen, Patrick Brown, and David Wright. Thanks also go to our hardworking, dedicated section leaders and our dynamic performance team.

While receiving our gold medals was a definite high point for us at IC&C, being able to sing and celebrate with our Harmony sisters is what truly filled us with love and joy. Singing *A Million Dreams* with everyone in the audience at Saturday evening's Moonglow, being on the stage with Take 4 and singing *This is Me* during their swan-song performance, and then singing that song with them again in the big hall along with members of so many other choruses – these are the moments that will stay in our hearts forever.

We are truly grateful and proud to be part of such a vibrant and incredible organization, and are humbled to be able to represent Harmony Inc. as champions during this year.

...how can we create more emotional intent when we sing, inject more purpose and more character in every phrase?

2023 Award Recipients



**G. Ruth Geils Memorial Award
Music City Sound**



**Jerry Dunlop Memorial Award
Chris Dunbar
Crystal Chords Director**



**L.A.B.B.S. Trophy
Atlanta Harmony Celebration!**



**Montreal City Voices Tait Trophy
Bella Nova Chorus**



**MacIntosh Award
Bluegrass Harmony**



**Jeanne O'Connor International
Chorus Championship Trophy
A Cappella Showcase**



**Skidge Heath Memorial Award
Director Jordan Travis
A Cappella Showcase**



**Harmony's Future Award
Daphodyls**



**Accord Award
Life is Good!**



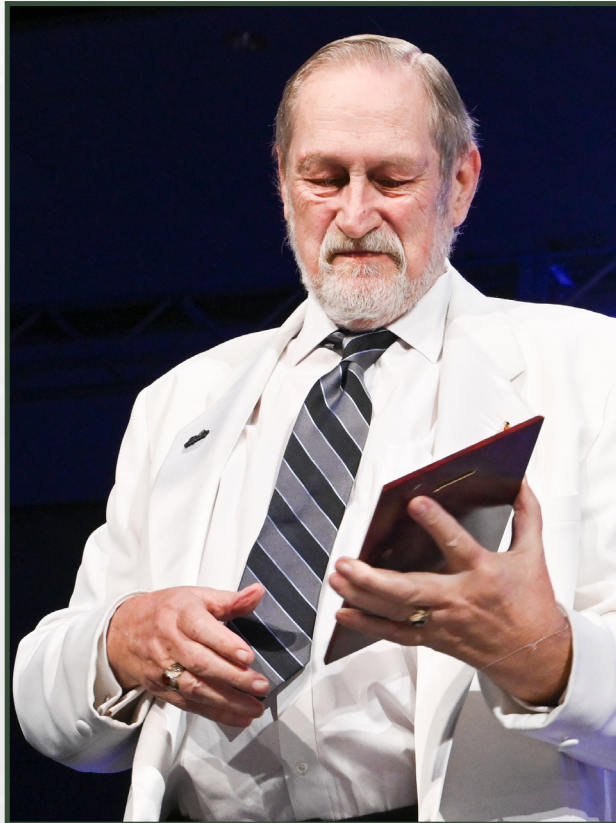
**Findlay Plaque
Sublime**



2023 Award Recipients

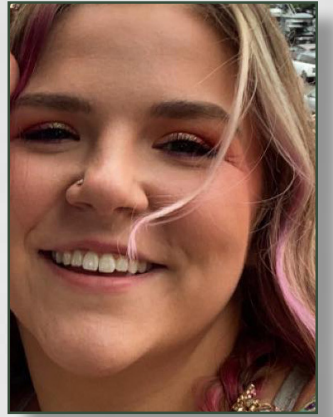
2023 President's Award Steve Hagerdon

President Linda Brehaut said of awardee Steve Hagerdon, "With this award we honor an individual who has given time, skills, and resources for many years. Steve Hagerdon has a deep-seated desire to ensure our youth keep singing and has been donating between \$5,000 and \$10,000 yearly for over 10 years. These funds have ensured our youth obtain free All Events Passes to all our Area Convention & Contests and International Conventions & Contests. His funds have supported many projects over the years, and we are eternally grateful for this. What an honor and pleasure it has been to spend time with this gentleman. His love for Harmony is inspiring. Thank you for all you have contributed to Harmony. Steve, and many others in our midst, have shown us the gifts we donate, whether it be time, talents, or money, truly make Harmony a stronger organization."



Youth Member of the Year

Mindy Marinko, member of the Liberty Belles.



Sandy White Membership Award

Valley Voices for their 63.3% growth as of October 15, 2023, with 19 new members.

Past President's Plaque

Presented to Linda Brehaut, who served three years as International President (2020-2023).

Gold Status Members

To mark our gratitude for the devotion of Harmony's 50+ year members, effective renewals in 2023, the International Board of Directors approved Gold Status for these individuals.

This year, we honor:

- Dorothy Bond
- Beverley Jackson
- Sally Reinsborough
- Lauren Lindeman
- Diane Fagerstrom
- Eileen Braidwood



SERVICE AWARDS 2023

Harmony honors our volunteers

Harmony, Inc., being a volunteer-led organization, relies on its amazing members to care for and guide us through all types of events and in a variety of ways. We honor eight women this year for their milestones of service. Harmony, Inc. is so very grateful to these dedicated women and we say thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

15 YEARS

Anita Prather Harvell
Trayce Elenteny

10 YEARS

Linda Brehaut
Anne Bureau
Donna Clarkson
Linda Hilko
Judi Johnston
Donna McKay

Harmony honors 5 *Judges Emerita*

The International Contest & Judging Committee officially honored some Harmony judges who, throughout the 39-year history of the Harmony, Inc. judging program have been instrumental in making the program strong and forward-looking in service to our contestants.

With the blessing of the International Board of Directors, the International Contest & Judging Committee has created a new title for formerly certified judges who have provided distinguished service to the Harmony, Inc. Judging Program. That title is **Judge Emerita**. Being named Judge Emerita recognizes the honouree's positive impact on the judging program, whether through length of service, leadership, innovation or other attributes or accomplishments. In the inaugural year of this program five former judges were honored.

Linda Muise, Assistant International Contest & Judging Chair presented the following individuals with certificates acknowledging this honour.

Nancy Foris – Certified in the Interpretation Category in 1984, Nancy was one of the first three judges certified by Harmony, Inc. She passed away in 2018, but it is appropriate to honour her as a pioneer for Harmony, Inc.'s Judging Program.

Lauren Lindeman – Another of the three pioneers. Lauren certified in the Sound Category in 1984, and when our judging categories changed

in 1995, she went on to certify as a Music Judge. The records reveal that she also acted as Chairman of Judges, as well as having served on the International Contest & Judging Committee for many years in various capacities. She retired in 2020 after thirty-six years of service.

Barbara-Ann MacIntosh – Barbara-Ann was also in our first class of certified judges, in the Stage Presence Category. She went on to serve as our first International Contest and Judging Chair.

Jeanne O'Connor – Jeanne served as the second International Contest & Judging Chair. And she was certified in two categories: She served for ten years as a certified Chairman of Judges before judging for seven more years in the Presentation/Performance category, from which she retired in 2017.

Jacquie Jensen – Retired from judging in May of this year, after thirty-seven years as a certified judge in the Chairman of Judges/Administrative Judge Category and twenty years as International Contest & Judging Chair.

Thank you to all these women for all they have done over the years, with Harmony, Inc. in their hearts, to serve our members through their remarkable service in the Contest & Judging Program.



Harmony for Young Women

The Harmony for Young Women Program is intended to reach out to young women through four-part a cappella harmony in the barbershop style. Its goal is to provide musical education and an environment that fosters a love of vocal music, personal growth and development, and life-long friendships.

The goals of the Harmony for Young Women Program are to:

- Introduce barbershop style singing to young women;
- Encourage young singers to pursue vocal music in schools, as well as in their communities;
- Provide vocal music education to all young singers;
- Raise awareness with young singers, educators, administrators, and the community of the viability of the barbershop style as a musical art form;
- Encourage and help schools expand their vocal music programs to include barbershop music;
- Help Areas and chapters develop more local youth outreach initiatives by providing guidelines and resources;
- Encourage an environment in which young singers can develop greater self-confidence, improved performance skills, and the value of teamwork;
- Educate all of Harmony, Inc. about the importance of youth outreach, and all that it entails;
- Encourage the current youth of Harmony, Inc. to be more active in their chapters and Areas.



Minor Chords entertain at IC&C 2023 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Harmony, Inc. talks supporting and encouraging youth in harmony

By Melinda Brunson

The youth members of Harmony, Inc. are the future, and The Bright Future Fund helps to ensure that.

We have all heard that, “the youth are the future,” but have you ever sat down to really think about that? The first barbershop singing organization was formed in 1938 as the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. – now known as the Barbershop Harmony Society. For ninety-four years singers have been spreading the joy of four part harmony with their communities, families, friends, and truly across the globe. It has not been only the people from 1938, 1945 when Sweet Adeline’s was founded, 1959 when Harmony, Inc. was founded, or any of the milestone years that our barbershop families expanded across the continents. It has been the youth who have joined this great artform that continue its growth and contribute to its longevity.

In Harmony, Incorporated, our youth members are defined as members under the age of twenty-six. While there is a great age difference between a 14 year old and a 24 year old, they receive the same amount of nurtur-

ing and support from our organization. One of the biggest ways that we have been able to support these members has been by generous donations, or endowments, to cover their event passes for conventions and contests. Not only has this helped the young people who are going out on their own for the first time, the families who have multiple children in multiple activities, the multi-generational and multi-child barbershop families, or the families that are not able to spare outside of their budgets, but it has helped the organization all around.

For many youth members barbershop singing is more than just a hobby or extracurricular activity. It provides a safe place for them to express themselves, connect to a passion they may not otherwise be able, meet hundreds or thousands of people who share their deep love for music and singing, be educated and encouraged by many of the most knowledgeable barbershop singers from around the world. There are so many reasons that young people have joined barbershop, and what is true is that their lives would never have been the same without it – that has certainly been the case for Steve Hagerdon.

Steve Hagerdon has been a donor to Harmony, Inc. for many years. At our 2023 International Convention and Contests, he shared how his life has been influenced by barbershop and how that passion has led him to supporting our youth. His passion and commitment to making sure that our youth have the opportunity to sing four-part harmony is why Harmony, Inc. has established the Steve Hagerdon Bright Future Fund. Officially launched during the Opening Ceremonies at IC&C, our organization was able to raise \$11,000 over the course of the convention to kick start this amazing fund.

The youth truly are the future, for without them continuing the passion and love for barbershop music this great artform would cease to exist. If you would like to support and celebrate the youth of Harmony, Inc., please consider becoming a donor to the Bright Future Fund. Whether just one time or over the course of your lifetime, every donation makes a difference. Please [visit our donation website](#) for more information about how you can get involved.



Parade of Champions 2023



ASSOCIATION OF HARMONY QUEENS CHORUS

TAKE 4 (2022)



CHANGE OF HEART (1999)

TAKEN FOR GRANITE (2016)



LIVEWIRE (2015)





2022 HARMONY QUEENS

Take 4

receive their permanent crowns

In the traditional on-stage ceremony — always an emotional one — 2022 Harmony Queens Take 4 exchanged their traveling crowns for permanent tiaras. Each member of the quartet was crowned by the people in her life whom she wished to recognize as most supportive of and significant in her, and the quartet’s achievement.

Sparkle on, Take 4!

Future IC&C Dates and Locations

2024	Galt House, Louisville, KY	November 6-9
2025	Hershey Lodge, Hershey, PA	November 5-8
2026	Galt House, Louisville, KY	November 11-14
2027	Niagara Falls Conv. Ctr, Niagara Falls, ON	November 10-13
2028	Hershey Lodge, Hershey, PA	November 1-4

Harmony Queens Travel Fund

What is the Harmony Queens Travel Fund? So glad you asked!
 The Harmony Queens Travel Fund consists of money raised each year by the Association of Harmony Queens at the annual Parade of Champions at IC&C. This money is raised for your benefit and we hope you will take advantage of this fund. Your chapter is eligible for up to \$1,500 US towards travel and accommodation expenses when you hire a Harmony Queens quartet to appear on your show. at an educational event or youth event.

Please check out the [Harmony, Inc. website](#) for details at or contact:
[Travel Fund Chairman Judi Johnston](#)
705-835-3402

Unlock your *WHY* in performance

It's all too common for choruses and quartets to excel in the external elements instead of focusing where the pros do: audience connection

By Theresa Weatherbee,
Performance Category Specialist

In the real world of entertainment, great performances transcend mere technical proficiency. They weave together music, movement, and emotion, captivating the audience's hearts and minds. As barbershop performers, we often focus on the external elements - the flawless technique, the stage presence, the choreography. But what if the true secret to unlocking your full potential lies within? The answer lies within your understanding your "why."

Knowing your "why" refers to understanding the deeper motivation, purpose, and reasons behind your actions and artistic choices as a singing performer. The "why" behind your performance can be as straightforward as wanting the audience to feel the love and camaraderie you share while singing together on stage. It also enhances your authenticity, emotional impact, and connection with the audience.

While everyone knows **what** they want to do, only some understand **how** to do

it, and very few truly grasp "**why**" they do what they do on stage. As a result, our thought processes, emotions, and communication often originate from the outside in. However, the most inspired performers – the ones who genuinely move their audiences – all **think, feel, and communicate from the inside out**. But how do they achieve this? By embracing their humanity and understanding the source of their power.

OUR BRAINS HOLD THE KEY

The Limbic System, often called the "emotional brain" plays a pivotal role in shaping our feelings, trust, and decision-making processes. But what exactly is the limbic system, and how does it influence our actions, especially when we step onto the stage?

The limbic system is a collection of interconnected brain structures that work together to regulate emotions, memory, and motivation.

Here's the fascinating part: the limbic system lacks language capacity. Unlike the neocortex (the outer layer of the

brain responsible for language, reasoning, and conscious thought), the limbic system communicates through emotions, sensations, and visceral reactions. It's the primal part of our brain — the one that reacts instinctively, without the filter of words.

Let's apply this knowledge to performance, especially on stage. Consider two communication approaches:

1. Outside-In Communication. In this mode, we convey information from the external world to our audience. Think of it as communicating lyrics, movements, and gestures.

While people can understand this information being delivered, it doesn't necessarily drive behavior. Why? Because it remains at the surface level - it engages the neocortex but bypasses the limbic system.



THE SHOP TARTS connected to the audience as they became waitresses bruised by love and learn to toughen up.

When a technically flawless choreography routine or a well-rehearsed song that lacks this limbic connection, the audience appreciates the skill but may not feel deeply moved.

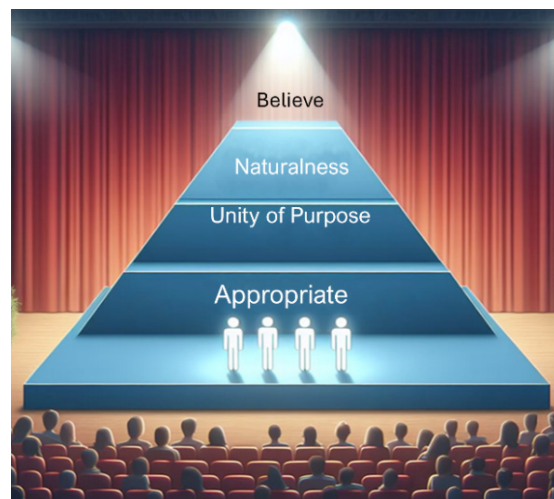
2. Inside-Out Communication. Great performers — whether actors, musicians, or speakers — operate from this inside-out perspective. They don't merely execute movements; they infuse them with genuine emotion.

When actors shed real tears on stage, the audience feels it. When a singer pours their heart into a song, listeners connect on a visceral level.

See **WHY**, continued on next page

WHY

Continued from previous page



THE HOW

Great performers employ a diverse set of skills to mesmerize, amuse, entertain, and breathe life into their message for the listeners. While these skills are teachable and learnable, they require consistent practice. High-quality singing, believability, vocal and visual expression, stance, pace, and the ability to gauge the audience's 'feel' — all of these can be cultivated through planning, preparation, and continuous improvement.

Let's break down the terms:

1. Technique is the manner and ability with which an artist, writer, dancer, or athlete employs the technical skills of their chosen art form. It involves mastering the mechanics and intricacies of performance.

2. Skills represent the abilities derived from knowledge and practice. To excel in any skill, one must acquire the necessary expertise and consistently apply it effectively.

As you can see, skills are built upon a foundation of knowledge, and technique enhances the execution of those skills. Both are essential for achieving excellence in performance.

THE WHY

So, if it is true that everything we do on stage must have purpose, the gestures, movement and actions should be appropriate to the performer's musical or performance theme. And when they align with emotional intent, the audience feels the magic. We want to explore our "why," and break free from habits, and let our bodies tell the story. The performers actions will enhance, explain, justify, or give more meaning to the lyric, melody, rhythm, or harmony. All this falls into a four-level hierarchy, with the goal being believability. Without achieving believability, the performance falls short of truly captivating the audience. This hierarchy can be expressed as follows.

1. Appropriateness (Plan it!) Ensure that your movements and gestures align with the musical or performance theme.

Consider the appropriateness of each action you choose.

2. Unity of Purpose or Precision (Rehearse it!) Practice your movements and actions meticulously. If physical movements are not synchronized or lack unity of purpose, the audience's attention is drawn away from the song and is focused on the distraction caused by poor execution. The musical theme tells you whether your actions should be precise or unity of purpose. For example, the Robot package Northern Lights did in 2011 required a great deal of precision, versus Parkside Harmony's performance of Sittin On The Dock Of The Bay required them to have a unified purpose.

3. Naturalness (Make it your own!)

Strive for authenticity. Let your movements flow naturally, reflecting your personality and style. Avoid forced or contrived gestures.

4. Believability (Give it to your audience)

The pinnacle goal is for everything you do on stage to appear and feel so authentic and convincing that the audience passionately believes in your message. Engage them both emotionally and intellectually.

While this hierarchy may not exactly mirror the learning process, it repre-

sents the order of refinement that leads to an effective and compelling performance.

Remember, as performers, we're not just delivering lines or executing choreography. We're channels of emotion, bridging the gap between the stage and the hearts of our audience while being totally in the moment. So, next time you step into the spotlight, remember it's not just about what you say or do—it's about how you make them feel. Perform from the inside out, and watch the magic unfold!

1. Authenticity: Authenticity resonates with the limbic system. When performers genuinely feel lyrics, movements, and expressions, the audience senses it. Authenticity breeds believability.

2. Emotional Contagion: The limbic system is contagious. If you're passionate, the audience catches that fire. If you're sad, they feel it too.

3. Creating Moments: Inside-out communication creates memorable moments. It's not about flawless execution; it's about touching hearts.

4. Audience Empathy: Understand your audience — their emotions, fears, and desires. Speak to their limbic brains, and they'll follow you anywhere.

2024 International Board of Directors

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— *Donna McKay*

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Vice President Finance
– *Jan DeVecchio*

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CONVENTION MANAGER:

Allison Thompson

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EDITOR, HI NOTE:

Roxanne Powell

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MANAGER: Debbie Wilson

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Liz LeClair

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2024 IC&C in LOUISVILLE



POST TIME! — Bluegrass Harmony executed the draw for the order of appearance in the 2024 contests. “On Your Marks...Set...”

Quartet Order of Appearance

- | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. The Short List | 8. Vivàce | 15. Continental Crush | 22. Sassafras |
| 2. Limitless Quartet | 9. Serenade | 16. What’s the Deal (MBHA) | 23. RetroSpect |
| 3. Angel’s Envy | 10. Sapphire | 17. ZEST | 24. SweetLife |
| 4. 4/4 A Time | 11. Just Sayin’ | 18. In a Chord | 25. High Gear |
| 5. The No Drama Llamas | 12. Limitless (MBHA) | 19. SparX | 26. Arranged Marriage (MBHA) |
| 6. BACKSTAGE PASS | 13. Sweet Addiction | 20. Onyx | 27. Blue Phoenix |
| 7. Legacy | 14. Intonations | 21. Roulette | 28. Daphodyls |

Chorus Order of Appearance

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Sisters of Sound | 9. Covered Bridge Harmony | 17. St. Louis Vocal Project |
| 2. Bluegrass Harmony | 10. Harmony Magic | 18. New England Voices in Harmony |
| 3. The Village Vocal Chords | 11. Shades of Harmony | 19. Atlanta Harmony Celebration! |
| 4. Vocal Moxie | 12. Northern Blend | 20. Bella Nova |
| 5. Rochester Rhapsody | 13. Music City Sound | 21. Sounds of the Seacoast |
| 6. Liberty Belles | 14. Crystal Chords | 22. Sunshine Harmony |
| 7. Barre-Tones, Inc. | 15. Unaccompanied Minors | 23. Women of Note |
| 8. Seaside A Cappella | 16. Harmony Heritage | 24. On Q |

Now that we’ve relived IC&C 2023, it’s time to get ready to enjoy IC&C 2024!

DEADLINES ARE APPROACHING

October 24

Submit your song registration (for competing quartets and choruses)

October 31, Midnight EDT

Online Registration closes - order through your AEP registration [HERE](#) until then (you may still purchase AEPs and tickets at the door)

NEED TO CHANGE A ROOM BOOKING?

So you’ve booked your hotel room for IC&C but there’s been a change in arrival date, roommates, etc. You must use the [website](#) to make any changes to your hotel res-

ervation. YOU CANNOT CALL THE HOTEL DIRECTLY.

LAST-MINUTE DINNER/REGISTRATION CHANGES?

Are you an individual who still needs to register, or are you about to register just one more person for your chapter? Are you looking for just one more Saturday dinner ticket? If so, be sure to check out the NEW [Self-Serve Ticket Transfer](#) bulletin board on the HI website (in the members-only section)

How does it work? Harmony members can now post AEPs, Dinner, and Event tickets they can no longer use. If you are in the market for one, check here first and help someone else in Harmony at the same time.

Any interested Buyer can visit the Self-Serve Ticket Transfer page and contact the Seller directly to purchase the ticket(s). Note: All monetary transactions are between the Buyer and the Seller.

The IC&C Registrar will be notified of postings and transfers and once a ticket has been ‘claimed’ the buyer will be contacted for additional information as needed.

Questions? Please reach out to Linda Briggs, IC&C Registrar.

Remember, you can always visit the website FAQ page for details on IC&C! The FAQ sheet is kept updated throughout the contest season with everything you need to know.

2023 IC&C Chorus Champions
A Cappella Showcase
*beams with delight at the realization that
 their dream is fulfilled.
 Congratulations!*



We will all remember fondly the time we celebrated Harmony in Grand Rapids ...

and look forward to seeing you all again in November in Louisville, Kentucky!

