

The Dixie District's

# REBELTROUSER

Alabama • Georgia • Mississippi • North Carolina • South Carolina • Tennessee  
Winter 2007

Fall Convention 2007

Chorus and Quartet Photos

Convention Highlights

Hamlet and Birmingham COTS

2008 YIH Opportunities



# The Rebel Rouser

Volume 50, Number 4

Editor

Keith Therrell

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The **Rebel Rouser** is published quarterly by the Dixie District Association of Chapters of the Barbershop Harmony Society.



## Vision

The Dixie District is committed to enriching lives in every generation and community through the lifelong benefits of the barbershop style and other forms of a cappella singing.

## Mission

The Dixie District SPEBSQSA, Inc., a charitable and non-profit organization, enriches lives through singing.

- We enrich lives through singing.
- We perpetuate and celebrate the barbershop harmony style.
- We serve each new generation of singers through support of vocal music education.
- We serve audiences through an uplifting, wholesome variety of a cappella musical entertainment.
- We serve our members by sharing fellowship, performance skills and leadership development.
- We help build better communities and a better world, bonding diverse people through the pure fun of a cappella harmony as we keep the whole world singing!

Cover Photo by Jim Simpson,  
Heart of Carolina Chorus

# 2007 Dixie District Executive Team/Board of Directors



**President**

Dwain Chambers



**Executive VP**

Bob Tilton



**Secretary**

Russell Bell



**Treasurer**

Curt Douglass



**Member At Large**

Larry Deters



**Member At Large**

Jack Donaldson



**Immediate Past President**

Don Lang

## Dixie District Management Team



**Music & Performance**  
Ralph Cordaro



**Marketing & Public Relations**  
Mike Schiermann



**Membership Development**  
Dennis Evans



**Chorus Director Development**  
John Phillips



**Contest & Judging**  
Jim Sams



**Chapter Support & Leadership Training**  
Dave Millson



**Youth In Harmony**  
Jim Moore



**Membership Events**  
Jack Donaldson



**Dixie Awards**  
Allen Finley



**Historian**  
Gerald Adams



**Financial Development**  
Thom Hine



**Web Master**  
Mark Hyde



**Rebel Rouser Editor**  
Keith Therrell



**Society Board Member**  
Dan Brinkmann

# The Prez Sez... Thanks!

**A**s I sit in my office chair composing my last Rebel Rouser article as President of the Dixie District of the Barbershop Harmony Society, I begin reflecting over the nearly 3 years that I have sat in this chair and the many positive actions that have occurred during this period.

I just returned from Nashville where Thom Hine, Mike Schiermann, and I attended a meeting of the District Presidents Council and the fall Society Board Meeting in the new Society



**By Dwain  
Chambers  
District  
President**

Headquarters building. I can honestly say that the new home of the BHS is indeed a great accomplishment for the Dixie District and they reside in a facility that we can all be proud of. So my first thanks goes to all those that participated in the decision to move the Society Headquarters to Music City USA in the Heart of Dixie!

I also want to extend a very special thanks to all members of the leadership team of the district whom I have had the distinct honor and pleasure of working with. As many of you know, the majority of this team was the vision of my predecessor Frank Cristina and his

very untimely leukemia diagnosis and death thrust me into the president's role well before I was really ready to assume that role. In addition to that, we were in the middle of the Society's reorganization with many unknowns about how to operate effectively under the new structure. So I thank this incomparable group of leaders serving on the Board and on the Management team who kept doing their job and moving us forward! I would also be remiss if I did not personally commend EVP Bob "Squeak" Tilton and the Budget and Finance Committee for all of the work they have accomplished in completely redesigning our budget and accounting process. Thanks guys!

We all know how important our spouses are to our hobby and my wife Connie has been an outstanding hostess for the Dixie District as our First Lady since I became President. During this time she also endured her own battle with breast cancer and the death of her father, Bob Strong, who many will remember as "Super Lead" in our

district. I would like to publicly thank Connie and her mother Ann Strong for all of the love, support and help they each have provided to the district and me!

Speaking of spouses, the wives of our leadership team have worked tirelessly with Connie to prepare, serve, and clean up the President's hospitality room at our conventions and board meetings. I could never find enough words to express my gratitude to each of you for making these events special and a true demonstration of "southern hospitality" to our guests. Thank you ladies! You know the true meaning of unselfish service!

In conclusion, I want to thank all of the members of the Dixie District for your trust, faith, friendships, and wonderful memories! It has been a wonderful ride but I am not going away – I will continue to work behind the scenes as we work together in making this the premier district in the Barbershop Harmony Society!

As our Society President Noah Funderburg says in his slogan for 2007, HARMONY For Life! 🎵

## Dixie District Addresses

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# Dixie District Chapter Operations Training Seminars for 2008 Officers

**O**n November 17, 2007 two successful Dixie District Regional One-day Chapter Operations Training Seminars (COTS) were held. Seventy 2008 officers were trained. The Northeast Regional COTS was held at Richmond Community College in Hamlet, NC, and the Southwest Regional COTS was held at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Our objectives in having regional one-day COTS are to train more chapter officers by making training more accessible both monetarily and time wise thus reducing cost to your chapter.

If more of your officers are trained for their jobs, your chapter's administration should operate much more smoothly and the leadership will better know how to coordinate the operations.

The Dixie District must thank David Brennan who served as COTS Coordinator for the Birmingham COTS. Without his tireless work and many hours of planning and coordinating we would not have been able to have the Birmingham COTS.

Congratulations to his team of helpers -- Mike Schierman, Ed

Davis, Robert Dupree and Mike Maetz -- for a job well done.

We also must thank our superb faculty at both locations (all of whom hail from Dixie) for being well prepared and teaching in the most exemplarily manner.

At Birmingham, class 1 was strictly single track.

After lunch there were combined sessions of Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers meeting in one group and Chapter Development Membership and Marketing & PR in another.

The faculty merged their instruction exceptionally well. The final two hours was a general session with Drew Ellis demonstrating the new Ebiz section of the BHS website and commenting about membership plans for 2008 and beyond. Then Noah Funderburg led a mock chapter planning meeting to demonstrate how a

chapter might elect to go about planning and stress the importance of continuous planning in the chapter.

At Hamlet, classes 1 and 2 were track specific, while class 3 was a joint class with everyone participating.

Class 3 consisted of Dennis Evans presenting a Chapter Planning class that gets all chapter members to buy into chapter goals for the year, Chuck Greene's briefing, "Compellingly Attractive Chapter Meetings", a look at revitalizing chapters, (this was requested by the attendees), and a ten minute update of the Carolina District Initiative by two members of the Carolina Task Force who were

in attendance. A gist of Chuck's remarks is available on a free pod cast at [www.singingbarbershop.com](http://www.singingbarbershop.com). This joint session was well received by all as being appropriate and very informative.

Post-COTS evaluations overwhelmingly support the continuation of one-day regional COTS. Increased attendance at the regional one-day COTS is another indication of support. There will be one more Regional COTS in Atlanta on 12 January, 2008 for 2008 officers. If you had a conflict with the 17 November, 2007 date, you still have an opportunity to participate in getting training and sharing your experiences and successes with other chapters and barbershoppers. Come join us in Atlanta. 🎵



Photo courtesy of Dave Millson



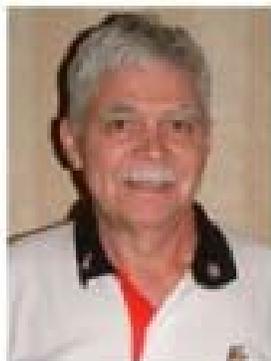
Photo courtesy of Dave Millson

Joint Session at Hamlet, NC COTS

## By Dave Millson Chapter Support & Leadership Training

# 2008 Brings Many YIH Opportunities

**Y**our Dixie District Board of Directors recently approved a Youth In Harmony 2008 budget that allows financial assistance in several areas. The new budget includes scholarships for two music educators to Harmony University, financial assistance for up to two College Quartet competitors in



**By Jim Moore,  
Youth In  
Harmony**

Nashville, financial supplements for two one-day festivals, help with expenses for a competitor in the San Antonio youth chorus contest, and assistance in funding exhibits at two music educator conventions.

In addition to all of that financial assistance, Harmony Foundation now supplements the costs of one-day high school festivals to the tune of \$10 per student and educator attending. They continue to supplement the costs of Harmony Explosion Camps at a rate of \$50 per student and Educator.

This is great news for our efforts to create a second District Harmony Explosion Camp for the Chapters, students and teachers who live in the western parts of the District, and who simply are too far away from the Clemson Camp to attend. Plans are for the west HX Camp to be held on July 11 through the 13th in the Birmingham area. This will be a two-day camp (all day Friday and Saturday, with a Saturday night show) whereas the Clemson camp, held the following week, is a three-day event.

The clinician for the west camp will be James

Estes, the Music Specialist from the Society. The teaching quartet will be selected later. James's resume is available at the following website:

[www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/pages/pub\\_jestes\\_longbio.hcsp](http://www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/pages/pub_jestes_longbio.hcsp)

I must have evidence from the Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia Chapters that they will support this camp both with finding interested campers and teachers, and with sponsorships, before this will become a reality. If you want this camp to happen, let me know of your support.

The clinicians for the Clemson HX Camp are Dr. Bill Adams, who many of you saw work his magic at last year's camp, and Michael Martin, Director of Choral Activities/Music Education at Methodist University in Fayetteville, NC. The teaching quartet will be **Lunch Break**, the hilarious new 2007 Dixie District Quartet Champions.

In my last article, I proudly said that two Music Educators from Dixie had been sent to



the 2007 Harmony University on scholarship. It turns out that I was wrong. Actually, there were three. Braeden Kershner from Southern Wesleyan

University attended on a Society scholarship. Braeden is a music educator in the Charleston area and is now a member of the Charleston Chapter. He was selected to direct one of the Harmony University choruses while at HU. This is a great way to make teachers aware of the benefits of introducing barbershop into their music programs.

*(continued on page 7)*

# Are You Interested In Serving the Dixie District as VP for Financial Development?

**S**ounds like an awesome task, does it not? Actually, it's a lot easier than I had anticipated as I replied, "Yes," to Dwain Chambers when he asked if I would accept the position in January of 2006.

Thanks to the DIX House of Delegates action on 9-28-07, all DIX District VPs now have a vote on the DIX Board. The Board is no longer divided into Governance and Operational bodies.

The post was formed at the district level to provide ongoing support for Harmony Foundation and each of our 16 districts. Qualifications include:

- Society member for at least five years and a member of a chapter in the district other than Frank H. Thorne Chapter.
- Knowledge of principles and practices of developing and utilizing volunteer leadership.
- Dedicated to total quality service and a team player.
- Accountable to the District Board and Harmony Foundation.
- Interpersonal skills with the ability to develop relations of trust.
- Ability to inspire confidence, to motivate and to persuade.
- Strong written and oral communication skills with a high level of energy and initiative.
- Accessible, reliable, supportive, collaborative, team-oriented style.
- Ability to work with Harmony Foundation Trustees and staff leadership to help ensure that his district implements an integrated, comprehensive and successful financial development program.



**Thom Hine**  
**Financial**  
**Development,**  
**2008 DIX**  
**President-Elect**

Duties include:

- Participate in the annual fund-raising program planning process.
- Plan for the training of volunteers in all four Foundation volunteer areas.
- Lead the annual district goal-setting process to determine challenging yet appropriate goals.
- Provide for Chapter Grant Writing Training.
- Grant Writing for the District.
- Report to the District President and attend District Board meetings.
- Attend all District Board and House of Delegate meetings.

Directly communicate with:

- District President, District Board, Harmony Foundation President.

If you would consider serving your Dixie District in this capacity, please send a brief personal/barbershop/business resume to:

Thom Hine  
4212 Bretsdale Run NW  
Kennesaw, GA 30152  
770-419-7405  
vp-development@dixiedistrict.org

Perhaps you feel you can handle some of the responsibilities listed above and you have barbershop friends who would assist you in others. Now you're on the right track, for it takes a team effort in any enterprise to be successful. In two short years, DIX has increased our President's Council membership by 40% and secured grants totaling \$13,500 (excluding chapter, quartet and individual donations to our annual Harmony Explosion Camp for high school and college age boys).

OK, now I'm sitting next to my phone and computer!🎵

## **YIH** *(continued from page 5)*

If you would like to nominate a music teacher for a 2008 District scholarship to HU, by March 31 send me a nomination letter, a copy of the teacher's resume, and a statement assuring that the teacher can attend. The dates of the 2008 Harmony University are July 27 through August 3.

And if your Chapter is holding a festival or sponsoring a booth at an MENC Convention, you need to let me know.

Here are several websites that can help you spread the word of youth in barbershop:

Our winning Society barbershop chorus on:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6\\_D2XDUPUo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6_D2XDUPUo)

Lunch Break, 2007 Dixie District Quartet

Champions and 2008 HXC Teaching Quartet:  
[www.musiccitychorus.org/node/47](http://www.musiccitychorus.org/node/47)

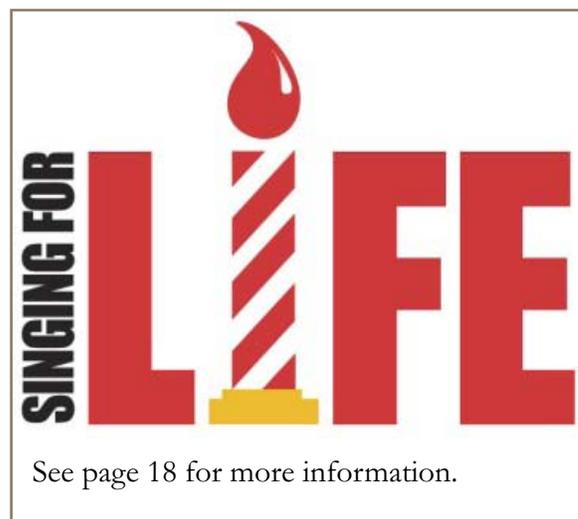
Youth In Harmony Resource Manual:  
[http://www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/native/id\\_047342.pdf](http://www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/native/id_047342.pdf)

Everything you may want to know about the San Antonio Youth Chorus Contest:  
[www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/pages/pub\\_YouthFestival\\_Home.hcsp](http://www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/pages/pub_YouthFestival_Home.hcsp)

A neat multi-track Scarborough Fair tag:  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfgk-i56QIO>

Pictures from the 2007 Clemson HX Camp:  
<http://public.fotki.com/JimYIH/hxc07bb/>

At this writing, still just over one half of the chapters in the District have a designated YIH contact. If your chapter is not one of those, and you have an interest in working with youth, please let your Chapter administration know, and contact me, so that I can help you establish a program for your chapter. There is not a more rewarding program in our hobby today, and seeing a young person's eyes light up when introduced to a ringing barbershop chord for the first time is that reward. Thanks for your interest.🎵



# Get Involved, Grow, Have More Fun!

I recently attended the District Presidents Forum and Society Board meetings at our new Society Headquarters in Nashville, and I must say it was a very worthwhile trip to the Music City.

Our Society is in the process of replacing its management philosophy with a new approach that uses simpler, more focused goals and aims. Some of you may have noted the new Society AIMS just released. One of these new AIMS is that Chapters become more involved in serving their communities. As a marketer, you've got to admit that's a PR gold mine!



**Mike Schiermann**  
**Marketing & Public Relations**

There are so many choices you may literally have to get the Chapter Board together for a special meeting to discuss all the options. I hope your Chapter already donates a portion of your income to a well-known and worthy local charity. When you do that, it opens many doors to promote your Chapter's activities, and it helps the Chapter build partnerships with media and other local groups, thus expanding your base of support.

People are more likely to buy a ticket to the Barbershop Show if they know they are helping the local charity hospital, Shriners, MDA, shelter, food bank, etc. Local TV stations, radio stations and newspapers are also much more likely to help you promote the show if such a charitable aspect is part of your plan. Make it a prominent part of your marketing push for the show!

Imagine the community support you could build if you started now promoting a Veteran's Day salute show for 2008, with plans to donate a portion of the proceeds to a local Veterans organization! Let's salute our town's #1 Military family...or #1 Military Mom. Let's reunite a returning soldier with his family at the show! Let's get some more ideas cranking! How cool could this be? How much publicity would it generate for

our Chapter? How many tickets could we sell? How many new members could we recruit? Stand back!

Whatever cause your Chapter chooses to embrace, get representatives from the charity to go with you when you make public appearances that benefit

**People are more likely to buy a ticket to the Barbershop Show if they know they are helping the local charity...**

them. Let them speak for a brief moment after or before you sing. Bring a rep with you to that radio station morning show quartet shot or TV interview. This adds tons of credibility and sends the message that we are here and we are serious about being a positive force in our community.

Some Chapters have built long-term relationships with one particular local charity. Others help a variety of organizations. It all depends on what is the best fit for your particular Chapter.

In any case, the main thing is, Get Involved! Sing out and contribute to your community! The by-products are all desirable: your Chapter grows because of the extra exposure; your Members are stoked because the Chapter is active and everyone is getting plenty of chances to perform. Your community becomes more aware of your presence and perceives your Chapter as a valued and contributing entity.

Bob Davenport will take over the Marketing & PR Vice President's job for 2008 and beyond. He is a very capable and creative guy with tons of experience at this, having served on the Society's Marketing & PR committee. It has been my privilege to serve you in this capacity for the past 3 years, and now I'm moving to a new job in the Dixie District. I will be your Executive Vice President as long as the Board finds my performance satisfactory. Please be kind to Bob and let's have a terrific 2008!🎵

# Last Call for Contest and Judging Applicants!

**T**his is the LAST CALL for all barbershoppers who are interested in becoming a judge to begin applying for the Contest and Judging program. You still have until December 31, 2007, but I would suggest that you begin preparing your applications NOW.

Currently we have NINE certified judges (3-Contest Administrators and 6-Singing Judges) in Dixie, but with the Society office moving to Dixie, we will have several more C&J members joining our ranks. I also have the applications of NINE Dixie barbershoppers who are interested in becoming members of the C&J family. We are always looking for more men who have a desire to study and prepare for the C&J program. It takes time, money, and commitment to make the "cut".

However, the rewards of camaraderie and service far outweigh the costs of preparation.

You should now have lined up TWO certified judges in the category that you wish to enter (Contest Administrator, Music, Presentation, Singing) to recommend you via letter or email to your District Director of C&J (that's me!). You will also need to have FIVE other character

references to vouch for you as an applicant for the C&J program. Please consider Society members who know your abilities and who can comment on your suitability for the judging program.

Forms for both the CA and SCORING categories are found in the Contest and Judging Handbook in the Document section of the Society website. On the opening page of the Society webpage click on "Compete" and highlight C&J Forms. If needed, I will also send the forms attached to an email directly to you if you will contact me. You can also read and study all about these categories in the C&J Manual as well. I would strongly suggest that you do some studying and ask some questions of certified judges before deciding to enter the program. You

will need to download a copy of the C&J Handbook for your personal use during your training and for future reference.

Here is the time line we will be utilizing. The TWO letters or emails of recommendation can be sent immediately to me. You can also send the application forms containing the five other references that are required. Once I have reviewed your application and followed up with your references, I will notify you if your application has been approved by me and I will send my recommendation on to the Category Specialist in your chosen category for his consideration. You will be notified in early 2008 if you have been accepted as an Applicant in the program. From that point on you will be totally in the hands of your

Category Specialist for training. Your training will begin as you are prepared for Judge Candidate School which will be held in July, 2008 during the week prior to Harmony University at Southwest Missouri State University in St. Joseph, MO.

Once you have "passed" the requirements at Candidate School you will be promoted to a Candidate Judge in your category. You will then have another two years to prepare for invitation to the 2010 Category School where you will hopefully be certified for three years. During this two-year candidacy program, you will attend a minimum of THREE conventions a year as a GUEST panelist to ply your trade and learn from the certified panel you will be working with. You will also have some homework to complete during those two years, which will also help determine whether you receive an invitation to attend the Category School. It is not an automatic invitation anymore. You have to earn your wings before you can fly!

I didn't say it was easy. But I did say it is a VERY rewarding experience. You will meet and work with some of the most talented and congenial men in the Society. Many of the barbershoppers who are members in the C&J community are your heroes! You will be rewarded by the opportunity

*(continued on page 18)*



**By Jim Sams,  
Contest and  
Judging**

# 2007 Fall Convention Quartet Competitors



Lunch Break



Pinstripe



Quadzilla



ZigZag



Let's Sing!



Way Back When



Music Row



CROSSFIRE

# 2007 Fall Convention Quartet Competitors



Five 'n Dime



N2Deep



Village Green



Next Wave



Dime Store Harmony



Collector's Edition



Acappella Fellas



Midnight Mix

# 2007 Fall Convention Quartet Competitors



Prism



Nightcap



Times Gone Bye



Tucker Street



Archives



Up Front



Doppler Effect



Last Flight Out

# 2007 Fall Convention Quartet Competitors



Front Page



Chord Of Appeal



Locked & Loaded



Sunny Side Up



Photo by Keith Therrell

## Dixie's 2007 Senior Quartet Champs **Village Green**

Rocky Mount, RTP, Winston-Salem, NC,  
Alexandria, VA

Tenor - Alan Kousen  
Lead - Charles Rose  
Bari - Jim Nappier  
Bass - Jon Vickers

## Dixie's 2007 Novice Quartet Champs **Next Wave**

Atlanta Metro, GA

Tenor - Matt Durden  
Lead - Brent Smith  
Bari - Lars Grevstad  
Bass - Michael Burnaman



Photo by Keith Therrell

# 2007 Fall Convention Chorus Competitors



Atlanta Metro, GA



Memphis, TN



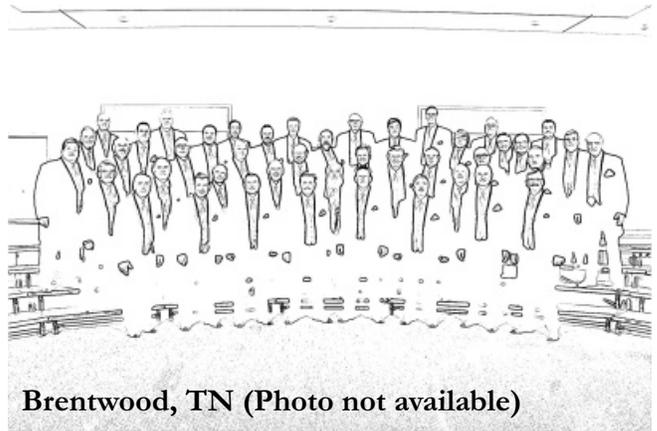
Research Triangle Park, NC



Nashville, TN



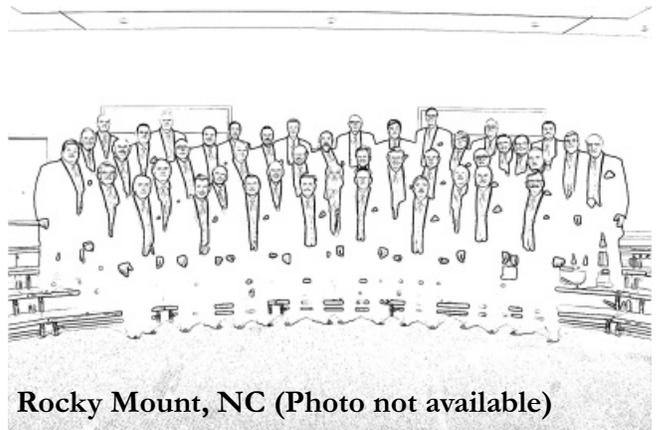
Stone Mountain, GA



Brentwood, TN (Photo not available)



Cleveland, TN



Rocky Mount, NC (Photo not available)

# 2007 Fall Convention Chorus Competitors

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Athens, AL



Winston-Salem, NC



Marietta, GA



Chattanooga, TN



Greater Knoxville, TN



Central Alabama, AL

*Chorus and quartet photos were provided by Jack Deere.  
Thanks Jack.*

# Convention Highlights

The **Atlanta Vocal Project** will represent the Dixie District at the 2008 International Chorus Contest in Nashville, TN. Already in its brief history the AVP has become synonymous with excellence and commitment, taking 9th place at International last year. The AVP is directed by Clay Hine.



Photo by Jim Simpson



Photo by Jim Simpson

**Lunch Break** captured the Dixie District Quartet Championship with two very clever sets. Friday night they somehow managed to simultaneously sing and eat breakfast cereal. Their Saturday set was also food related, this time featuring everyone's favorite tuneful tuber, Mr. Potato Head.



Photo by Keith Therrell



Photo by Keith Therrell

**Drayton Justus** was inducted into the Dixie District Hall of Fame. Drayton began his barbershop career in high school and became a gold medal quartet winner as the lead of The Gentlemen's Agreement in 1971. He is shown here accepting the Hall of Fame honor with wife Sue Ann. In Drayton's own words, he is the "luckiest cotton picker in Dixie!"

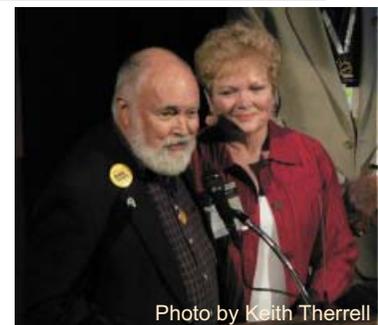


Photo by Keith Therrell



Photos by Keith Therrell

**Most Expressive Face**

There is never a shortage of great faces on the Dixie contest stage, and Quadzilla tenor **Mike Fitch** is perennially among the best. Mike and his creative countenance have been singing in the Carolinas with Quadzilla since 2004.



**Most Artistic Chorus**

Hats off to Stone Mountain for their evocative tribute to Grant Wood's "American Gothic."

**Most Eclectic Wardrobe**

Marietta's Big Chicken Chorus



**Most Colorful Wardrobe**

On a chromatic scale of 1 to 13 **Greg Zink** gets a perfect score for his black and red, red and black, blue and white, black and blue outfits while doing double-duty singing bass for Lets Sing! and ZigZag, both top 10 finalists.



## Judging *(continued from page 9)*

to work with and help other competitors achieve their goals. And you will have the best seat in the house at all the contests you judge!

I hope this helps answer any questions you might have about the C&J application process. I will be more than happy to help any of you along the way. Please feel free to contact me at any time. You will find my contact information in both the Rebel Rouser or at the bottom of the emails that I will be sending out. Best wishes and a pleasant journey in your search for the "holy grail" of certification in the C&J program.

Email me at [jimsamsca@bellsouth.net](mailto:jimsamsca@bellsouth.net) or call me at 901-861-0676 if you have ANY desire to complete this application period in time. Do it today! 🎵

## A Common Gift

**Keith Therrell, Editor**

Well, it's that time of year when people all across the land are discovering odd and unnatural looking things behind the easy chairs and end tables they're moving to make way for Christmas trees. The Rebel Rouser offices are no exception, except that we didn't find last Easter's mostly melted Jelly Belly, or hot dog jerky from the Independence Day gathering. Rather, the staff here blew the dust off a forgotten tome that slipped off the desk who knows how long ago. It is ponderously titled *Lincoln and the Civil War in the Diaries and Letters of John Hay*. When picked up and replaced on the desk, it fell open to the following words of President Lincoln:

"Common looking people are the best in the world: that is the reason the Lord makes so many of them."

*(continued on page 19)*

## Singing For Life International Blood Drive and Donor Recruitment

SINGING FOR LIFE is a HUGE opportunity for chapters and quartets to...

- build awareness for barbershop in their area, through the great PR this program can attract
- build alliances with other arts organizations in their community
- have a chance to perform for the blood donors in attendance
- earn respect and admiration from our strategic partners in this project, the American Red Cross, Hem-Quebec, America's Blood Centers and Canadian Blood Services
- attract new members

For information on how to get your chapter involved go to [www.barbershop.org](http://www.barbershop.org).



## A Christmas Wish

There are so many things that divide us today as a community, as a nation, as a world. One of the latest is how we choose to wish each other well at this time of year.

“Merry Christmas” has become offensive to some, and conversely, a battle cry for others. We members of the Dixie District are diverse in our faiths, politics, and cultures. But we are all brothers in harmony. We have found a common denominator that allows us to stand shoulder to shoulder and take the gift of music into our communities.

May we continue to put our differences aside and be a much-needed example of unity in the coming year. So whether you are lighting the menorah, kneeling by a manger, or simply celebrating the joy of giving, may this season of light, joy, and wonders be a happy one for you and your family.



## Gift *(continued from page 18)*

I thought of this quotation later that day as I listened to a radio broadcast of a community chorus singing a Thanksgiving hymn. The chorus wasn't nationally known. They weren't professional musicians in the sense that we normally use the term. They were a group of men and women not unlike choral groups all across the country, even the world, who simply come together to make music. And the music they were making was beautiful. There may have been some lovely solo voices in the group. I don't know because they didn't stand out. Whatever their individual talents may have been, they blended in one communal voice of uplifting song.

During December, many of our own District members will join voices to entertain and inspire in Christmas shows across the southeastern US. Other groups across the country, and indeed to the far reaches of the earth, will do the same for other holiday audiences. Some will be professional musicians; some will be church choirs; some will be grade-school kids. But the common bond between us all will be our ability to touch audiences with our voices.

A few people can entertain by playing sports. However, most of us can't play football or baseball or golf on a level so that others enjoy watching. A few people can play instruments really well. The rest of us who try leave people squirming in their seats. And putting more players together doesn't necessarily improve the outcome. It's interesting though -- you can put a group of average voices together and come out with a really nice result, something greater than the sum of the parts. You get something that can truly move the people who are listening. Maybe the Lord doesn't care so much for football or baseball since he didn't make too many folks who can do those things well. I think the Lord really likes singers. Isn't that the reason he makes so many of them?



# The Rebel Rouser

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## Plan Ahead...

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|--------------------|---|
| <b>1/12/08</b>     | <b>Regional COTS, Atlanta, GA</b>   |
| <b>1/20 - 1/27</b> | <b>Mid-Winter Convention, San Antonio, TX</b>   |
| <b>2/14</b>        | <b>Valentine's Day, Singing Valentines all across Dixie</b>   |
| <b>2/29</b>        | <b>Spring Contest Entry Deadline</b>  |
| <b>3/14 - 3/16</b> | <b>Dixie Spring Convention, Greenville, South Carolina</b>  |
| <b>6/29 - 7/6</b>  | <b>BHS International Convention, Nashville, Tennessee</b>   |
| <b>7/11 - 7/13</b> | <b>Friday - Sunday — Harmony Explosion Camp, Birmingham, Alabama</b>  |
| <b>7/17 - 7/20</b> | <b>Thursday - Sunday — Harmony Explosion Camp, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina</b>                |
| <b>7/18 - 7/20</b> | <b>Friday - Sunday — Dixie Lakeside Harmony Weekend Mini-HEP, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina</b> |
| <b>7/27 - 8/3</b>  | <b>Harmony University - Quartet College, Director's College, MWSU, St. Joseph, Missouri</b>                   |
| <b>10/3-5</b>      | <b>DIX Fall Convention -- Chattanooga, TN</b>   |