



# The MVEer Monthly

July, 2017

## July is International Contest in Vegas, Baby!

No practice on Monday, July 3 (July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend and quartet contest in Vegas).

➔ **CONTEST – Friday, July 7, 2017** at BHS International in Las Vegas!

No practice Monday, July 10 – (returning from Vegas)

Monday, July 17 – rehearsal and **Town Hall Meeting** on our director search and the future of the MVE and much more at 7:15pm

Tuesday, July 18 – Board Meeting at the Church at 7pm.

Monday, July 24 – rehearsal at 7:15pm

Monday, July 31 – rehearsal at 7:15pm

## Interview with MVE Member Patrick McAlexander

**MVEer asks:** Patrick, you've been an MVE member for a little while now. Sorry we didn't interview you before. Didn't you sing with the MVE in Nashville at our last visit to International?

**Patrick replies:** No, I was still living in Nashville at the time, so I competed with the **Music City Chorus**. However, I did get to watch you guys sing my arrangement of **Good Times Medley**, and that was pretty fun! Vegas will actually be my first time singing with the MVE on a contest stage!

**MVEer asks:** Wow, you must have a barbershop background.



**Patrick replies:** Yes - my mom is a longtime member of both Sweet Adelines and Harmony Inc., and my dad is a longtime BHS member. I started singing in the **Circle City Sound** chorus with my dad in Indianapolis, IN at 7 years old.

<http://circlecitysound.org/>

**MVEer asks:** Did you sing throughout High School and College?

**Patrick replies:** Yes, I was very active in choirs throughout grade school, high school, and college. In High School I was also in quite a few musicals and plays. I went to school at **Vanderbilt University** (which you can see on my shirt), and while I majored in Mathematics there, I also minored in Music and Computer Science and stayed very active musically there. In addition to singing, I've played piano since I was five, and I've also played organ and saxophone (though it has been a while, especially on the sax).

**MVEer asks:** We'd like know about your family.



**Patrick replies:** My parents are **Ann** and **Brad** McAlexander, who both sing as I've mentioned. I also have a younger sister Maggie.

Like our mom, Maggie is in both **Sweet Adelines International** (<https://sweetadelines.com/>) and in **Harmony Inc.** <http://www.harmonyinc.org/>.

Maggie and her quartet **Spot On** won the **International Quartet Contest of Harmony Inc. in 2013**, and Spot On will be competing (also in Vegas) in the Sweet Adelines international contest this year.

**MVEer asks:** How old are the two talented McAlexander kids?

**Patrick replies:** I am 23 and Maggie is 21.



**MVEer asks:** Have you any other hobbies and singing activities?

**Patrick replies:** I don't do much besides barbershop these days, but I do frequent local trivia nights, and I enjoy trying out Wisconsin's many great beers!

Barbershop-wise, I do a ton of arranging (as you guys know). I've gotten to arrange for both of our last two quartet champs, **Instant Classic** and **Forefront**, as well as other groups like **Signature**, **GQ** (SAI), **ClassRing** (SAI), **Central Standard**, and **Throwback**. I have been quite busy arranging in the last year and look forward to hearing many of my arrangements sung in Vegas!

I also sing in the **Capital Chordsmen** in Madison and in two quartets. This newsletter has already met two other members of my local quartet, **Chord-tastrophe (Zach Rolfs and Matt Record)**, which recently qualified for the district contest in Rochester this fall!

My other quartet, **Ohana Means Family**, is a little bit longer distance (4 different non-bordering states!). We came in 4<sup>th</sup> in Nashville in the **Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest** in 2016 and will be competing in that contest again in Vegas!

*Editor's Links:* **Guilty** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZKQTxErp19w> and **Proud of Your Boy** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FsuRqwdmIY> and



<http://www.barbershop.org/all-conventions/nashville/youth-quartet-contest/>

**MVEer asks:** Explain a bit about the **Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest** and the name, "**Ohana Means Family**," please.

**Patrick replies:** Last year, the BHS broadened the former "College Quartet Contest" to include younger members and others who are under 25 years old. They said:

"No more asking "can I sing in the college contest if I'm in high school?" or "do I have to be enrolled this semester?" Academic status is not the key: positive youthful encounters with barbershop are the utmost priority. The Youth Barbershop Quartet Contest, sponsored by Harmony Foundation International, is self-descriptive and easy to say.

### **Greater encouragement and recognition for younger quartets**

Many music educators have pointed out that the gap between high school freshman and post-collegiate men aged 25 is daunting and perceived as insurmountable. Several changes will address this going forward

- We'll have recognition in separate divisions for "**junior varsity**" (all members under age 20) and "**varsity**" quartets (up to age 25.)
- Similarly, we'll have special recognition for "**novice quartets**" of first-time entrants."

Source: <http://www.barbershop.org/youth-barbershop-quartet-contest-evolves-with-changes-for-2016/>

**Patrick continues:** Oh, you also asked about our name? "**Ohana Means Family**" is a quote from **Lilo and Stitch** that we really liked!

**MVEer asks:** I think I know the answer to this one, but where do you work?

**Patrick replies:** I am an "integration engineer" at **Epic Systems Corporation** in Verona, Wisconsin.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic\\_Systems](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epic_Systems). We are involved in the software for medicine and clinics, and my job is to make our software talk to other systems our customers use, both in development and in customer support.

**MVEer asks:** Our chorus sang in Verona a few years back and that Epic campus is amazing. Have you any other friends



you would like to tell us about?

**Patrick replies:** I do have a girlfriend, **Sarah**, who I met at Vanderbilt and have been dating for over a year and a half. She just graduated in May and will be staying at Vanderbilt to pursue her doctorate in audiology. Needless to say, I'm very excited that Southwest is bringing back direct flights from Milwaukee to Nashville!

**MVEer comments:** Congratulations, Patrick, on being recently selected as a **Music Category Candidate Judge**. We are so glad to have your beautiful tenor voice and your masterful assistance in arranging and modifying tags and sections of our songs.

**Patrick says:** Thanks, it's a lot of fun being part of the MVE!

*Editor's Note:* Patrick's email is [pmacarrangements1@gmail.com](mailto:pmacarrangements1@gmail.com)



## Interview with New MVE Member John Von Haden

**MVEer asks:** What part do you sing, John?

**John replies:** I sing lead in the MVE.

**MVEer asks:** How'd you become a singer?

**John replies:** I played trumpet since fifth grade and in the U.W. marching band in college. But I never sang in front of anyone until five years ago. I joined St. James Catholic choir in Menomonee Falls. One day, someone said that their barbershop chorus was might fold without new members, so I joined the **MenoHARmonee Chorus** in Menomonee Falls in Fall 2013. And, now I'll be a dual member with the MVE. I had also been in **New Tradition** in Northbrook, Illinois for a year, but the three-hour round-trip drive got to be too much.



Two of the MenoHARmonee guys got me hooked on the **Harmony Brigades**, which are a blast! I've attended 10 in the past 3 years and will attend again this month in Okemos, MI (<http://eventful.com/okemos/events/great-lakes-harmony-brigade-2017-/E0-001-102606614-7> ). You learn 10-12 songs with learning tracks (pretty much by yourself in the car) then converge for a weekend and get randomly selected into quartets to compete (for bragging rights). It is very challenging, with great arrangements and a ton of fun!

**MVEer asks:** Excellent. Tell me a bit about your family?

**John replies:** **Michelle** and I have been married for 25 years. We have two sons: **Grant** is age 20 at WCTC and **Parker** is age 16 at Menomonee Falls High School. **Michelle** plays classical piano and cello.



WAUKESHA  
COUNTY TECHNICAL  
COLLEGE



**MVEer asks:** Outside of barbershop and trumpet, did you have other musical interests?

**John replies:** In my early teens, after a few piano lessons (with my paper route money), I got bored and read books on music theory and taught myself piano and theory. I wrote a full score for our high school jazz band and various original songs over the years for piano/vocal, some copyrighted.

Lately, I've taken up *a cappella* arranging and have one arrangement which will be included among 11

songs for the **Minnesota 2018 Harmony Brigade** next February. Being a little impatient with the copyright process, I recently wrote an original barbershop song called "Mary Won't Marry Me".

I also took up genealogy (family tree research, Wisconsin history, *etc.*) during high school and transformed it into a small business which I'll ultimately retire to.

**MVEer asks:** Aside from your ancestry business, what do you and Michelle do for a living?

**John replies:** Michelle is also a computer grad (me from U.W. Madison, she from WVU) and we met at IBM in Rochester, Minnesota. Michelle works at Allen Edmunds Shoe Company in Port Washington and I do freelance custom software for Sharp Packaging in Sussex. Michelle also keeps busy as the secretary of the Menomonee Falls Little League.



**MVEer asks:** Have you always lived in Wisconsin, John?

**John replies:** I grew up in Harford, WI, but after college, I lived Minnesota for ten years, moving back here in 1994. Oh, you know, Rochester is where we (MVE) will be competing this fall at the LOL District contest.

**MVE says:** John, your experience in **Harmony Brigade** and arranging are great assets along with your wonderful voice. Thanks for being MVE with us.

**John replies:** Thank you. I can't make it to International this year, but will be cheering MVE on from afar.

### **Chorus Contest Order on July 7, 2017.**

Marcsmen (SWD) **Mic Testers**, San Marcos, TX

1. Northwest Sound (EVG), Bellevue, WA
2. The Men of Independence (JAD), Independence, OH
3. Southern Gateway Chorus (JAD), Western Hills (Cincinnati), OH
4. Voices of Gotham (MAD), Hell's Kitchen, NY
5. The Cottontown Chorus (BABS), Bolton, **England**
6. Sound of Illinois (ILL), Bloomington, IL
7. Kentucky Vocal Union (CAR), Elizabethtown, KY
8. Carolina Vocal Express, (NSC), Rocky Mount, NC
9. Sound of the Rockies (RMD), Denver Mile High, CO

10. Parkside Harmony (MAD), Hershey, PA
11. Heralds of Harmony (SUN), Tampa, FL
12. Voices Incorporated (EVG), Pacific Northwest, WA
13. Atlanta Vocal Project (DIX), Atlanta Metro, GA
14. Sound Connection (BHA), Gold Coast, **Australia**
15. Pacific Coast Harmony (FWD), La Jolla, CA

### **Intermission**

16. Central Standard (CSD), Metro Kansas City, MO
17. Upstate Harmonizers (SLD), Mohawk Valley, NY
18. Voices of California (FWD), California Delta, CA
19. Circle City Sound (CAR), Greater Indianapolis, IN
20. Fog City Singers (FWD), Barbary Coast, CA
21. Great Northern Union (LOL), Hilltop, MN
22. The Alliance (JAD), Greater Central Ohio
23. Vocal Majority (SWD), Dallas Metro, TX
24. Vocal Revolution (NED), Concord, WA
25. Great Lakes Chorus (PIO), Grand Rapids, MI
26. **Midwest Vocal Express (LOL), Greendale, WI**
27. Toronto Northern Lights (ONT), Toronto, Ontario, **Canada**
28. Masters of Harmony (FWD), Santa Fe Springs, CA
29. SmorgasChorus (CSD), South Central Kansas
30. Saltaires Chorus (RMD), Wasatch Front, UT