



# The MVEer Monthly

September, 2012

**Busy, Busy September** – see the filled out calendar at the end!

- (1) We have extra practices first week of September on choreography (Tuesday September 4 and Thursday September 6);
- (2) Voice Lesson with Rob Mance on September 8 and 9;
- (3) Golf Outing, September 8<sup>th</sup>
- (5) Guest Night, September 10<sup>th</sup>
- (6) Singout at the Brewers on Saturday, September 15, and
- (7) Coaching with Kim Vaughn on Sunday, September 23 and Monday night September 24.



## **Rob Mance – Vocal Lessons**

Saturday and Sunday, September 8 and 9, chorus members have the opportunity to get vocal lessons for \$15 (MVE picking up the remainder of the cost) for 40

minutes with Rob Mance. Rob is the current director of the *Central Standard Chorus* (Metro Kansas City) and a BHS Certified Judge in the Music category. He has a bachelor's degree in Music from McGill University (Montreal) with a focus on vocal performance, and a double master's degree from Westminster Choir College in choral conducting and voice pedagogy.



## **Singout at the Brewers**

On Saturday, September 15, 2012.

Check out our Youtube from last year in our new blue shirts:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwU4AqQy8\\_8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwU4AqQy8_8) and come for the fun of singing for a big crowd and our friends and family. Photo from a few years ago in our black shirts. Brewers *versus* The Mets on Sept 15<sup>th</sup>. Game time is 6:10 pm and we sing just before that, about 6pm.



## The Circle of Fifths by Gerry Feldman

The circle of fifths is a guide for acceptable chord progressions in a barbershop-style song. It is constructed by writing the fifth of the key in the next position, clockwise, along with its relative minor.

Turn the circle so that the starting key is at the twelve o'clock position. The next chord (not counting embellishments) must be one position over, either clockwise or counter-clockwise. Alternatively, the chord directly across the circle may be substituted. Therefore, a move from the twelve o'clock position to the five or seven o'clock position (a half-step in either direction, a.k.a. chromatic movement) is also legal.

For example, if the first chord were C, then the next chord would have to be either F or G, or their counterparts B or D-flat (or a relative minor). Any of these could have 7<sup>th</sup>s or 9<sup>th</sup>s added.

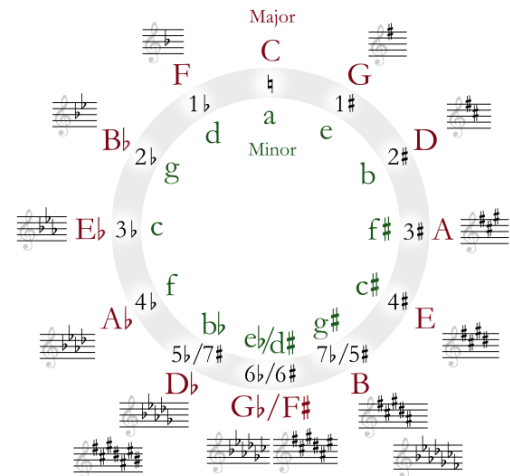
Each move "feels right" because one note stays the same and another moves a half-step. In the case of C major (C, E, G), for instance, a move to the right would leave the fifth (G) and move the root (C) down one half-step to form either G major in first inversion (B, D, G) or E minor in second inversion (B, E, G). A substitution across the circle can be used to create a deceptive cadence; an unexpected move that makes the listener think the song is over, although it is not. (This is sometimes used to lead into the tag.)

A good example of the circle of fifths is the song "Has Anybody Seen My Gal," in the key of C major. For reference, the lyrics are: "Five-foot-two, eyes of blue, but oh what those five foot could do! Has anybody seen my gal?" The chord progression is: C [Five], E7 [eyes], A7 [oh], D7 [anybody], G7 [seen], C [gal]. Starting at the twelve-o'clock position on the circle, the next move appears to be to the four-o'clock position -- but wait -- isn't that illegal? It would be, but since a seventh chord has four notes (E, G#, B, D), the base triad can be either the first three notes (E major) or the last three notes (G# minor). If the E7 is considered a g#6, it is a perfectly legal move from the twelve o'clock position to the five o'clock position. That's one of the advantages of using seventh chords. Notice that the remaining moves follow the circle counter-clockwise, back to the twelve o'clock position, which is the ideal progression for a barbershop song.

As a counter-example, let's look at "Mary Did You Know," in the key of E minor. The progression begins: e [know], D [baby], a [some], B7 [water]. Turn the circle so that "e" is at the top on the inner circle. The first move (D) is to the one o'clock position. So far, so good. The next chord (a), however, jumps two places counterclockwise, which does not fit the rules of barbershop.

The circle of fifths, enhanced by seventh chords, differentiates the barbershop style from other forms of a *cappella* music. It forms the basis for every song performed at district and international conventions, and it provides a proven recipe for that unique and wonderful barbershop sound.

***(Editor's Note: This article was requested by the editor to help him understand some of the lesser understood parts of our hobby. Gerry, a design engineer now working for GE Medical has passed his audition and is in process of becoming a new MVE member. I'm just glad there is no test on the circle of fifths.)***



## September 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3 LABOR DAY	4 MVE 7PM Practice (choreo)	5	6 MVE 7PM Practice (choreo)	7	8 Golf Outing Rob Mance – Vocal Lessons
9 Rob Mance – Vocal Lessons	10 MVE 7PM Practice (GUEST NIGHT)	11	12	13	14	15 Quartet Club at 10- noon MVE sings the National Anthem at the Brewers Game
16	17 MVE 7PM Practice	18	19	20	21	22
23 Coaching by Kim Vaughn	24 MVE coached by Kim Vaughn	25	26	27	28	29 Quartet Club at 10- noon
30	<b>Notes:</b> <b>Guest Night September 10 – Men Wanted! Have you asked someone to come on that Monday night?</b>					

*A venerable barbershop poem:*

*Deep in Prayer:*

If you hear a song sung softly,  
 By four barbershoppin' guys.  
 And their chords are high and lofty,  
 And their words are true and wise.

If they sing of how they love you,  
 And of how the shamrocks grow.  
 How the moon is high above you  
 How the streams beyond you flow.

Then you'll know the joy we're feeling,  
 In the music that we share.  
 Though we sing when we're not kneeling,  
 We are often deep in prayer.