



## Christmas Traditions Show at the Saber Center for the Performing Arts – Dick Marcus

Whether warming up in front of a huge mirrored wall or on stage learning how to do the final group sing of *Rock Around The Christmas Tree* with **Midnight Croon** and **Vintage Mix**, everyone was ready to give their complete 100% performance for our great **Christmas Traditions** show.





Thank you to the performers in our production: **Shelly Brantman** and **Matt McClellen** (the outstanding team of Church mice), **Tom Rogina** (ticket master extraordinary), **Harry Hanson, Curt Campagna** (sound & lights), **Mike Lietke** (Show Producer), **Niel Johnson** (Show Chairman).

Thank you also to **Midnight Croon** and **Vintage Mix** as our featured quartets.



## Tree Lighting in Oak Creek

Our paid performance at Oak Creek lighting the Christmas Tree got great reviews and more ticket sales.



Afterward, some of the singers went to **Mod Pizza** in Oak Creek to make

our individually designed pizzas. Other groups went to a wide variety of places in Oak Creek



**Calendar** - No practice on **New Year's Day**.

Monday, January 7	Rehearsal	St. Luke's at 7pm
Monday, January 14	Rehearsal <b>&amp; <u>Guest Night</u></b>	St. Luke's at 7pm
Monday, January 21	Rehearsal	St. Luke's at 7pm
Monday, January 28	Rehearsal	St. Luke's at 7pm

**Photos from the VA Hospital** – Photos by Sarah Balke, Article by Dick Marcus

There are three bullet points in our long-standing *mission statement* for the chorus. The last of which involves going out to help others with our singing.

*"Midwest Vocal Express, the Greendale, WI Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, is a fraternity dedicated to providing its members, audiences and community with:*

- *A cappella entertainment excellence.*
- *Education in this unique American musical style.*
- ***Altruistic service.***"

One activity of an altruistic kind we have loved doing is going to the **Zablocki VA Hospital**. We have also sung for the Ronald McDonald House, donated to American Heart Association, and other worthy things.



We had a big contingent of 26 singers this year on the Monday following our Christmas Show (January 10<sup>th</sup>). We warmed up on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor. **Patrick McAlexander** got us started in the warm up room and **Bryan Ziegler** directed the show.



The audience was particularly alert and receptive to our songs and the humor provided by **Mike Lietke**. Jim Franklin passed out several CDs to the audience and led in several holiday sing-alongs.



After the performance, many went along Miller Way to 4238 West Orchard to the **Ice House Bar & Grill** to continue our Christmas cheer. It felt right to be giving our joy and spirit to the men and women who served our country.

## **MVE Installation Banquet**

Reservations and information about an early February Installation and Awards Banquet will come out soon.

## **MVE Highlights from 2018** – Dick Marcus

The year 2018 was a banner year for **The Mighty MVE** to be sure.

The year began with a series of excellent director auditions, culminating in the selection of our director **Bryan Ziegler**. We promised all the directors that we would not be going to Orlando in 2018, which was just as well as Bryan and his quartet, **After Hours**, won the **Gold Medal** in July in Orlando.



We are now headed to **Salt Lake City** in 2019 with two great songs and we are ready to change lives with our songs.

Every two years at **Port Washington High School** is their **Acapocalypse** event. We have performed there in 2016 and 2018 to amazing adulation. We sang great on April 6, 2018 at this great *A Cappella Festival*. Also in April, **Patrick McAlexander** won the prestigious **CARA Award** for the best professional arrangement for his, "*New Fangled Tango*," for **The Newfangled Four**.

We were the excellent hosts of the joint **Division One, Mixed Contest, and Prelim Contest** on May 4 and 5, 2018, held at the Franklin Saber Center. We were the first in Wisconsin to host the mixed contest which featured some of our favorite people: **Lipstick & Levi's** with Sarah Nagel, Shelly Brantman, Niel Johnson, Derek Balke; **Vintage Mix** with Julia Shoppach, Kelsey Shoppach, Anika Shoppach, Ian Shoppach; and **Achilles Thiel**, with Mary Thiel-Roberts, Dawn Thiel, Robb Thiel, Gary Thiel. Winning the Division One Contest was **Chord-tastrophe** with Dennis Haight (bass), Zach Rolfs (bari), Matt Record (lead), and Patrick McAlexander (tenor).

This year, the **Spring Show** was a **Soup du Jour Comedy Hour** held at the Oak Creek Community Center on two days: A Friday Night and a Sunday Afternoon (May 18 and 20). The place was sold out. **Mark Trevor Ranum** became Carnak

the Magnificent and featured four quartets: **Midnight Croon**, **The Committee**, **Chord-tastrophe**, and **Brew City Harmony**.

July was also a monumental month as **After Hours** won the Gold medal. **Midnight Croon** improved by 1% over last year's International and finished 24th in a record-setting field of quartets. **Mike Lietke** served on the prestigious Judging Panel for the **International Chorus Contest**.

But July was not over; the **Mighty MVE** returned to take over the **Greendale Gazebo** on July 14. We've supported Greendale in their parades, the Gazebo, and with various quartets and VLQs over the years. And proving that the MVE knows how to party, we had a hugely popular July 16<sup>th</sup> celebration of Bryan and (3 of the 4 After Hours dudes, and one on Skype). In some ways, the party for **After Hours** is my true highlight of the year.

September was a busy month as we sang to huge crowd on September 8 at **Miller Park**, as the Brewers were definitely in the hunt to try to go the World Series. Our National Anthem video had over 8,100 hits – if that is not 'viral' it is pretty darn close. September 15 brought us to a **Muskego Church Festival** along with **Midnight Croon**. **Brian Plehn** directed the show, which was outside under a massive tent. We ended September with a lovely **MVE Picnic**. Interlude from Illinois came up to sing us a few songs prior to their district contest.

October brought us the first **Midnight Croon CD**. Midnight Croon also performed at UWM for the **Real Men Sing Day**. This is an event that our chorus also performed at some years ago and featured 775 high school boys, and 308 middle school boys. October 26 and 27 found the MVE in Rochester, Minnesota for our District Contest. Although we came in second to GNU, our scores moved up and were listed as the 20<sup>th</sup> highest scoring choruses for **Salt Lake City**. We expect to move up that list after our July 2019 performance. District saw **Robb Thiel's** quartet **The Border Project** sing their swan song as outgoing LOL District Champions.

December brought us the great **Christmas Traditions** shows, with cheery church mice, and wonderful "overture" to our show reprised in pieces as we retold the Christmas story. It was beautiful.



Now we begin 2019. On March 29, 2019 we officially have our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At that same day, our director also celebrates his birthday of the same number. We are working on plans for a great 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary year. But at the Installation Banquet, be there for a "2018 Year in Photos," by Dick Marcus to relive highlights from this past year.



***NEW & RETURNING***

***DUDES in 2018***

*Aaron Davis*

*Dylan Keegan*

*Curt Nash*

*Chris Vander Pas*

*Matt Post*

*Jeffry Reifsynder*

**Interview with MVE Member Chris Vander Pas**

**MVEer asks:** You are a highly accomplished musician and singer, Chris. Tell us of your music education leading to your current position as a High School Music Teacher:

**Chris replies:** I was first inspired to be a music educator by my high school choir teacher and then went to the **University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh** to complete a bachelor's degree in education where I worked under multiple voice instructors and choir directors. I was fortunate to have found such a supportive district with a great appreciation for the fine arts that I can continue to grow in the future years to come.



**MVEer asks:** You seem to sing different parts (lead, bass, bari). Which do you sing in **Hakuna Fermata**, **Vocal Fury**, and the **MVE**?



**Chris replies:** You would be correct. I am currently singing **lead in MVE**, but will most likely dabble in **baritone** eventually as it is the original part I started when I began barbershop with the **Appleton Fox Valleyaires**.

As for my quartets, in **Vocal Fury** I sing baritone and in **Hakuna Fermata** I "fake" bass to the best of my abilities so I can sing with my friends in a quartet. Singing all three parts has definitely helped me work on my entire range and has sharpened my ears a lot.



**MVEer asks:** Aside from music, are there other hobbies you like to dabble in?

**Chris replies:** Well, I am avid in **bowling** and have been since I was eight years old. I also like to **disk golf** in the spring/summer time to get outside more often. I would have to say I have almost as much passion in those as I do music.

**MVEer asks:** Tell us a bit about your family, **Jessica Vander Pas**, and the like.

**Chris replies:** I was raised by a mostly non-musical family that supports me in all of my interests. They will typically come to shows when they can. **Jessica** is a huge supporter in Barbershop as she helps me with the administrative side of directing the **Winnebago Land Chorus** and has a good ear to let me know if I missed anything. (<https://www.barbershopsingers.org/>)



I should also mention she was kind enough to let me go to **Harmony University** for multiple years in both the directing and quartet tracks (even the day after our wedding!) I guess I can say I have a lot of support behind my endeavors.

**MVEer says:** Thank you Chris, for adding your treasure of experience and musical gifts to make the MVE even better. You've competed on the International Stage in Portland with your college quartet, and we are looking forward to your being with us on stage in Salt Lake City.

Thank you for **Being MVE**.

### **What's this thing called installation about?** – Dick Marcus

The Chapter elects officers each fall to serve for the following year. We agree in the installation to have them direct, instruct, teach, and shape us into the chorus we know we are and can be.

But we do more than install officers. We also recognize those who have done extra work, by being exemplary in service, song, and dedication. The most coveted award is the **BOTY**, *Barbershopper of the Year*, which are decided by the past winners. The BOTY receives both a plaque and a mug. All of the past BOTY winners at the Installation greet their newest inductee into this special status.

Other popular awards are the **Rookie of the Year** and the **Russell A Foris Director's Award**, both given by our Director. A special oil can is given to the **Do It Award Winner**, who just seems to be there to "do it" whenever and whatever is needed to be done, which is decided by last year's Do It winner (Tom Rogina, last year).

### **Your Chapter Officers for 2019 are:**

**Derek Balke** - President  
**Steve Johnson** - Immediate Past President  
**Dick Marcus** - Secretary  
**Jim Ansay** - Treasurer  
**Robb Thiel** - Music VP  
**Jim Franklin** - Marketing and PR VP  
**Tom Weber** – Membership (Chapter Development) VP  
**Matt Post** - Member At Large  
**Tom Rogina** - Member At Large  
**Bob Fichtner** – Member At Large

### **Awards to be given at the February Banquet:**

**Barbershopper of the Year (BOTY)** – last year, Derek Balke  
**Rookie of the Year** – last year, James Pruszka

**The President's Award** – last year, Tom Weber

**The Do It Award** – last year, Tom Rogina

**The Russell A Foris Director's Award** – last year, Brian Plehn

**List of Past BOTY Winners by Year** – Derek Balke was our BOTY last year, which was given in 2018 for 2017.

So, there have been twenty-nine Barbershoppers of the Year presented, a few of which are multiple award winners. This year will be the 30<sup>th</sup> as we enter our 30<sup>th</sup> year. Here are our BOTY winners and their year:

Harry Hanson, 1989

Bill Kilbourne, 1990

Dave Speidel, 1991

Peter Little, 1992

Jim Franklin, 1993

Mike Lietke, 1994

Bob Krantz, 1995

Chuck Crary, 1996

Tom Weber, 1997

Mike Lietke, 1997 (two time winner)

Russ Foris, 1999

Larry Hanson, 2000

Brad Charles, 2001

Chris Carlson, 2002

Harry Hanson, 2003 (two time winner)

Jim LaBelle, 2005

Dan Fenske, 2006

Rich Kirwin, 2007

Josh Umhoefer, 2008

Tim Zielke, 2009

Scott Ganswindt, 2010

Steve Johnson, 2011

Matt Nagel, 2012

Jim Schmidt, 2013

Tim Zielke, 2014 (two time winner)

Jake Umhoefer, 2015

Cody Whitlock, 2016

Derek Balke, 2017

***Who's Next*** in 2018?

The "next *BOTY* goes to..." we will learn on installation dinner and awards night.

