

# THE Sunburst



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE SUNSHINE DISTRICT BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY



**THREE AND A HALF MEN**  
*Sunshine District Quartet Champions*



**RIGHT ON Q**  
*Intl Prelim Seniors Quartet Qualifier (SUN)*



**HERALDS OF HARMONY**  
*Intl Prelim Chorus District Representative (SUN), Sunshine District Chorus Grade Improvement Award [Fall],  
Sunshine District Most-Improved Chorus Award [Fall]*

# President's Message

Bruce Checca  
Sunshine District President  
president@sunshinedistrict.org

## So Far Fall Has Been GREAT!!

Thanksgiving already??? Where has the year gone? Our Barbershop calendar certainly hasn't been lacking in things to do!

Labor Day Jamboree , one of the "BIG" events in Sunshine, was a huge success, thanks to the efforts of **Chad Bennett**, the LDJ Chairman! If you weren't there, you really missed some great times, not to mention a few great shows! You really need to mark your calendar for Labor Day Weekend in 2024!

Did you get to the Fall District Convention? World Golf Village Renaissance in St. Augustine came alive with the best our district has to offer! This year, we celebrated some Championship Anniversaries... and if you didn't get to see the **Wise Guys** Reunion...well, I'm not sure anybody there could really describe what THAT was like ...but if you run into **Brett Cleveland** just don't mention squirrels, ok?

Our new District Quartet Champions – **Three and a Half Men** – put on a performance worthy of

the International Medalist they are ... averaging well over 93 points! ALL of the competitors this year showed that this district is hard at work improving their skills...

Tampa *Heralds of Harmony* once again showed us why they are our current 3rd place International Chorus medalists! *Big O* and the *Miamians* also showed strong performances in their 2nd and 3rd place finishes!

This fall we held several classes as part of the convention weekend, and due to the success of those, will be continuing more of the same, and some newer classes, in the future! Put it on your calendar for next Spring to join us in St. Augustine NOW!! And wouldn't it be great if you happened to be there because YOU were going to be up on stage with YOUR group in one of our events?

We'll be looking for you!

Bruce Checca



# Christmas on the 9th!

**THE PARADISE COASTMEN**



**Barbershop Chorus**

will be joined by the

**Seacrest Country Day School Choir**

to bring you joyfull Christmas and Hanukah songs



*Bring your family and carol with us!*



**WHEN:** 3 PM, Saturday, December 9, 2023

**WHERE:** Pulte Center. St John the Evangelist Catholic Church  
625 111th Ave N., Naples, FL 34108 (Immokalee Rd, West of 41)

**COST:** No ticket price - Donations accepted

# Message from VP of Events

**Bob Thau**

*Sunshine District VP of Events*

cdd@sunshinedistrict.org

I would like to thank everyone who attended the 2023 Fall Convention in St Augustine FL. You made it a huge success and the largest convention since before Covid.

The Events Team is already hard at work getting the Spring Convention March 22 – 24, 2024

setup and plan on making it bigger and better. We will be in St Augustine for both conventions in 2024. Additionally, we are currently looking for new venues for 2025,26 and 27. If you think you know of a suitable venue, please contact me and we will check it out.



# Message from VP of Music and Performance

**Steve Culpepper**

*Sunshine District VP/Music and Presentation*

music@sunshinedistrict.org

Thanks to all who participated in the fall convention! What a great turn out. Also kudos to the SDAQC. Great show, it was a trip to see the past quartets! I hope we can keep the momentum going. Look for updates on LeadAc in January, things are in the works for great

weekend! Lets keep the excitement growing. And again Congratulations to Three and a Half Men!

Keep on Singing!

Steve Culpepper, VP/Music and Performance



# VP of Communications & IT

Roger Smeds

Sunshine District VP for Communications & IT  
communications@sunshinedistrict.org

What a great weekend we had in the Sunshine District! We had 19 quartets in the Quartet competition and the top ten competitors in the Finals all scored 71% or higher. A great accomplishment for the district! Also, eleven of the nineteen quartets were new in that they had not competed previously.

Taking top honors was **Three and a Half Men** with score of 2244 or an average of **93.5%**, in second place was **Tonal Fusion** with a score of 1901 or an average of **79.2%**. Of note was that **Joseph DeRosa** sang Tenor in **Three and a Half Men** and Baritone in **Tonal Fusion**! Placing third in the competition was **Suite Life** with a score of 929 or an average of **77.1%**.

The quartet competition also selected Sunshine District's representative to International Senior Quartet Competition to be held in January 2024 in New York City. **Right on Q** won the honors with a score of 863 or an average of **72.0%**.

Complete score sheets for all sessions are [HERE](#).

In the Chorus competition for the right to represent Sunshine District at the International

Chorus contest in July 2024 in Cleveland, OH, *Heralds of Harmony* under the direction of **Tony DeRosa** and **Clay Hine**, took the honors with a score of 1084 or an average of **90.3%**. *The Big Orange Chorus* under the direction of **Daniel Pesante**, took second place honors with a score of 898 or an average of **74.8%**. Third place was secured by the *Miamians* directed by **Alex Rubin** and **Eddie Mejia** with a score of 892 or an average of **74.2%**.

If you have picture or videos that you took at the Fall Convention and are willing to share them, please be sure to forward them to our Social Media team at [social.media@sunshinedistrict.org](mailto:social.media@sunshinedistrict.org). Also, if you have chapter annual shows, holiday shows or other performances that you would like to spread the word about, please send the information to our Social Media team as well.

Roger Smeds  
VP for Communication & IT  
Sunshine District  
[communications@sunshinedistrict.org](mailto:communications@sunshinedistrict.org)



# **2024 Leadership Academy**

## **Harmony College**

### **Top Gun Quartet Coaching**

January 5-7, 2024

at the Rosen Plaza Hotel, Orlando, Florida

Sign-up NOW

\$75 / Attendee

This covers coaching or class and lunch on Saturday.

Classes will be held for all Board officers except members at large although the members at large or other chapter members are encouraged to attend to learn how to support the board and chapter.

Registrations for classes should be made by contacting Jack Klotzbach via email at [jackklotzbach@gmail.com](mailto:jackklotzbach@gmail.com) or calling (850)377-7229.

Steve Culpepper is managing a “Top Gun” coaching clinic for quartets with coaching by top tier coaches.

Quartets please contact Steve at [jstevec@gmail.com](mailto:jstevec@gmail.com) if you are interested.

Hotel reservations are your responsibility and must be completed by December 15, 2023 to get the discounted rate.

Hotel reservations should be made directly with the hotel by calling (800) 627-8258 and specifying you are attending “Sunshine District LeadAC/HarmonyCollege”

Questions? Contact Jack Klotzbach  
Sunshine District VP of Education [jackklotzbach@gmail.com](mailto:jackklotzbach@gmail.com)



# Chapter Happenings

## St. Petersburg Chapter

July 19th, 1946: The first St. Petersburg Chapter was chartered.

Oct 5th, 2023: The New St Petersburg Chapter is reborn.

We are so excited to announce the newest Chapter in Sunshine, *The Sunshine City Chorus*.

Are you looking for an additional singing opportunity? In our pursuit of excellence, our rehearsals focus on duets and trios, getting things synched as perfectly as possible. It can be hard work, but the results are spectacular. We plan to compete, but we're not going to let that diminish the joy that brought us all to this glorious "hobby". Singing well is where the joy is.

Oh yeah, and there's that artistry "thing" too. We're doing that as well, with some really fun charts.

This is a male chorus, and we are particularly looking for experienced barbershoppers who want to sing at a high level, and are either currently not affiliated with a chorus, or are affiliated, but would welcome an additional opportunity to ring chords. No gymnastics required, but words, notes, and singing artistically are part of the "ante".



**727 410-5696**

We meet Tuesday night at 7:00 PM, and are still seeking a permanent location in St. Petersburg, so the location is subject to change. We'd love to have you be part of the overtones.

For more information, call Lance Lubin  
727 410-5696.



(Continued on next page)

## Chapter Happenings

### Venice Gondoliers

Like so many other small chapters we are still here but struggling for new membership.

We just advertised in our local newspaper inviting non member guest to join us in presenting some 6 Christmas performances. We need the help to do the gigs and at the same time hope that some of the guests stay on as full members. Crossing our fingers and hoping for a bit of good luck.

**JOINT REHEARSALS:** Has your chapter ever invited a neighboring chapter to join you for a good old fashioned fun harmony night. Each

chorus singing some of their favorite songs. Then add joint chorus songs and tags. Fill in with make up or registered quartets and you have a fantastic fun evening.

The Venice “Gondoliers” and Sun City “Par for the Chorus” has been doing this once a year for several years. Along with making new friends your having a great night of singing and harmony.

Inviting the spouses makes it a complete meeting of fun.

Lee Frayer, Director  
Venice Gondoliers



### Fort Walton Beach Chapter

by Scott Smith

The *Emerald Coast Chorus* in Fort Walton Beach is planning for the next big Panhandle Music Festival, also known as Timpoochee Weekend! We will welcome the 2018 International Quartet champions, After Hours, as our Deans of Music.

Put it on your calendar now to join us September 20-22, 2024, at Camp Timpoochee near Niceville for a great weekend of singing and fun competitions. Bring your quartet, your chorus, or just yourself!



## Chapter Happenings



### Tallahassee Chapter Capital Chordsmen

by Kenneth Schroeder, VP Marketing

The *Capital Chordsmen* from the Tallahassee chapter return to the competition risers this year with their new director, **Norman Young**, and several new members. In addition, for the first time, the chorus' longest standing quartet, **Four Oysters in Search of a Pearl**, will also enter the competition stage. Both return for two events:

First is an annual favorite among the Chordsmen: the Joe Breedon Panhandle Music Festival, hosted by the Emerald Coast Chapter. It is a weekend gathering of harmony enthusiasts from the Florida Panhandle, held this year on Sep 15 – 17. This is a Barbershop Harmony extravaganza, with male & female choruses, a mass-chorus concert on the last night (combined with youth chorus from the Emerald Coast area). The event features contests for both quartets and choruses. Other events include a 'Krazy Quartet Contest', lots of tag singing in the evenings, with the last event being a bonfire & picnic 'sing-around'....where quartets & choruses share some of their favorites.

Then, only four short weeks later, the *Capital Chordsmen* return to the risers at the Sunshine District Fall convention in St. Augustine. The Chordsmen have not competed since 2018 when they had 36 voices. Covid created a serious loss of members for various reasons: Fear of contact, loss of interest, family health issues. Active membership dwindled to around 12 active singers. In the last two years, however, they picked up new members (one was a Valentine recipient purchased by his wife). The annual show for 2023 had 20 singers. The chorus has 22 active and four inactive members.

Everyone knows the Barbershop world is aging: The Chordsmen were no exception, with ages averaging 60 in 2009, and by 2015 had grown to a ripe 66-age average. The recent growth in membership, however, has dropped that average back to 60.1. The Chordsmen hope those trends continue.

The *Capital Chordsmen* are diligently working on the music for their 2023 Holiday Show, which will be presented at the Tallahassee Senior Center on Dec 7th & 12th @ 7pm.. This event is open to the public. All seats \$10, with tickets at the door and already on our website at: [www.capitalchordsmen.com/tickets](http://www.capitalchordsmen.com/tickets)

The show committee is co-chaired by our director, Norman Young, and our current scholarship recipient, Timothy Yu. The show includes many songs never before performed by the Chordsmen chorus and the quartets.

# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet

## THREE AND A HALF MEN

Tampa, FL; Frank Thorne

Joseph De Rosa, Josh Szolomayer,  
Tony De Rosa, Chris Keough

Total: 2244 Points / 93.5



## TONAL FUSION

Tampa, FL; Frank Thorne

Raegan Stauffer, KaleyAnna Raabe,  
Joseph De Rosa, Stephen Goldman

Total: 1901 Points / 79.2

## SUITE LIFE

Tampa, FL; Frank Thorne

Lex Goity, Cody Mathewson,  
Tripp Carter, Zach Gould

Total: 1851 Points / 77.1



Photography by William McCombie



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet



## LOCAL EDITION

Orlando, FL

Matthew Boutwell, Chris Coffee,  
Chris Burns, Aaron Ledger

Total: 1789 Points / 74.5



## TIME OF OUR LIVES

Gainesville, FL

Dave Jacobs, Mark Slamka, John Dew,  
Tyson Adams

Total: 1759 Points / 73.3



## 4 FOR 4

Fort Walton Beach, FL; Frank Thorne

Dave Roberts, Nick Firth,  
Luc-Dogg Lord, Jeff Buehler

Total: 1747 Points / 72.8



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet

## RIGHT ON Q

Tampa, FL; Frank Thorne

Paul Carter, Tim Perenich, David Mills,  
Bryan Hevel

Total: 1727 Points / 72.0



## SMASH HIT!

Tampa, FL

Lee Markham,  
Gabe Maldonado,  
Stephen Goldman,  
Jordan James

Total: 1722 Points / 71.8



## NEAT!

Central Florida; Hernando County,  
FL; Tampa, FL; Frank Thorne

Jamie Lynn Gilliam, Jack Voorhies,  
Josh Gilliam, Chris Barthauer

Total: 1719 Points / 71.6

Photography by William McCombie



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet



**Q4**  
Tampa, FL

Mike Cross,  
Dave Cross,  
Michael Vokoun,  
Kyle Fisher

Total: 1706 Points / 71.1



## LIMITLESS

Greater Pinellas, FL; Frank Thorne

Juliet Collins, Britney Hoch,  
Dean Davis, Nick Collins

Total: 819 Points / 68.3



**HALF STEP UP**  
Tallahassee, FL

Timothy Yu, Norman Young, Tommy  
Berrien, Bobby Berrien

Total: 784 Points / 65.3



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet

## TENOR ELEVEN Tallahassee, FL

Timothy Yu,  
Ethan Westrate,  
Norman Young,  
Jon Hall

Total: 767 Points / 63.9



## TBQ

Greater Pinellas, FL; Tampa, FL

Ed McKenzie, Frank Bovino, Jr.,  
Joe Kane, Dean Seller

Total: 758 Points / 63.2

## CASUAL HARMONIES (score only) Niceville High School

Jonathan Duque, Trevor Saewert,  
Ethan Milonas, Shaun Malonzo

Total: 750 Points / 62.5



Photography by William McCombie



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet



## SKIRT AND TIES

Greater Pinellas, FL

Megan Clark, Mike Wood,  
Gary Raulerson, Jeffrey Paul

Total: 748 Points / 62.3



## DYNAMIX

Gainesville, FL

Jenn Gaspari, Paul Tousignant,  
Bob Tucker, David Nations

Total: 714 Points / 59.5



## GEEZAIRES

Miami, FL; Palm Beach County, FL;  
Sunrise, FL

Andy Plotkin, Jim Gammon, Randy  
Harner, Don Knieriem

Total: 693 Points / 57.8



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet

## 4 OYSTERS IN SEARCH OF A PEARL Tallahassee, FL

Erich Brough, Ken Schroeder,  
Glen Warren, Jerry Parr, Jr.

Total: 681 Points / 56.8



Quartet contest Fall 2023 Convention



Tenor Eleven



4 for 4



Casual Harmonies

Photography by William McCombie



# Fall Convention Competitors

[Click for full scoresheet](#)



## HERALDS OF HARMONY

Tampa, FL

Tony De Rosa and Clay Hine

Total: 1084 Points / 90.3



## BIG ORANGE CHORUS

Jacksonville Big O

Director: Daniel Pesante

Total: 898 Points / 74.8



## MIAMIANS

Miami, FL

Directors: Alex Rubin and Eddie Mejia

Total: 892 Points / 74.3



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet

## ORLANDO HARMONY

Winter Park, FL

Marshall Webb

Total: 830 Points / 69.2



## ORANGE BLOSSOM CHORUS

Orlando, FL

Sean Stork

Total: 823 Points / 68.6

## JOE BREEDON MEMORIAL FESTIVAL CHORUS

Fort Walton Beach, FL

Jeff Buehler

Total: 808 Points / 67.3



Photography by William McCombie



# Fall Convention Competitors

Click for full  
scoresheet



## CAPITAL CHORDSMEN

Tallahassee, FL

Director: Norman Young

Total: 762 Points / 63.5



## EMERALD COAST CHORUS

Fort Walton Beach, FL

Jeff Buehler

Total: 761 Points / 63.4



*Big Orange Chorus/Jacksonville Big O*



*Miamians*



*A full house watches the chorus contest*

Photography by William McCombie





# Dr. Clare McCreary Joined the Heavenly Choir Nov 15th, 2023

by Lance Lubin

There are legendary barbershoppers whose names we all know. For every one of those however, there are dozens of heroes who never won a gold medal, but who have served as the glue who have held this artform together, influencing hundreds of lives, inspiring them, educating them, and helping them blossom as artists.

Dr Clare McCreary joined the heavenly choir November 15th, 2023. Clare was not only the oldest member of the Society at 107, he was the oldest competitor to ever cross the contest stage, which he did in Sunshine District, at the ages of 100 and 101, with his quartet, "The Dr. Is In".

Clare was a barbershopper for over 75 years, and there is no telling how many people's lives he touched and how many hearts were lifted, but it was many. In his barbershop life, he was an avid woodshedder, arranger, coach, director, vocal pedagogist, chorus member, and sang in too many quartets to count. One of his most notable was "The Ringmasters" (this was 50+ years before those Swedish kids were even a glimmer in their parent's eyes). He also wrote and edited the award-winning newsletter, "Scoops and Swipes".

Clare and his wife June, were married just days after Pearl Harbor, and after World War II, they moved to St. Petersburg Florida. Clare was an orthodontist, and he and three dentists formed a quartet, called "The Dentalodians". The four wives formed a quartet, "The Dental Flossies". Clare always joked that they had done it in "self-defense". He joined the *St. Petersburg Chorus*, which ultimately became

the Greater Pinellas Chapter (AKA *The Florida Suncoast Chorus*) and held many offices and was barbershopper of the year numerous times.



*The Ringmasters*

At his recent 107th birthday party, Clare sang in two quartets and performed a solo "Young at Heart". He was indeed young at heart, always welcoming change, enthusiastically supporting "Everyone in Harmony". What did he want for his 100th birthday? A 3D printer of course. No doubt, to crank out pitch pipes. But into his second century he was still playing tennis three days a week, driving, and wagging his finger at quartet mates who didn't know their notes and words, or sang "barber-choppy".

He was a kind man, a loving man, and a role model for many. He and June were a romance for the ages. On a personal note, there were two great men in my life, my father and Clare. Clare was my "barbershop dad", and every blessing I've had in my life resulting from barbershop, I owe to him. At various times he told me "The only part worth singing is baritone", "you need to be in a quartet", "you should really be woodshedding", "you need to learn music theory", "you should be a Director". I did all those things, and my life was forever altered...for the better.

Dr. Clare never won a gold medal, but if you remember that famous speech by Jim Henry about "Gold Medal Moments", Clare made those gold-medal moments possible for so many singers over the years.

One of the coolest things ever is that with the recent rebirth of the St. Petersburg chapter (AKA *The Sunshine City Chorus*) Clare was a charter member. So he started in the St. Petersburg Chapter, and ended in the St Petersburg Chapter. We were honored to have him.

As long as there is a tag to sing and a chord to ring, his memory will be a blessing.



*Here he is, performing at 100 years old. Jeff Paul - Tenor, Lance Lubin - Lead, Clare McCreary - Baritone, Kurt Popp - Bass*

# Sunshine District Management Team



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# Sunshine District

Barbershop  
Harmony  
Society



Please send photos, articles, and other interesting tidbits  
for inclusion in future publications of  
*The Sunburst.*

Send to [Editor@sunshinedistrict.org](mailto:Editor@sunshinedistrict.org)



## Sunburst Deadlines



Mar 15 • Jun 15 • Aug 15 • Nov 15

### SUNBURST ADVERTISING INFORMATION

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	Rate per issue . . .	Annual rate (4 issues)	Per issue/Annual
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Keep your personal information, home address, email address, telephone (home & cell) up-to-date in the Society database. Check with your chapter secretary if help is required.  
DO NOT send personal changes to District staff or *The Sunburst* Editor.



The Sunshine District wants to ensure our performances and programming are accessible to everyone. Should you require a special accommodation, please contact us, and we will be happy to help you.