



The

# SERENADER

E-Newsletter



Editor: Fred Green poolvacman@gmail.com ■ February 2024 ■ An Occasional Publication As the Need Arises

## WELCOME!



... to the first issue of the *Serenader* e-newsletter. My name is Fred Green. My wife, Debbie, and I have recently moved to Albuquerque from Las Vegas, NV, where we had lived for the past 33 years. My friend, Larry Butler, and I both sang in the City of Lights and Silver Statesmen barbershop choruses in Las Vegas and it is at his months-long encouragement and conversations that we finally decided to make this change in our lives.

Now with the okay from the NMC board of directors, I plan to publish a monthly newsletter for our chorus and everyone else on our extensive database of "fans". I would really like to get your help by sharing articles, info, photos, cartoons, etc., to make the *Serenader* a fun publication that will be informative and enjoyable. So, dust off your archives of barbershop "goodies" and send what you can for future issues.

Both Debbie and I are USAF veterans. We have four adult children and seven grandchildren. In 1998, I began singing barbershop in Las Vegas with the City of Lights Chorus. In 2013, the City of Lights and the other chorus in LV, the Gambleaires, merged into what is now the Silver Statesmen Chorus. Debbie sang with the Sweet Adelines, Celebrity City Chorus for about a year. She retired from the Las Vegas school district, where she was a music teacher for grades K-5.

I'll keep this short for now... It seems the older I get, the more stories I have to tell... ha!

We are both very happy to be here and I look forward to becoming a part of NMC and singing barbershop together with all of you.

Sing-cerely,

Fred

P.S. Be on the lookout for an upgraded and updated chorus website coming soon to the internet near YOU.



Our weekly meetings are on Tuesdays, 6:30pm, at **St John's United Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110**

The church is located one block North of Menaul & one block East of San Pedro.

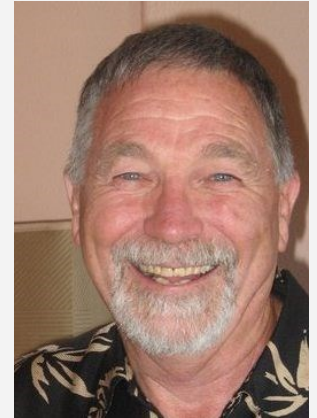
You can see an online location map here:

<https://goo.gl/maps/9nGS8mcvRKQYFgBE8>

## FROM OUR DIRECTOR:

### “BIFFLEISMS”

I know, that's a dumb title, but over the years I've had more than one group I worked with say they were going to publish a book of "Biffleisms" someday. To my knowledge, it's never happened, but — who knows — maybe this space will be the start of something big, as Steve Allen once said. And maybe I'll think of a better title someday, too. Who knows?



For this first issue, though, I want to welcome Fred and Debbie to our town, reassure them that they'll love it here as we do, and thank them for all the work they are doing, and will do, for our chapter...They have truly been a breath of fresh air and Fred is a great addition to the bass section, to boot. Debbie has sung with us at a few rehearsals and, I hope, will continue to do so. It would be great to have another couple to add to our singing family!

Also, I want to welcome our newest members to the fold. Under Walt's energetic and reliable leadership, we are growing rapidly. And that's wonderful. It really brings joy to us to bring the joy of what we do to others. This year we have a goal of singing for more people in our community and that will bring new members, too, to add to those that you invite — always the most productive method of sharing our thing with others. Spread the word, folks. You'll change someone's life!

So, keep singing, keep smiling, keep sharing what we do with others. Together we'll grow this thing out of the rehearsal hall. Maybe we'll have to start meeting in the gym someday!

See you Tuesday, champs.

Oh yes, when you see him, thank Fred for putting this thing together. We're gonna have a lot of fun sharing things with each other in the beautiful bulletin.

Bill

**Do you love to sing? Tired of entertaining only yourself  
in your car or the shower? C'mon out and see how  
much fun it can be to sing with a group of others!**

**See us at:**

**[www.NewMexiChords.com](http://www.NewMexiChords.com)**

**Our chorus and quartets love to sing for our audiences and to share our love of barbershop.  
You are invited to join with us to enjoy an evening of camaraderie and great barbershop  
harmony. Don't miss out on the fun. Come and see what it's all about!**

**What? Weekly Chapter Meeting & Rehearsal**

**When? Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.**

**Where? St John's United Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE, ABQ 87110**

## ***2024 INSTALLATION & AWARDS BANQUET***

On Friday, January 26th, we held our Installation & Awards Banquet at the Tanoan Country Club. This annual event installed our Board of Directors for the new year and also recognized our Annual Award recipients for 2023.

Below is our new board for 2024 and the award recipients. The following page contains photos from this event that were submitted by a few of those in attendance. A BIG Thank You! to those who sent photos for the newsletter!!

### **ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS**

Barbershopper of the Year - Ruth Koury

President's Award - Bill Biffle

Volunteer of the Year - Mary Turner

Ms New MexiChord - Ruth Koury  
*(first year this award was presented)*

Most Improved Singer - Rebecca Biffle

Mr Performer - Walt Parsons

Quartet of the Year - The Music Man Quartet

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS for 2024**

President - Tom Cole

Secretary - Mary Turner

Treasurer - Celeste Cole

Membership VP - Walt Parsons

Music VP - Richard Grady

Marketing VP - Fred Green

Performance VP - Jerry Quintana

Program VP - Ruth Koury

Member at Large - Leo Twiggs





*This is Part 1 of a 5-part series, "Music and the Mind" by John Colapinto (AARP Magazine, December 2023). Each of the next four months will contain the next part in the series. I hope you will enjoy these interesting articles.*

## **Part 1 - "Hey Jude"**

In 2007, a young man named Colin Huggins began playing music on the streets of New York using a battered upright piano he'd bought on Craigslist. He was a former accompanist for the American Ballet Theatre, but playing and singing pop songs outdoors had convinced him of the almost mystical power of music to soothe, delight and heal his fellow New Yorkers. He began to push the piano all over downtown, even managing to get it onto a subway platform at 14th Street. There in December 2008, he was caught on a blurry cellphone video, later posted to YouTube, playing the Beatles' "Hey Jude." In the course of two minutes, the potentially dangerous netherworld of the New York City subway—the very definition of existential alienation, where eye contact is assiduously avoided—was transformed into a place of joy, camaraderie, connection. At first, four or five college-aged kids began to sing along ("take a sad song and make it better"), and by the time Huggins hit the crescendo ("better, better, BETTER"), a group of middle-aged businessmen in long black coats on the opposite platform were singing too. With the irresistible coda ("nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, nah, etc., etc."), everyone on both platforms—male and female, Black and white, young and old—was singing, clapping, smiling at one another. The transformation was miraculous.

That video is testament to how melodies and lyrics lurk in our brains, ready to be released at the sound of a few notes—lifting our spirits, connecting us with our fellow human beings and evoking deeply buried memories as powerful as anything in the human experience.

For more than 50 years, the medical specialty known as music therapy has harnessed this extraordinary aspect of music to treat diseases ranging from depression to chronic pain to movement disorders to autism to Alzheimer's disease. But only in recent years has the scientific community begun to penetrate the mystery of how something as ephemeral as an acoustic signal—mere air vibrations—can have such profound effects on damaged bodies and brains. In the process, experts are gaining a deeper understanding of the importance of music in everyone's day-to-day life, and its astonishing effects on the healthy, normal brain.

That music has been a part of human cultures since time immemorial is attested to by early man-made fossils—including various percussion instruments and a 60,000-year-old flute made from the femur of a now-extinct European bear—to say nothing of the original musical instrument, the human voice, whose remarkable music-making properties have given it a central place in virtually all forms of religious worship, from the chants of shamans in Indigenous tribes, to Islam's haunting call to prayer, to the extraordinary overtone singing perfected by Buddhist monks in Tibet, to the hymns and psalms of Judaism and Christianity. According to historian of religion, Karen Armstrong, "Scripture was usually sung, changed or declaimed in a way that separated it from mundane speech, so that words—a product of the brain's left hemisphere—were fused with the more indefinable emotions of the right."

Recent scientific studies have shown that music's power over us is not purely psychological but based in measurable physiological changes. Singing along with others to a beloved song (such as "Hey Jude") causes the brain to secrete the chemical oxytocin, a naturally occurring hormone that creates the warm sensations of bonding, unity and security that make us feel all cuddly toward our children and others we love; infuses us with feelings of spiritual awe; and can alleviate chronic pain or the debilitating sensations of anxiety or the isolation of autism. One area of medicine where the power of music has been particularly remarkable is in the treatment of the dementias, including Alzheimer's disease, whose stubborn and terrible symptoms have been resistant to most forms of treatment.

***Continued next month with Part 2, "Fly Me to the Moon"***



The New MexiChords Calendar  
Upcoming Events

2024

- 13-14 Feb - Singing Valentines (*see flyer at the end of the newsletter*)
- 26-27 Apr - Rocky Mountain District Spring Convention, Little America, Cheyenne, WY
- 3 & 4 May - Spring Show, 7pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St.
- 17 May - Naturalization Ceremony
- 30 Jun-7 Jul - BHS International Convention, Cleveland, Ohio
- 26-28 Sep - Rocky Mountain District Fall Convention, Little America, Cheyenne, WY
- 11 Oct - Naturalization Ceremony
- TBA - Christmas Show

Stay up-to-date with us by visiting our "Performances" page on the website at:

[www.NewMexiChords.com](http://www.NewMexiChords.com)



*The Serenader* is your newsletter and vehicle for sharing information, stories, and news about the chapter, chorus, quartets, and the people in them. To make it interesting and a fun read, I would encourage all of you to provide articles for publication, photos of quartets in action, our members, chorus on the risers..... Anything that you find interesting and would like to see in the newsletter to share with others. — The Editor



## Your Daily Chuckles

My wife asked me to do some odd jobs. She gave me a list of 10, so I did 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9.

Who is the coolest doctor at the hospital? The hip doctor.

Did you hear the joke about the time a mosquito landed on my leg? It was a knee-slapper.

Why couldn't the vampire's wife sleep? Because of his coffin.

Did you hear about the man who couldn't drive his friends underground? He had carpool tunnel syndrome.

Who stays out all night on St Patrick's Day? Paddy O'Furniture.

What did the Time Traveler do when she was still hungry after a meal? She went back four seconds.

Where might you get a haircut and a hotdog? At a Barber-Q.

A dad was washing his car with his son until the son said, "Dad, can you please just use a sponge?"

Why is everyone so tired at the beginning of April? Because they just finished a 31-day March.

I always found it a little counterproductive when a teacher would say, "Don't get smart with me!"

My wife started a business selling candles that don't smell like anything. The customer reaction has been poor. The candles don't make scents, so my wife doesn't make cents. Does that make sense?

A kid decided to burn his house down. His dad watched, tears in his eyes. He put his arm around the mom and said, "That's arson."

My daughter dropped an ice cube in the kitchen. She was pretty worried about it, but I said, "Don't worry, honey, in a few minutes it will be water under the fridge."



### **Our Mission:**

**The members of the Albuquerque Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society dedicate themselves to:**

- **Continually seek the joy to be found in singing well in the barbershop style**
- **Promote the benefits of our hobby at every available opportunity**
- **Provide our community with high quality musical entertainment, and**
- **Foster continual musical growth and fellowship among the members**





**This year do something EXTRAORDINARY!**

# *Singing Valentines*

**Surprise someone special with a unique Valentine serenade!**  
A talented quartet, from one of Albuquerque's five award winning choruses, will appear bearing gifts, at the place of your choice in Albuquerque - Rio Rancho to share the gift of song in perfect, four-part harmony.

**Make your reservation early!**

**February 13-14**

**Singing Valentines begin at \$75**

**For reservation and more details:**



Albuquerque Florist

**ABQValentines.com**



**Or Call 505-323-SING (7464)**

**Send by phone, \$20 anywhere in the US!**

*Senior Buyers Discount Available. Additional fees apply for travel outside the Albuquerque Metro area, same day orders, and extra gift items or songs.*

