



The New MexiChords Barbershop Chorus

The

# SERENADER

E-Newsletter



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

## The Votes Are In

Given a choice of eight different graphics to adorn the header of the new *Serenader* newsletter, and with 42% of the votes cast, the winning graphic is seen above. The State flag of New Mexico was a clear favorite. Thanks to all of you for your input into this “group effort”. As a heads up, over the course of a year you may see other graphics from time to time.... Just for the fun of it.



Do you have a stash of old chorus photos, of members past and present, or stories and anecdotes that others would find interesting? Being the “new guy on the block”, and not having a lot of New MexiChords history to fall back on, I would like your help to share with others what our chorus has done over the years. I would really appreciate anything that you care to share with me to make the newsletter both informative and fun. Please send to me at poolvacman@gmail.com. Here is a little info from the early years:

The Albuquerque Chapter was successfully established in 1950. It was originally known as the Albuquerque Chorus and later became the Duke City Chorus. About 1960, the name was changed to The New MexiChords. There were many active quartets in the chapter, including the Lads of Enchantment, who won the International Quartet Championship in 1957. The first annual show, “First Annual Harmony Rodeo” was held at the Carlisle Gym (UNM) in September 1952 for an audience of about 200 people who braved a raging sand storm to attend the show.

In the very early years there was a committee responsible for coming early to meetings to ice down the beer. During rehearsals, the chorus was seated, and smoking and drinking beer were quite acceptable. For more than 20 years, the chapter continued to be a small, fun-loving group, singing a lot of four-part woodshedding. Clearly, it was not the well disciplined, nearly professional group it is today.... But, we’re still fun-loving and work hard to increase our musicality and get much enjoyment from entertaining our audiences!



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”

Well, hello, ladies and gents. Column no. 2 for Fred's excellent newsletter, resurrecting a long tradition of *The Serenader*. Just a few words about where we've come from, where we are, and where I hope we're going.

When I took this job, the chorus was in need of some basic work - on individual singing skills, work on ensemble skills, and work on barbershop skills. Last year, I selected music for our spring show that would allow us to work on these things. And, well, it worked. We had a good show, took some nice material into contest, and had a solid Christmas show.

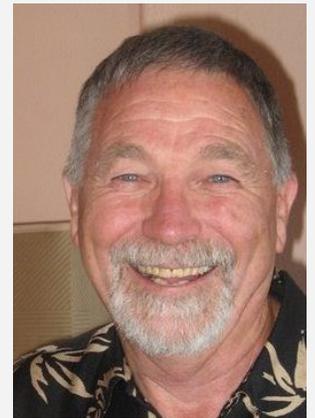
This year our rep is a bit more challenging. On purpose. We've advanced in our overall and individual skill levels and are actively learning some more interesting stuff. So, this year's show will be a bit different - and even more enjoyable, I hope, for you and for our audience. Also, all of these songs are solid repertoire pieces, allowing us to actively look for more performance opportunities which, in turn, will provide us with more chances to sing, more people to entertain, and more new members to attract.

So, please seek out places for us to sing. It doesn't have to involve a fee - although one is always welcome, of course - but it should, ideally, involve one or more of these characteristics: a chance to entertain folks who wouldn't otherwise have a chance to hear us, contain some possibility of putting our joy of music in front of possible new members, and be in a space that's conducive to an enjoyable performance for us. When you have ideas for performances, please let Jerry Quintana, VP of Performance, know.

Thanks for reading. I'm excited about the Spring show, about discovering new venues and audiences for what we do, and for a summer of building on our repertoire and Polecat/tag inventory so we can sing more things with more people at the convention in Cheyenne this Fall.

Oh, yes. Keep bringing guests. It's fun to grow together, que no?

See you Tuesday, champs!



**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)**

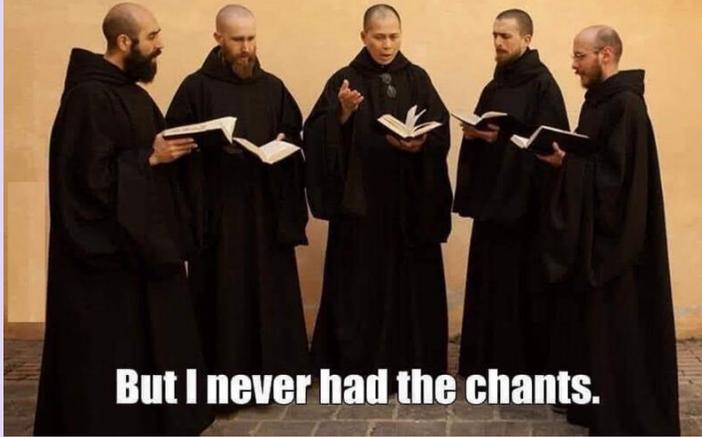
**Our chorus and quartets love to sing for our audiences and to share our love of barbershop. You are invited to join with us to enjoy an evening of camaraderie and great barbershop harmony. Don't miss out on the fun. Come and see what it's all about!**

**What? Weekly Chapter Meeting & Rehearsal**

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

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

I always wanted to be a Gregorian Monk..

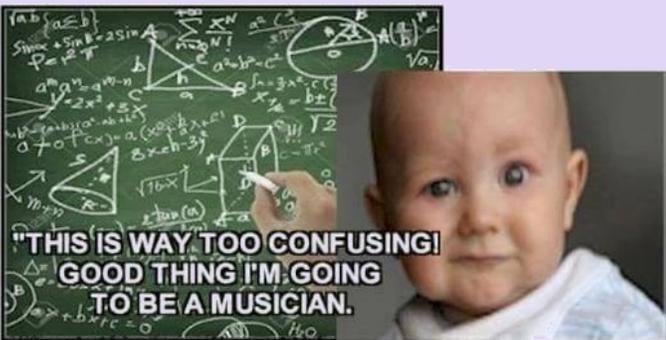


But I never had the chants.

WHEN USING A PUBLIC CAMPGROUND, A BANJO PLACED ON YOUR PICNIC TABLE



WILL KEEP THE CAMPSITES ON EITHER SIDE OF YOU VACANT.



“So how big is your cat?”

“About 3 and a half octaves long”



***This is Part 2 of a 5-part series, “Music and the Mind” by John Colapinto (AARP Magazine, December 2023). Each of the next three months will contain the next part in the series. I hope that you will enjoy these interesting articles.***

## **Part 2 – “Fly Me to the Moon”**

On a recent afternoon, I visited the 80<sup>th</sup> Street Residence, an assisted living community for dementia patients on Manhattan’s Upper East Side. Seventeen patients gathered in a community room, and staff members helped seat them in chairs that faced the front of the room, where Xiyu Zhang, a 37-year-old music therapist, introduced herself to the group. Her audience stared back, blankly (“They don’t all remember me,” she later told me. “They see me every two weeks, but many don’t know why I’m here.”) She began strumming an acoustic guitar and singing: “Fly me to the moon / Let me play among the stars / Let me see what spring is like...” The effect was immediate. Chins lifted from chests; eyes opened. Smiles flickered on one or two faces. A woman began to sing certain phrases: “on Jupiter and Mars ... in other words ... hold my hand.”

Over the next 45 minutes, Zhang fanned the fragile spark of group attention into a steady blaze with a string of standards (“Blue Moon,” “Catch a Falling Star,” “You Are My Sunshine”) and got nearly every person singing along. Between verses, she called out questions: “Who sang ‘Singin’ in the Rain’?” A white-haired woman said, “Gene Kelly!” “What is the girl’s name in Wizard of Oz?” A woman in the second row blurted out, “Dorothy!” “And her dog?” “Toto!” “That’s amazing!” Zhang cried. And it *was* amazing for people who, before the music started, would not have been able to recall the names of family members or the career they had pursued for 40 years – or been able to break free of the inward-turning silence in which the disease had wrapped them.

Indeed, isolation is one of the most frightening and unsettling symptoms of the memory loss that’s synonymous with Alzheimer’s and other dementias – a memory loss that separates a person from their very self. For what are we, ultimately, but the sum of our personal recollections? At the end of Zhang’s session, as the patients were led back to the elevators, the mood was a little like a bubbly cocktail party breaking up. Restored for the time being to a sense of self through the activation of better-preserved neural networks, the patients traded words and laughter with caregivers and one another – a transformation as miraculous as that of those commuters on the New York City subway platform. Indeed, more so.

Music therapy’s roots date back to World Wars I and II, when service members with traumatic brain injuries and “combat fatigue” (now called post-traumatic stress disorder-PTSD) were discovered, by chance, to improve in mood and function when listening to music. Veterans hospitals began hiring musicians to play to patients, and it was not long before physicians realized that the treatment’s effectiveness would be enhanced if musicians learned the basic tenets of psychology, neurology and physiology, so that they could tailor their playing to a patient’s specific needs. Michigan State University launched the first degree program in music therapy in 1944.

# Barbershop Creeds - Part 1

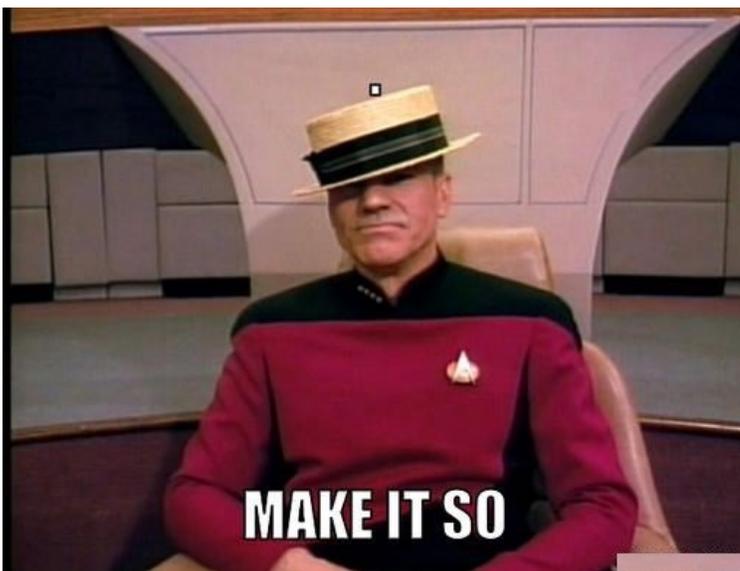
By Earl McGhee (EDITED)

## The Bari's Creed

1. I will sing what works, even if it cannot be described on paper, for I am a Baritone.
2. I will show a little respect for the Tenor, for he also sings softly, though his notes are ordinary.
3. I will sing flawlessly thru the two-part swipes, creating wonderful sounds.
4. I will never attempt to match volume with the Lead, for I understand that what I must seek is the harmony that only a Baritone can produce.
5. I will occasionally tilt my head to one side and smile blissfully, so that everyone will think I'm hearing wonderful harmonies that they can only dream about.
6. I will try to understand that others do not realize that it is really the pitch pipe that is off.

## The Bass's Creed

1. I will always remember that Basses are God's chosen people and will strive to convince others of that truth.
2. Whenever the notes fall within my "Power Range," I will sing in a manner that conveys the message "I am a Bass! Hear me roar!"
3. Whenever there exists the slightest opportunity for a swipe, I will take it, whether the music is so written or not.
4. I will always remember that the Bass establishes the sound of the quartet or chorus.
5. I will remember that the Tenor is a rare and hard to find singer and so, will treat them with grudging respect. I will not overdo it.
6. I will do all of the above in a spirit of humility befitting one of God's chosen people.



## Barbershop Creeds - Part 2

By Earl McGhee (EDITED)

### The Lead's Creed

1. I will constantly remind myself that I am the natural center of the quartet or chorus.
2. I will make no attempt to understand why the Tenor sings way up there.
3. I will take command of the melody and the other three parts can harmonize with whatever I'm singing.
4. I will smile wider and make more gestures than other singers, for mine is the part that everyone listens to.
5. I will allow the harmony parts to take a swipe now and then.
6. I vow to remain generous, modest and unspoiled by acclaim.

### The Tenor's Creed

1. I will remember that I am a Tenor and that Tenors are unique among singers. I will conduct myself accordingly.
2. During chorus rehearsal, I will allow myself to be shushed by the Director, but at the performance, I will drive my high notes to the far corners of the room.
3. I will be very selective about the other parts that I will consent to sing with in a quartet. I know that I will always be in great demand, for they are many and we are few.
4. I will practice until no one can tell when I go from natural voice to falsetto, for I know it drives the others crazy.
5. Whenever my quartet manages to create an overtone, I will let a sly smile play across my face that says "Yes, I really did hit that note."
6. I will hold my head high, remembering that I am a Tenor and that humility is for those who cannot afford arrogance.

A percussionist, tired of being teased by his bandmates, decides to switch instruments. He walks into the local music shop, points to his choices and says, "I'll take that trumpet and that accordion." The shop owner looks at him for a second and replies, "Ok, you can take the fire extinguisher, but the radiator's not for sale."

Be decisive. Right or wrong, make a decision. The road is paved with flat squirrels who couldn't make a decision.

"Your call is very important to us. Please enjoy this 40-minute flute solo."

I didn't make it to the gym today. That makes five years in a row.

Just once, I'd like the prompt for username and password to say, "Close enough."

The New MexiChords Calendar  
Upcoming Chorus Events

2024

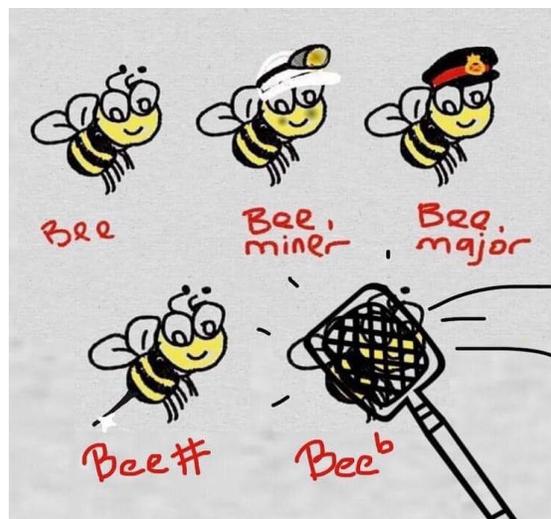
- 26-27 Apr - Rocky Mountain District Spring Convention, Little America, Cheyenne, WY
- 3 May - Spring Show, 7pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE
- 4 May - Spring Show, 2pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE
- 17 May - Naturalization Ceremony
- 30 Jun-7 Jul - BHS International Convention, Cleveland, Ohio
- 26-28 Sep - Rocky Mountain District Fall Convention, Little America, Cheyenne, WY
- 11 Oct - Naturalization Ceremony
- 20 Dec - Christmas Show, 7pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE
- 21 Dec - Christmas Show, 2pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE

Stay up-to-date with us by visiting our "Performances" page on the website at:  
[www.NewMexiChords.com](http://www.NewMexiChords.com)

A DAY WITHOUT MUSIC.....

JUST KIDDING....

I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THAT'S LIKE.

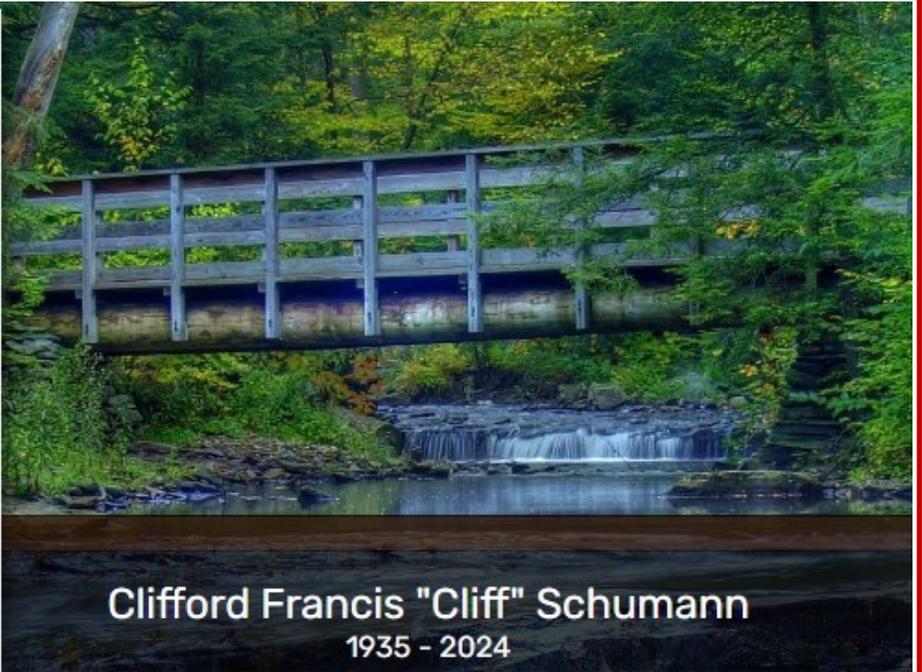
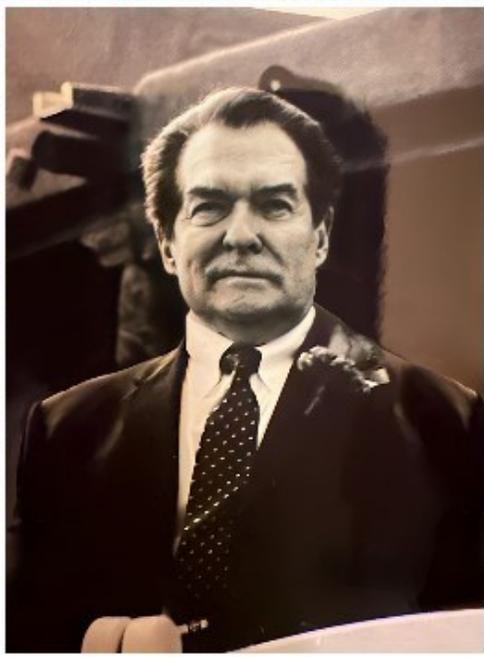


WHEN WORDS FAIL,  
MUSIC SPEAKS

~ SHAKESPEARE

*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





### GONE TO CHAPTER ETERNAL

Clifford Francis Schumann, age 88, of Pittstown, NJ, passed away on February 9, 2024. After graduating from the US Naval Academy in 1960, he served in the US Air Force for 20 years, attaining the rank of Major. His wife of 63 years, Lorraine Hunchak, passed away in September of last year.

A longtime member of our chapter, Cliff was an active member of the Barbershop Harmony Society from 1965 to present. He enjoyed singing in barbershop choruses and quartets, as well as volunteering as a soloist and choir member in church.

He visited us a few weeks ago with several members of his family. Bill expressed condolences on behalf of the chapter to his daughter, Amy.

Clifford is survived by three daughters, two sons, twelve grandchildren, and five greatgrandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted on February 25th in Clinton, NJ. To send condolences to the family, please visit [www.martinfh.com](http://www.martinfh.com).

Together  
in Harmony



## Your Daily Chuckles

What do you call an elephant that doesn't matter? Irrelephant.

What do you call someone who pretends to be Swedish? An artificial Swedener.

The Army Major approached a young Private. The officer got right in his face and said, "Soldier, I didn't see you at camouflage training this morning!!" The young soldier suppressed a smile and said, "Thank you, sir!"

What do you call a can opener that doesn't work? A can't opener.

I love telling dad jokes..... Sometimes he laughs.

What is Forrest Gump's computer password? 1Forrest1

How many apples grow on a tree? All of them.

Did you hear that Old MacDonald's son joined the Army? They call him, "E.I. G.I. Joe"

Everyone has a favorite word. Mine is "drool." It just rolls off the tongue.

Did you hear about the headphones that became friends? They were earbuds.

When your children are teenagers, it's important to have a dog so that someone in the house is happy to see you.

Did you hear about the celebrity who accidentally glued himself to his autobiography? That's his story and he's sticking to it.

Did you hear about the optometrist who loved jokes? The cornea the better.

How can you make a waterbed bouncer? Use spring water.

What word starts with "E", ends with "E", and has only one letter in it? Envelope.

What do you call a fake noodle? An impasta.



### **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**