



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR MEMBERS

Bob Amblad

Vice President, Membership



This story starts in the early 40's growing up in Peoria, Illinois.

I met my wife, Jeri, sophomore year in high school. My interest in vocal music started in high school with the mixed a cappella choir. Senior year I attended the Illinois All State Music Festival, joining 800 high school vocal, band, and orchestra musicians, performing together the Prologue to Mefistofele which was the first of several goose-bumply singing moments in my musical journey.

From high school it was off to college at Northwestern University. Although I was a Radio-TV-Film major, my music interest led me to the University Chapel Choir and my second goosebump musical memory: singing Handel's Messiah accompanied by the University Symphony. After graduating in '64, Jeri & I got married in December of that year. When the blizzards and ice storms of '65-66 hit Chicago, we decided to head West to someplace warm. We maybe over-did the warm, but you don't have to shovel sunshine!

We ended up in Las Vegas. Jeri taught English and Journalism at the old Vegas High School and then after kids, joined the faculty at Vo-Tech as a counselor/admissions director. I taught jr. high for 30 years and helped train Nevada geography teachers as part of the National Geographic Society's education outreach program. For the past 30+ years, I have hosted the Nevada State Geographic Bee sponsored by NGS. I also DJ'd part-time at KORK radio (68-81) and hosted the high school academic Varsity Quiz on channel 10-PBS for 26 years.

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Our weekly meetings are at the **University United Methodist Church at 4412 S. Maryland Pkwy, LV 89119**, on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

UNIVERSITY CHURCH is located across the street from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas (UNLV) on Maryland Parkway, between Flamingo Rd and Tropicana Ave.

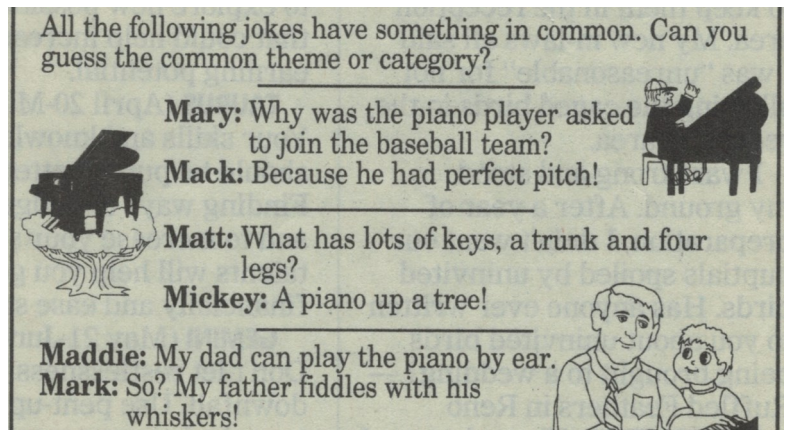
You can see an online location map here:
<https://goo.gl/maps/JnQu8S85t7DkpVmK8>

After retiring from the school district in 1996, I immediately went back to work for 14 years at the newly opened New York New York hotel as a bell man. It was great fun, totally opposite from teaching—both money wise and stress wise. A highlight was being named Employee of the Year in 2002.

All through the early 2000's we were able to travel a lot. Our journeys took us to China, Peru (Amazon and Machu Pichu), Panama, Greece, Italy, France, SE Asia, and our trip of a lifetime — East Africa: Kenya & Tanzania. We haven't filled our bucket list entirely, but our trips these days are mainly to Seattle to escape summer heat and getting to know our grandson.

We have two sons: Erik lives here in Vegas and is an accomplished actor/director/acting coach in the local theatre scene. Our other son, Kristofer and wife, Treasure, have blessed us with a now 7 year old grandson, Nikolas. They live in Seattle. Our empty nest is filled with our doxie, Josie. Life has been good to us as we move into our 80's in remarkably good health. This year (2022) we celebrate our 58th wedding anniversary and look forward to many more.

Music returned to my life in 2012 when Dave Larson and Roc Pucci invited me to join the Gamble-aires. I was hooked right away on the close harmonies and fun songs of Barbershop music as well as the fellowship. Now in my 11th year singing barbershop, I experience my third musical highlight of my life—not a particular moment or song, but the whole experience of being a Silver Statesman. Let's keep the whole world singing!



Vocal Health Perceptions

Vocal Health has been a hot topic for a while, thanks to high-visibility performers such as Adele, Sam Smith, Michael Buble, and others being forced to cancel shows due to damage to their voices.

Some observers exercise kindness and a measure of understanding when discussing someone else's voice and health. Others, perhaps even those with good intentions, are less than kind. Singers are more prone to vocal trauma than other kinds of voice users. That is a simple statement of fact. The sheer quantity of voice use exposes us to greater risk.

Barbershop singers and other choral singers are in additional jeopardy as quartet or chorus singers rarely use personal amplification. If someone experiences an interruption in vocal health, it is our opportunity to be compassionate, rather than judgmental. Healthy dialogue around vocal care is an important part of our experience as singers (and directors and coaches and judges, etc.)

Understand that voices come in all shapes and sizes. Many factors influence phonation (speaking and singing): genetics, upbringing, regional diction, general health, and voice use and type. Phonation is also affected by hormone levels, external and internal stress, and allergens in the environment. Any number of reasons exist for an interruption in someone's vocal health. Exercise compassion; have a care when discussing someone's singing! Each human voice is unique and, whether consciously perceived, is linked to an individual's identity.

Sometimes our comments about another's voice can be taken as a value judgment of the person themselves. These types of remarks can do lasting damage. How many people in chorus have been admonished to "just stand in back and mouth the words" or asked, "shouldn't you let (insert singer here) sing this song instead?" How many singers were encouraged not to sing by someone who thought they were being funny (or just cruel)? How many of you have wished you would have found barbershop at an earlier age, but were perhaps afraid or shy about your voice?

There are many articles that do a good job at bringing to light something that was considered taboo in the barbershop world: talking about vocal injury. They explain what happens and why singers sometimes are at risk. Think about the hundreds of thousands of microcollisions that the vocal folds experience during one of our shows and performances, and the cumulative effect on the vocal mechanisms and structures.

It wouldn't hurt for us to do some research regarding preventative vocal maintenance and what to do to recover from a vocal injury. Articles related to the lifespan of the singer, including the aging voice and the developing or changing voice are also great sources of information regarding our voices. Barbershop singing doesn't normally use instruments, so attention to vocal health needs to be correspondingly higher.

Happy, healthy singing, my friend!

My husband had just lost 50 pounds when, after eight years of being a housewife, I had taken a job in a restaurant. When I returned home after my first day at work, I gave my husband a big hug. He seemed to cling to me longer than usual. "Did you really miss me that much today, dear?" I asked. "No," came the reply. "But you smell so much like pancakes that I hate to let you go."



Silver Statesmen Calendar

Events for 2022

AUGUST

17th - Non-Profit Awareness Participation - 4:00pm - Sahara West Library

20th - "Viva Las Vegas" - 2:00 p.m. - Winchester-Dondero Cultural Center, 3130 Mcleod Dr, LV 89121

SEPTEMBER

23rd - "Viva Las Vegas" - 7:00 p.m. - Siena Senior Community 55+, 10525 Siena Monte Ave, LV 89135
(Residents Only)

OCTOBER

13-16 - FWD Fall Convention - Fresno, CA

NOVEMBER

12th - Veterans Day Show - 2:00 p.m. - Clark County Library Theater, 1401 E. Flamingo Rd, LV 89121

13th - Veterans Day Show - 2:00 p.m. - Windmill Library Auditorium, 7060 W. Windmill Ln, LV 89113

DECEMBER

10th - Christmas Show - 2:00 p.m. - Winchester-Dondero Cultural Center, 313- McLeod Dr, LV 89121

Your Daily Chuckles

Why do we leave cars worth thousands of dollars in the driveway and put our useless junk in the garage?

Why do they have drive-up ATM machines with Braille letters?

Why don't we ever see the headline "Psychic Wins Lottery"?

Why is "abbreviated" such a long word?

Why is the time of day with the slowest traffic called rush hour?

Why isn't there mouse-flavored cat food?

Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes?

If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the terminal?

You know that indestructible black box that is put on airplanes? Why don't they make the whole plane out of that stuff??

Building Musicians: Resources for Learning Musicianship

This article will examine different facets of building musicians and hopefully dispel myths and inaccuracies. Most importantly, the goal is to provide support for music teams and provide constructive solutions for singers.

Singers join our chapters for many reasons, but all share the love of singing barbershop chords. Some singers come to us with years of singing experience and can hop on the risers with no problem at all. Some singers come to us with nothing but earnestness and a love of singing and camaraderie. All should be welcome.

Joining a chapter and singing in a chorus can be intimidating, especially if you don't feel secure in your singing voice or in your musicianship. Perhaps someone made a joke about your singing voice at one time. Perhaps you feel self-conscious about your music reading abilities.

Would it surprise you to know that some of our early quartet champs could not sight read music? A research study by choral professor and 1991 gold medal champion bass of The Ritz, Dr. Ben Ayling, showed interesting survey data results of the music literacy of early quartet champs. Of those surveyed, 26.7% indicated that they could not read music upon joining their quartet. Further, 96.5% of respondents indicated that singing barbershop music increased their ability to read music. How glad we are that they stuck to their desire to sing, despite their perception of their personal musicianship abilities!

There are a variety of sources for you to use on your musical journey. Try these free resources:

- Barbershop.org: Did you know that BHS created a free, online musicianship tutorial? It is divided into 4 sections, each with 7 parts. Most of the examples use excerpts from barbershop songs.
- MusicTheory.net: This website has many free exercises to help you build your skills-learning. You can go as fast or as slow as you want.
- Teoria.com: A great site for learning music notation and for working on ear training (identifying intervals and chords).
- Phitulga.com: A neat site that can help you learn to read rhythms.
- PitchImprover.com: This is a great resource for ear training. Of particular interest was their chord identification section.
- SightReadingFactory.com: This website has several free exercises to download.
- [Eyes and Ears – An Anthology of Melodies for Sight-Singing](#): This free, downloadable book is a great resource to sequentially build musicianship.

Practice Patience - No one is born with the ability to sight read music. The process of learning to sight read is often compared to learning a new language. Please exercise patience with your fellow singers, as we are all at different places on our musical journey.

WE LOVE TO SING!

Last month we performed twice, both on July 3rd. First we performed at Dr. David Dorway's annual organ concert at Grace Presbyterian Church. David is a member of our bass section and sang with us during our part of the concert.

Later that day, a group of us performed at the Las Vegas Ballpark for the Aviators Triple A baseball game. The promoters must like us because we are asked to sing the National Anthem at the start of the game, usually about twice a year. With all the vocal groups and singers available in Las Vegas, we feel privileged to be asked back as often as we are.



Performing patriotic songs on stage at Grace Presbyterian Church for Dr. Dorway's organ concert started our day of singing on July 3rd.



Whether on top of the 3rd base dugout or prominently displayed on the Jumbotron screen, the Silver Statesmen are always a crowd favorite at the Aviators' baseball games.



Our Mission Statement:

"To share our passion for music, to preserve the art form known as Barbershop singing, to enrich the lives of our members, community, and audiences through performance and to bring people together in harmony and fellowship."

