



Kokomo Men of Note

Program – Meeting Night (11/30/09)

1st Presbyterian Church - 2000 W. Jefferson Street

Please visit our website: <http://www.kokomo-men-of-note.org>

The mission of the Kokomo Chapter is to promote, encourage, preserve and sing the barbershop style of music; and lead the cause of supporting and encouraging vocal music in our schools and community.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY! Mary Rhodenbaugh – December 2nd; Phil Rankin – December 6th

Program

7:00 Warm-up and Polecat tunes – Music Chairman, Al Temby suggested we break out "You Are My Sunshine", "Love Me Tender"& "I Love You Truly" (Valentine songs) for warm-up.

7:15 Go Tell It on the Mountain

7:45 Christmas package on risers

8:30 Break and Business

8:45 Western Music

9:15 Quartetting on Polecat tunes or Show Tunes

9:30 KTWWS

Target: *I would like to get "Go Tell It On the Mountain" to where we can perform it at least once this season, although I realize it's a difficult arrangement. Charlie*

Kokomo Men of Note Chapter News

In Good voice!

The MON performance at the Seiberling went very well. The third floor ballroom at the Seiberling has good acoustics for singing, which made us sound much bigger than we actually were. Also, the fairly good-sized crowd was pleased; they stayed and listened to our presentation when they could have been wandering about the museum. We kept their attention with our program and Bill Doyel's terrific song introductions. Let's keep up the good work, but make each performance a little better than the one before!

Charlie



Here's the pitch pipe!

What is the technically-correct name for pitch pipes? For extra credit, how many companies produce pitch pipes in 2006?

The official and correct name for a pitch pipe is a chromatic pitch instrument. The trade name that is seen on the distinctive red boxes that the pipes come in as well as stamped on the pipes themselves is The Master Key. Although lesser quality knock offs made in China and, ironically, Germany, are now available, the William Kratt Company remains the one and only manufacturer in the United States, anywhere in the world for that matter, of the high quality pitch pipes with which barbershoppers are familiar. With cheap overseas pipes on the market as well as electronic tone generators (boo, hiss, groan), there is some concern about the long term prospects of the Kratt company. Maybe it's time for us barbershoppers to buy a new pipe, need one or not. From the first one in 1925 through the most recent one made, every last one of the estimated three million pitch pipes manufactured by Kratt has been hand crafted in New Jersey! Their official state motto is the Garden State, but to barbershoppers (and other musicians who use pitch pipes) they are also known or should be as the Accurate Pitch State.

Singing Tip

When in small groups, singing in a circle helps to hear the others and match vowels, turn diphthongs, unify attacks and releases, blend voices. But this is during the learning of the song only.

As soon as possible, you should re-format your positions into your performance stance. The sounds you hear when spread are different than when in a circle. These sounds are what you need to deal with, using an outside coach and/or recordings with separate video and audio devices, if possible, to maintain your 'circle' sound and develop good stage presence.



Bring a guest to the next meeting night!

- December 3rd** – Thursday – Sing at 1st Pres. for Salvation Army Senior Citizens Luncheon - Noon
December 7th – Monday – Music Committee meeting @ 6:00 PM
December 8th – Tuesday – Sing at Friendship Haven – Be there at 6:00 – sing approx 6:30 PM (Tux w/red)
December 10th, 17th, or 22nd – One date only (Sing @ Century Villa Greentown) WU3:00PM, show 3:30
December 11th – Friday – Sing at Autumnwood Village across from Tipton HS @ 7:15 PM Entrance is on the Fairgrounds Road - dress TBA
December 14th – Monday – BOD meeting @ 6:00 PM
December 15th – Tuesday – St. Joseph Hospital Christmas Party (Warm up @ 12:30PM in the Board Room located in the Berkley Wing of the hospital on the main floor. Sing @ 1:00PM in the Conference Center in the basement of the hospital)
December 19th – Saturday – VFW Children's Christmas party @ the VFW on N. Washington St., Kokomo. Sing from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. - dress TBA
January 2nd – Saturday – Officer Installation Banquet @ St. Joseph Center in Tipton, Nice dress up clothes Jackets & Ties or warm Sweaters suggested 6:00PM
January 4th – Monday – Music Committee meeting @ 6:00 PM
January 9th – Saturday – COTS (Leadership Training) @ Columbus Holiday Inn
January 11th – Monday – BOD meeting @ 6:00 PM
February 1st – Monday – Golden Corral Restaurant - Sing for the Golden K Kiwanis Club at 12:30 p.m. Dress - chorus casuals
March 7th – Sunday – MoN performance @ the Rhum Academy sponsored by the Kokomo Symphony – 7:00PM
April 9th -11th – Cardinal District Spring Convention in Fort Wayne

Is It Too Early for Emotions?

Sometimes it can be difficult to decide what to work on next, to get the most bang for the buck. When I'm working with performing groups they often ask me if it's too early to get into the "emotional stuff" with a new piece, if they haven't even quite got the notes and words nailed down.

My short answer would be "no", but I can imagine why they might think so! First, when you're a hammer everything looks like a nail. Lots of performers, especially musicians, are first and foremost great technicians. They love to fine-tune their technical skills, above all else! Just like a bowler who spends hour after hour down at the lanes, trying to bowl strikes. It's very "flow" - clear rules, instant feedback. It's fun! But bowling isn't a performance art. I mean, people may like to watch it, but it's a sport, not an art, and the spectators aren't having to suspend disbelief. Their expectations are rather low, in terms of the emotional depth of the experience of watching a bowling tournament. So treating stage performance like bowling isn't the best approach.

Also there's a prevailing attitude that the "fluffy stuff" is pointless until the technique is in place. And to some extent that's true - if you don't know the notes, you're not going to make big gains by delving deeper into the character and the objective!

However, that's not the end of the story.

Firstly, the strategy of "finishing the technique" before getting into the emotional guts of the piece is fatally flawed because the technique can never be finished. There is no perfect. If you wait for perfection before moving on, you will never move on.

Secondly and maybe more importantly, having a clear concept of the piece at an emotional level gives you a framework to hang all that technique on. If you ground your musical and performance choices in the human purpose of the piece, you might actually remember those dynamics! I wouldn't take the artistic analysis to its conclusion right away, but if you can just figure out the basics (who are you, who else is there, what's the relationship, what are the changes), you will find all that technical work will be more exciting and more efficient too.

Finally, you get a whole lot of technique "for free" when you give yourself over to the human, emotional concepts that form the purpose of the piece. A thousand little details fall into place without discussion, springing naturally and forcefully from the scene. And just like the tennis player who finally just watches the ball instead of obsessing on the details of their swing, letting your "self 2" take over will let you get out of your own way, letting your best technician shine through for a change.

So it's never too early! *Tom Metzger, coach & Gold Medalist w/ Realtime from "Owning the Stage"*