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Merry Christmas to All

Monday night we will get together to celebrate a really good weekend. This will be our last time to be together as a chapter until January 4, 2010. And what a weekend it was. My feet are tired but my heart is light after four great performances. I heard many great compliments about the shows.

A big thank you to Dave Shepherd for his efforts as the show chairman and making sure the myriad tasks, large and small were accomplished to ensure we did have four successful

shows.

While we will not have any rehearsals after Dec 14 until January 4, your music team will be meeting on Dec 21 to continue their planning for the musical future of the chapter.

Running a group such as West Towns requires a lot of effort. Please consider what YOU can do

to help and volunteer your talents.

Meanwhile, I wish each of you a Blessed Christmas and Joyous New Year!

Bob Nicodem



Christmas Show

I just wanted to say how proud I was to sing with all of you on this years Christmas shows. This was my first Christmas show, and I loved every minute of it. I have not been in the chorus very long but as we sang the reprise of Adeste Fideles and felt tears rolling down my face, I

really felt a part of a family. I would like to thank everyone that was a part of this Christmas season that I will never forget.

Merry Christmas to you and your families,

Ben Dirks

A Moose Thank You

The following is an excerpt from an email received from the Moose:

Date: Monday, December 7, 2009, 10:47 AM

Tony,

I received the tickets that were left in the Social Quarters last week. Thank you very much for this generous gift to the children at Mooseheart...

At this time of year lodges around the district plan parties for the Mooseheart children. Starting in late September the

coordinator began getting requests from the Mooseheart Homes to attend the Dinner/Lunch at The Downers Grove Moose Family Center and the West Towns Chorus Christmas Show. This truly is a go to event for the children at Mooseheart.

Thanks for all you do for the Downers Grove Moose Family Center!

Fraternally yours,

Roy A. Brown III Jr.

Past Governor

Downers Grove Moose Family Center #1535



Cougars Baseball Outing—Don Davia

At the request of the Board I have obtained 100 tickets for our annual Cougar outing (to sing the National Anthem) for **Thursday, August 5, 2010**. Fireworks, running bases, etc. are part of the package. August is also Ozzie's birthday. Since he is part of the Cougar family, there will be a special program. As a Cub fan I swallowed my pride and booked this evening anyway. The tickets will again be \$10. I'll start taking money in June. I just want you to put it on your schedule.

Review

Each week our director, assistant directors and music team work on various techniques to help us sing better. While the following notes make references to Christmas songs, they must be carried into EVERY song we sing, EVERY time. So to help you remember, Joe T and Jon Hoekema have sent out these reminders:

November 30

From the warm-up throughout the rehearsal, we stressed the FORWARD PLACEMENT of the sound. The 'ng' sounds in "Ding" and "Bung" are effective for sensing the correct placement. Our weakest target is "ih" as in "king" and "his."

For DIPHONGS, stay on the first vowel target sound as long as possible. Our favorite words - "Baby", "Merry", "Joy", "White", "High", "While" and "Night." Secret of Christmas, Silent Night and Mary Had A Baby become magical when we match these words.

To maintain quality sound in the fast tempo songs, create a comfortably open space in the back of your throat (the 'oh' shape) and form the words on the outside with MINIMAL MOUTH MOVEMENT. Also, remember to stay on the target vowel for the FULL VALUE OF THE NOTE and/or to the END OF THE PHRASE. (Remember Jingle Bell Rock?) As a result, it's easier to tune the chords and we stay TOGETHER.

I hope you all sensed the unity and power of the sound we produced by focusing on these rules. Joe T.

December 7

Our goal is to sing and perform at 85% all of the time. To do that, it will take a commitment by all of us to get there. Last night (Dec 7) there were times that we sang 85%. You heard those moments and so did I and it sounded great!

We know we can do it. So, as promised, here are the expanded notes from last night's rehearsal to help us reach and stay at 85%.

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Lost and Found—Bruce Rhoades

In your wild state of euphoria this afternoon, if any of you left behind a black bow tie, a black scarf, a white tie, a "Marchon" hard shell glasses case, a fold-up chair, or a shaving kit with a 2009 Anaheim S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. International Silver Medal in it, (I wonder who that belongs to? Maybe a guy who followed heart this weekend and took us along with him) I'll have all the items with me tomorrow. Keep the Whole World Singing!

More Lost and Found—Ken Keever

What a wonderful weekend of shows. A special thanks to all who participated. As I was about to leave I found a DM black shirt and white tie, XL. I will bring it tomorrow night if someone can remember that it is his.

Thanks again for a wonderful set of shows.

Schedule of Events

December 2009

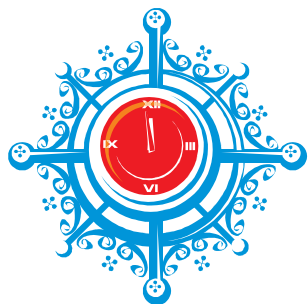
- ◆ 14 Cast Party—Pizza! Last rehearsal of the year.
- ◆ 21 Music Team meeting
- ◆ 4 Rehearsal
- ◆ 11 Guest Night—Rehearsal
- ◆ 18 Rehearsal
- ◆ 21 Board Meeting
- ◆ 23 Sat. Installation Banquet
- ◆ 25 Rehearsal

January 2010

- ◆ 1 Rehearsal
- ◆ 8 Rehearsal
- ◆ 13 Saturday—Sandwich Opera House **Call time: 6:45 PM**
- ◆ 14 Singing Valentines
- ◆ 15 Rehearsal
- ◆ 22 Rehearsal

December 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		



2010

- ◆ Apr. 16–18 Illinois Spring Convention
- ◆ June 27 - July 4 - International (Philadelphia)
- ◆ Aug. 5 Cougar outing
- ◆ Sep. 24–26 Illinois Fall Convention

January 2010

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

February 2010

Su	Mo	Tue	We	Th	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						



PO Box 1005
Downers Grove, IL 60515

West Towns rehearses every Monday evening, 7:00 PM on the 2nd floor of the Moose Lodge, 1030 Warren Ave., Downers Grove, IL 60515
Phone: 630-201-5544
www.westtowns.org

PITCH Editor:

Bob Nicodem
18W109 Claremont Dr
Darien, IL 60561



email: RNicodem@comcast.net

Work: (708) 735-8164 Cell: (708) 337-3895

The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Chicagoland West Suburban Chapter aka The West Towns Chorus

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Email: board@westtowns.org	

Review—continued

(Continued from page 2)

Secret of Christmas

Joe K wants a warm tone at the beginning of the song, especially in the tune-up chord.

As mentioned to the leads, think of an orange or a golf ball in your mouth, creating a big yawn inside making space.

Use a little more air in your tone. That will create the warm tone that Joe is looking for.

Mary Had a Baby

We worked for a while on the phrase “He is called King Jesus, Mighty Counselor, King Emmanuel, Mighty God”

To best sing this, make sure your body is involved and you are full of energy to best move from the soft to the loud at the end.

On the loud “Mighty God” there is a tendency to open your mouth wide and large to get the bigger sound.

Instead, create a big inside yawn (golf ball in your mouth), a small external vowel and focus the placement forward.

The forward focus of all 80 of us together will give more than enough to create a powerful sound, and a moving musical line to create a great moment for the audience that they will remember.

(These three things: 1) big inside yawn, 2), small external vowel and 3) focus the placement forward, sung through an “oo” vowel or on a hum, create the unit sound that the top choruses use to create unit sound within their sections.)

God Rest Ye (and all other unison sections)

2nd verse “in Bethlehem, in Jewry” make sure to listen and blend on this single musical line, a single unit sound is impressive

Also, some more general notes not attached to any specific song.

Perform

When eyebrows are lifted, your face looks involved, you perform the song better, and the pitch stays better.

Gang Singing

Joe K mentioned last night that on some of the songs we sang at an A level, and when we did, we all knew it sounded great, because it did!

There were some other songs, Jingle Bell Rock for one, that it was just gang singing.

Since we can sing songs at a higher level, let’s bring those to all of our songs and kick those bad habits!

Entrances

In the rehearsal, there were more than a few times that many missed entrances, except for those two exceptionally sounding bari’s in the front row. (Great job, bari’s!!!)

Before the pitch blows, Joe wants us quiet. So be ready. Be quiet. When the pitch blows, listen to the pitch, be ready for the director’s hands to give us the entrance.

Joe K asked us during the rehearsal, after an especially great moment, this question, “Why don’t we sing like this all the time?”

I can’t answer that question for you, just for me.
What’s your answer?