



SINGIN' SUBWAY JAY'S REHEARSAL OBSERVATIONS- 2-1-10

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Hey Guys,

I would like to provide you with some of my observations and thoughts for you to consider. Jon gave great general notes (see page 4)— these are more song-specific.

WTC OPENER

* Our first impression must be our *best impression*. We need to be **so prepared !!** The faces must be bright and smiling through the entire song- we are having a blast so why not let the audience enjoy along with us by seeing our love of singing on our faces.

* "... JUST LET A SMILE..." in the beginning is an "all-skate" four-part pick-up.

* Don't drop the faces while Jack gives his narration... in fact, it is just the opposite. When we are just "LOOing", we need to give even more facial expression.

* **WHY DO WE FEEL THAT WE NEED TO GANG SING THIS SONG ??????????** Singing louder doesn't make the song better.

Intensity needs to come from energy and involvement **not VOLUME!!!**

* Make CRISP movements- a snap will make the point more than a slow reaction will

ALMOST LIKE BEING IN LOVE

* Is this a love song????? No one would know it in the audience if they look at your faces. (Just to remind you BEING IN LOVE IS SUPPOSED TO MAKE YOU FEEL ((AND LOOK)) HAPPY !!)

* Remember how Joe K. took valuable time to explain how important it is to sing this song on the **UPBEAT** not the **DOWNBEAT** ? The song comes off more upbeat if we sing on the upbeat (*PUN INTENDED*)

* Have confidence with the starting pitch of this song or we never get it back on track the rest of the song.

* Leads have strength in UNIT SOUND not **VOLUME**. As a section of 13, we can easily match the basses of 31 if we just listen to one another and sing together and in control.

* You did a good job following and maintaining the tempo that Joe was asking us for (at least that was one song)

* **TALL VOWELS - enough said !!**

HOW DEEP IS THE OCEAN

* You created some really stellar moments in this song but not enough and not consistently enough

* Get set up to sell the song from the very first moment— as you take the first **bullet-proof** breath— PREPARE !!!

* You can only sell this song with your faces- this is a perfect chance to show your **HEART**. Don't deny your audience the same experience.

* "There are places in this song to let it sit and grow" Quoted by Joe K. Do you know **exactly** where those places are? If you don't then, you must challenge yourself to spend as much time to review every measure of the song on your own time to find where those opportunities are- Your fellow riser neighbors deserve that attention to detail as much as you do.



Sandwich Opera Performance—Jim Ahlgrim



Gentlemen, Regarding the Sandwich performance, there is a pretty good sized dressing room at the back of the stage and 3 smaller dressing rooms. However, from a comfort level, you might want to come dressed in your tux and carry your coat so that it doesn't wrinkle. If you have to dress at the Opera House, it will not be a problem.

The risers will be set up just in front of the curtain because of the size of the stage and we will be entering the risers from both sides. I mention this because of the shoes! The back rows have worn everything from brown street shoes to gym shoes. Guys, we need to take pride in our appearance for every performance, but especially for this one because the audience will see each man as he enters and exits the risers. If you don't have the black patent leather shoes (Which is part of the uniform), then please take time to put a high polish on your black shoes. A crummy looking pair of shoes can sure ruin the great look of a tux.

When I went out to check on the Opera House, I found that the following directions were very direct from the Downers area: Take I-88 west to the Sugar Grove exit Rt-56. Go south to Rt-47, left on Rt-47 to Rt-34, Ogden Ave. Turn right to Sandwich. Watch for Galena St. and turn right. Proceed about a block to the RR tracks. The Opera House is on your left. Call time is 6:45. Show time is 8:00pm.

Jay's Observations continued

(Continued from page 1)

* **BASSES:** this song allows you to shine as CELLOS- Don't make Joe K. have to remind you every time

* LISTEN TO EACH OTHER MORE-This is a tight sounding song

* **TALL VOWELS - enough said !!**

WROTE 'EM IN THE GOOD OLE DAYS

* Once again, confidence right on the starting note

* Anticipate what is coming next and who has the : "Spotlight"

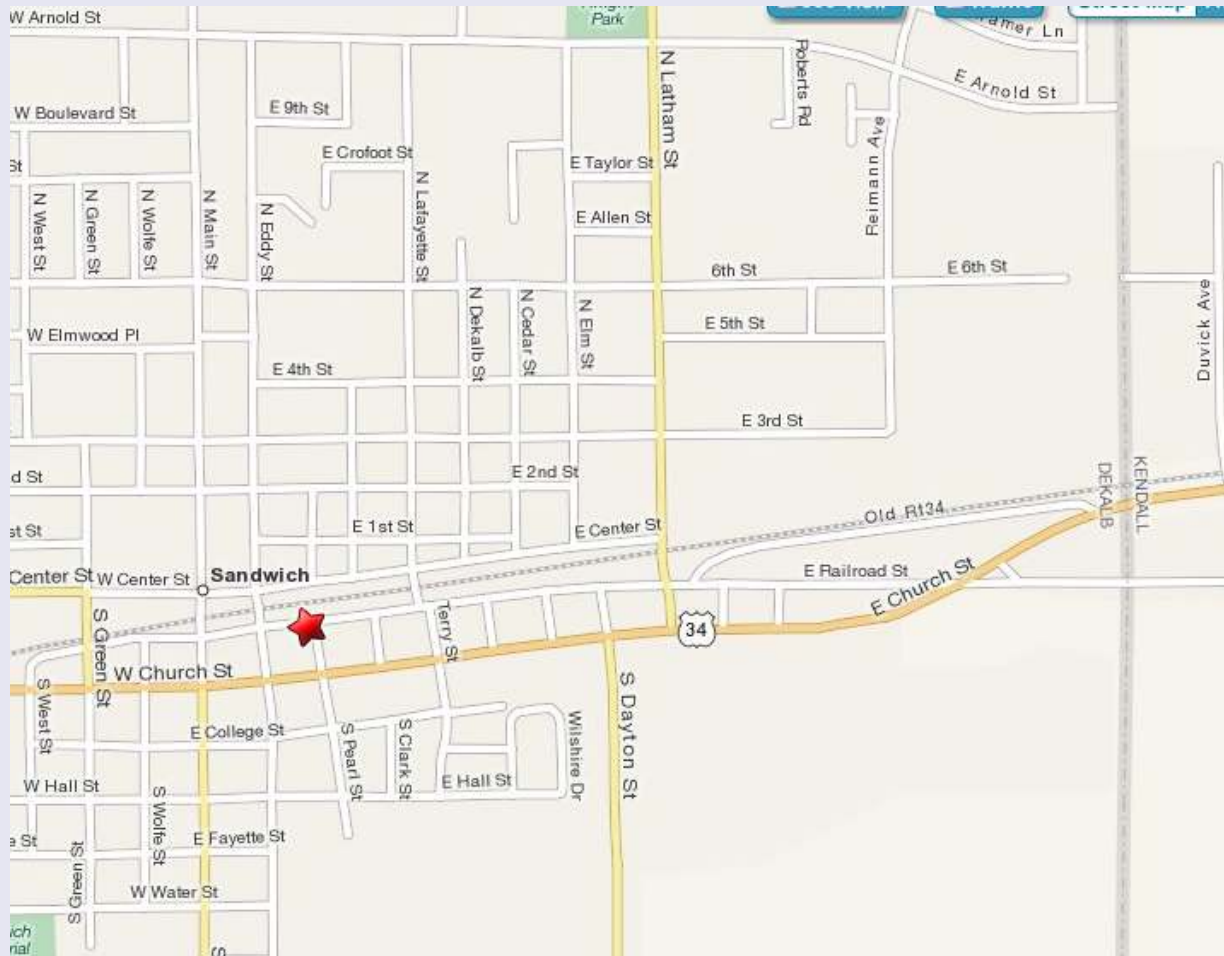
Trio- back off and let them have their moment

* Joe K. has given you permission to move and have fun while singing this song. The sound and the **look** of the song improves 100% when you physically get involved. (DISCLAIMER: movement must be appropriate and within your "personal box")

Please, Please, Please review these notes **prior** to next week's rehearsal so we can start at the level that we left off in order that we can improve this week and continue to improve *every week !!!!*

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK !!! CONTINUE TO "STRIVE FOR 85"

Sandwich Opera House



Pitch
Keeping everyone in tune with West Towns



Monday night's rehearsal had some great moments of great singing.

Here are some comments from that rehearsal:

1. We need to sing with **confidence**. That means knowing our notes and entrances without having to think about it. And, it starts with the Leads. (this is a challenge to my fellow leads!!)
2. **Energy** - In the beginning of the rehearsal there was great energy. As the rehearsal went on, the energy dropped. Part of being an 85% chorus is singing with energy throughout the whole rehearsal.
3. **Pitch taking** – When the pitch blows, listen to the pitch, think about your first note, breath on the first vowel that you'll be singing, and be ready to come in on pitch on the first word. It takes practice and it takes concentration when the pitch blows.
4. **Discipline** – when the director, assistant director, or anyone in front of the chorus stops us, DO NOT START TALKING!, the director has stopped us to tell us something to help us improve, we would be wise to listen.
5. **Choreography** – when making a move, such as an arm swipe or lift, imagine that you are moving a 5 pound weight or a ball of energy so that your moves are not loose but firm and purposeful.
6. **Sound** – at the risk of sounding like a broken record, in order to make the best unit ensemble sound, our vocal placement should have a forward sound, tall space in the mouth (which might feel a bit weird to begin with), and small mouth with the sides of the mouth tucked in and not spread out wide.

Two more quick things:

On my way home from rehearsal, I was listening to sports radio catching any talk about the upcoming Super Bowl. One of the commentators talked about the greatest sports athletes and described their work ethic this way "Success is Discipline." If we want success at 85%, we have to have the discipline to get there.

In the next few issues of The Pitch, I'll be putting some thoughts down about listening at an 85%. Stay tuned.

Rehearsal / Learning Tip —Mike Deitz

I typically, have a mechanical pencil and some 3x5 cards with me on the riser. When there is some correction or nuance identified during rehearsal I mark up the sheet music. When there are questions, concerns or other notes, I generally write them on a 3x5 card and follow up after the rehearsal.

Great idea Mike!

Choreography Notes—Eric Sutherland West Towns Opener aka “Let a Smile Be Your Umbrella”

We're gonna SING	Full body press (forward and tall) (Big X)
in the West Town's Barbershop STYLE	Outside Shoulder turn, hands on hips rows 1 to 5 on swiper chords and outside dig/spread on last tenor note
SKIES are gray	scrunch down, pull up your hand on lapels
a SMILE will bring	Pop up to chorus position with hands palm out, fingers spread at sides of face
NEVER get wet	hands come down, body moves up
(tag) rainy DAY	inside shoulder spin, superman pose (feet need to move) ripple from basses(chorus left)
so SMILE	down the tiles and proud
DAY	outside hand dig/spread

Thanks to Bill H. for suggesting me to share these notes that Joe T. gave me to the whole list. My suggestion is to keep a copy in your music folder and do a quick review prior to nights we are singing this song. I will get sheets like this out for the other songs with choreo as soon as I can.

Performance Dates

Mark your calendars and reserve Monday, October 18 for a return performance at Monarch Landing in Naperville. We will be their sixth and final group for their Artist Series. Note that we are the only group that performed for them in 2009 that are returning in 2010. Since this is a regular rehearsal night there is no reason to miss this paid chorus performance.

We will also be singing the National Anthem at the Chicago Rush indoor football game on Saturday, June 19. More details later.



Convention Planning Update

Some of you may know that last year a group of Illinois barbershoppers were putting together a bid to host the 2014 International Convention in the Rosemont area. Unfortunately, that bid was rejected. The primary reason given was that the distance between the hotels and the arena would require significant busing, as well as that the hotel prices were on the high side.

John Schneider wrote to the group; *“We appreciate all of the work that you guys did in presenting the bid and the thought of bringing an International Convention to Chicagoland was very interesting.”*

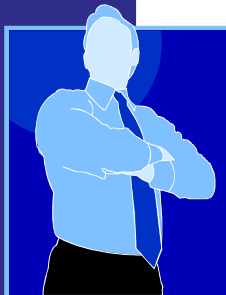
Pitch

Keeping everyone in tune with West Towns

In the rehearsal notes on the previous page we were reminded of Joe K's words that we should sing with confidence.

That means we need to know our notes and music and trust ourselves that we will do this well.

I received this quote from the Masters of Harmony "MasterLink" and thought it would be good to pass on.



Trust Yourself

Self-trust is the genesis of all trust.

With it, you inspire others;

without it, you trust no one.

With it, you equip yourself for leadership.

Without it, you strip yourself of self-respect.

With it, you can rise to the heights of happiness and joy.

Without it, you are destined to remain in the shallows of compromise and mediocrity.

Self-trust is the father of faith.

Self-doubt is the forerunner of failure.

Self-trust opens the door of opportunity for you.

Self-doubt closes gates and removes welcome mats.

REMEMBER, you can trust yourself into victory, or you can doubt yourself into defeat.

—William Ward



LiveWire

eXtreme Quartetting - Harmony Brigade

The fourth "eXtreme Quartetting" Harmony Brigade has just been adopted by the Society as its newest subsidiary. Now making 4 around the country and one at Harmony U. This is one of the most exciting, grass roots developments in society quartetting and it's something every devoted quartetter should know about.

Each of the Brigades is at a different cycle of its registration period. Can Live wire help us to announce something along the following lines:

"eXtreme Quarttting" is alive and well around the Society- sign up now! If you are a particularly ambitious quartet-man and want to mix it up with hundreds of other great and well prepared quartetters for a weekend of nonstop quartetting... then apply now to your nearest Harmony Brigade

[Great Lakes](#) - MI Applications being accepted Event: 06/04/2010

[Harmony University](#) - MO Event: 07/30/2010 Applications being accepted

[Atlantic Harmony](#) - DE Event: 08/20/2010 Application deadline: 2/28/10

[Indiana Harmony](#) - IN Event: 11/2010 Applications available in May-June

[North Carolina](#) - NC Event: 1/2011 Applications available in June-July

To subscribe to the Barbershop Harmony Society's weekly online newsletter, LiveWire, e-mail live-wire@barbershop.org with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line.

Schedule of Events

February 2010

- ◆ 8 Rehearsal
- ◆ 13 Saturday—Sandwich Opera-House **Call time: 6:45 PM**
- ◆ 15 Rehearsal
- ◆ 18 Board meeting
- ◆ 22 Rehearsal

March 2010

- ◆ 1 Rehearsal
- ◆ 8 Rehearsal
- ◆ 13 IDAH—Bloomington, IL
- ◆ 13 Sat. evening performance at St. James Church, Glen Ellyn
- ◆ 15 Rehearsal
- ◆ 18 Board meeting
- ◆ 22 Rehearsal
- ◆ 29 Rehearsal

February 2010

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						

2010

- ◆ Apr. 16—18 Illinois Spring Convention
- ◆ Apr. 24—Cabaret
- ◆ June 19— Chicago Rush—Nat'l Anthem
- ◆ June 27 - July 4 - International (Philadelphia)
- ◆ July 8—gaming night—tentative
- ◆ Aug. 5 Cougar outing
- ◆ Aug. 18—gaming night—tentative
- ◆ Sep. 16—gaming night—tentative
- ◆ Sep. 24—26 Illinois Fall Convention
- ◆ Oct. 14—gaming night—tentative
- ◆ Oct. 18—Monday Full Chorus Performance—Monarch Landing
- ◆ Dec 10, 11 & 12 —Christmas show

March 2010

Sun	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	29	30	31			

April 2010

Sun	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	29	30	

The West Towns Chorus

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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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Immed. Past President	Darryl Nordentoft
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Last Week's Visitors



Larry Galuszki
Lester Grossman
Dan Murphy