

Heart of America Chorus Calendar



- June 4** - HOA CD Recording Session - White Hall, UMKC - 1 to 8 p.m. with a dinner break
- June 6** - HOA Weekly Meeting - **Bill Biffle** Coaching! Vocal production tune-up for Indy! - 7 p.m.
- June 15** - HOA Extra Rehearsal for Indy Prep
- June 22** - HOA Extra Rehearsal for Indy Prep
- July 2-9** - SPEBSQSA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION - Indianapolis, IN
- July 23** - HOA BATTLES THE CICADAS - MUSIC IN THE PARK 6 p.m. Santa Fe Commons, Overland Park
- July 30** - All Week - BHS HARMONY UNIVERSITY - St Joseph, MO
thru
August 6

CROWNED #1 CHAPTER BULLETIN IN THE CENTRAL STATES DISTRICT FOR 2005!

June 2006 Volume 06 - Issue 6

HARMONOTES

The monthly newsletter of Kansas City's
Heart of America Chorus



The second-oldest chapter in the Barbershop Harmony Society

Drawn by Harmony,...
Bound by Friendship,...
Striving for Excellence!

HOA Lands Yardley Hall, Dapper Dans for '07!

by Show Chairman Jerry Garrard



Ron McIntire

The Kansas City Chapter is closing out six decades of barbershop harmony at the downtown Kansas City Music Hall. It's a place we have loved, but the challenges with going downtown have become major—and so have the costs. And in recent years, other venues have become more attractive.

HOA was able to recognize a net gain of roughly \$11,000 from our March show this year. With that success, I decided to keep wearing the show chairman's hat for another year and see what other things could be stirred.

Representing HOA, I was able to negotiate a contract with Johnson County Community College for the use of the Carlson Center's Yardley Hall for March 17, 2007. It's arguably the finest performance venue in the metro area. We gain a better environment for our audience: ample free parking, state-of-the-art theater, parking surrounding the hall, acoustically enhanced experience, parking, ushers provided, parking, great reputation, etc.

Now here's equally great news: our headliners will be perhaps the best-known quartet on the planet: the *Dapper Dans!* We have signed the *Dapper Dans* of Walt Disney World (aka the *Humdingers* shown at right). *Tone-Henge* has offered to teach this non-stop enterprising foursome how to play pipes—but I think they might have their collective hands full. You see, the *Dans/Humdingers* can sing and play their chord chimes, while our *Tone-Henge* are chipping teeth and frantically bouncing from note to note. And the *Dans* can do it all while tap dancing!

The move to Yardley calls for modifying our business model for the spring shows, since the hotel is a few more blocks away, dressing rooms aren't as accommodating and tickets handled by Yardley staff and affiliates. But the positives more than offset that in the decision of the chapter

board to accept the move.

With all of that said, I as Show Committee Chairman will do everything in my power to make the transition from the Music Hall to Yardley as painless and comfortable as possible. So get out there and tell your contacts that we have a new venue for them to hear our great music. With this lineup and venue (hint: it seats a lot fewer than the Music Hall) we're bound to have a sellout.

Mark your calendars! 2007 Spring Show, March 17, Yardley Hall, Overland Park, KS, featuring *The Humdingers* (aka. the *Dapper Dans* of Walt Disney World), second billing to our very own *12th Street Rag*, other chapter quartets and last and most definitely least, *Tone-Henge* (aka *Dan Henry and the Pips with Pipes*). ♥



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of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America
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HARMONOTES

...is published by the board of directors of the Kansas City, MO., Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, a non-profit organization. Unless accompanied by a byline, all articles have been written by the Editor and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the officers and members of the chapter. Space will be made available for opposing points of view.

Heart of America Chorus

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All chapter officers and quartets are expected, and chapter members encouraged, to contribute their ideas on a regular basis.

The editorial staff reserves the right to deny publication of material deemed inappropriate for Harmonotes and to edit all submissions for reasons of space and clarity (grammar, phrasing, and spelling).

Permission to reprint articles is granted to barbershop chapters as long as the author and Harmonotes are acknowledged.

The utmost care was used in preparation of this newsletter. However, should you notice erroneous copy, please let the Editor know! Comments/submissions may be made to:

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(816) 373-8633 • toddanderson@comcast.net

Chapter meets at 7 p.m. each Tuesday night, at:
St. Peter's United Church of Christ
110th & Holmes • Kansas City, MO 64105

The HOA Board of Directors meets at 7:30 p.m. on the second Monday of the month. Place TBA. Chapter members are welcome!

HOA Website: www.hoachorus.com
Web Address: webstaff@hoachorus.com
Chapter Telephone: (816) 221-7888



HOA Shines at Demanding Venues

by Jim Bagby, Chorus Director

An open letter to the Kansas City Chapter, all our friends and supporters:

On consecutive weekends in May, the *Heart of America Chorus* made all of us proud. I mean effort and artistry that deserves exceptional praise!

Each of the two events involved about the same time commitment, counting travel, but they were drastically different in approach. One culminated in a well-deserved standing ovation after 16 songs. The second had no applause for about 6 grueling hours on the risers, covering 7 songs.

HOA presented a two-hour package show in Richmond, MO, about 35 miles northeast of Kansas City on May 13. We were fortunate that *12th Street Rag* volunteered to be our headliners, and did their usual super job. *All-In!* also was on hand for a well-sung three-song set. But it was one of those nights where all our other chapters quartets had 1 or 2 guys with a conflict, so I laid out the show with 17 chorus songs—as far as we know, a record number for one HOA performance. It's certainly the most in my 25-plus years as a KC arm-waver. We ended up cutting one of those toward the end of the show.

It was Mother's Day weekend, which accounted for some of the quartet conflicts and a reduced chorus performing size. But 70 guys showed up, undaunted by the challenge of the long bill, and sang at the top of their game—for a small but enthusiastic audience. It was one of the most memorable performances I can remember. So, as I say, our chapter members everywhere should be proud of this group.

The following Sunday, 80 HOA regulars spent from about 12:30 to 6:30 in White Recital Hall, on the campus of the University of Missouri-Kansas City. It was the first recording session for our second CD. We had seven songs we hoped to get in the can, although we knew from our "From the Heart" experience that was very ambitious. But we did! Six of them are ready for mixing, and the seventh we'll try for a better track at our next session, when we return from competition in Indianapolis.

The focus and energy were amazing. Veteran recording engineer **Dan Israel** commented after the very first take of "Who Will Buy" that the chorus was singing so much richer than on our first CD. "This is going to be a piece of cake to put the control tracks with," Dan said. And he noted that the control tracks just about made the first CD, whereas the chorus sound will be the key to this one. ☘



Above: HOA's Heartbeats are shown preparing to feed the 80 voices that turned out for HOA's recording session at White Recital Hall

It was unfortunate we had no means to do playbacks for the chorus, so the singers could experience the same things the directors and section leaders in the booth were: giggles, moans, high-fives, flinches, goosebumps, shoulder lifts and huge grins. It was an exhausting, amazing day. Again, that 80 represents about half our total roster membership, so how about a big huzzah out there for these dedicated singers!

In both of these events, there were common elements. Foremost among those are the spirit, musicality and fellowship of HOA, the talent that flows from directors **Mike Neff**, **John Fortino** and **Carter Combs** and the ceaseless behind-the-scenes work of the riser crew and support staff. The *Heartbeats* showed up at UMKC to feed us a much-appreciated supper at the end of the recording session. And at both places, **Chuck Ames** and **Marty Oldehoeft** and the HOA trailer were first on the scene. New member **John Erwine** was among the last to leave, helping wherever he could. And at both places, the last guy off the lot, hauling tables, equipment, water, candy and everything no one else thinks of was irreplaceable Chorus Manager **Vince Perry**. ♥

Attention All Members Of HOA!

Consider directing your tax-deductible contributions to your very own charitable organization...HOA!

As you can see, it has already started. Certainly not everyone has the financial ability to participate, but consider that this is an opportunity to know how your charitable dollars are being used. *Be included in the list below, and proudly support HOA.*

DONORS

Members And Friends Making A Difference!
We gratefully acknowledge your generosity to the Heart of America Chorus into 2006

Gold Heart
(\$1,000 - \$4,999)
Thom Tisdall

Bronze Heart
(\$50 - \$399)
Arthur Gibson
Dick & Joan Korek
Hugh & Nancy McCreery
David Peck and Don Peck
Tony Strub

Donors will be listed in HOA's monthly bulletin and the March 23, 2006 Annual Show program. The Heart of America Chorus is a 501(c) (3) organization. Checks should be made out to: HOA Give to any HOA Board member or mail to: HOA, c/o Dale Neuman 816 W. 121st. St. • Kansas City, MO 64145-1011 Donors are listed from June 30, 2005 through July 1,

Heart of America Chorus

SPONSORS

Thank You For Making A Difference!
We gratefully acknowledge your generosity to the Heart of America Chorus 2005-2006!



DAVID F. HOKANSON FAMILY FOUNDATION



The Heart of America Chorus is a 501(c) (3) organization. Checks should be made out to: Kansas City Chapter/ Barbershop Harmony Society Mail to: HOA, c/o Dale Neuman 816 W. 121st. St. • Kansas City, MO 64145-1011

An Important Element in Our Plans for a New CD

by Dale Neuman



I am writing this to see if all of you can help in one way and some of you help in an additional way as we move to get the new CD project off the ground. As Coordinator for FROM THE HEART in 2003, I faced the same problems as Doug Brott is facing now: How do we meet the fairly substantial bills that will be coming in long

before we have any CDs to sell to generate income to pay them?

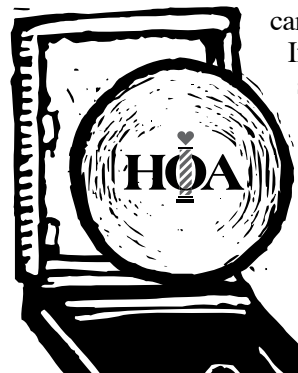
The first way that everyone can help is to once again participate in the "Pre-Purchase Program" that Jim Porter will be heading. By placing a pre-paid order for 5,10,or more CDs, the revenue stream gets started. Last time we obtained over \$7,000 in 'pre-order' sales which amounted to slightly more than half of our production expenses. We did not meet the rest of our expenses until after we sold the CDs and that was only because Dan Israel graciously extended us the time to pay him for the charges he incurred over a number of months.

This time we are planning an initial production run of 2,000 and so our total costs will approach \$19,000 instead \$14,000. And I personally feel it unfair to expect Dan Israel to, in effect, once again make us an interest-free loan until we sell the CDs.

What I would rather see is that those members who are interested and in a position to do so be the ones who "carry" their chapter this time. My idea is that a number of us might subscribe to a series of \$250 or \$500 "no interest" loans to the Chapter re-payable from the proceeds of the actual CD sale. Currently we plan to have the new CD available to sell at the 2007 Annual Show. The due date for repayment of such loans would be at a time certain but probably no sooner than six months after the actual release date of the CD so that revenues could be available to pay off the loans. Also the repayment date will be a function of

the loan date: those loans that came in first get paid off first.

If this second way to help seems like something you as a member or friend of HOA would like to do, please contact Doug Brott. Thanks. ♥



HOA Entertains in Richmond

by Ron McIntire

When you stand in silence beside the stage of the Farris Theater and the last of the audience has long gone home, you can almost hear violins softly tuning, occasional objects land heavily on stage behind a thick curtain and voices float beneath the arched ceiling as if from a short-wave radio tuned to a station in some distant land. The magic of opening night, June 20, 1901, still lingers as Sam Dougherty, benefactor, takes his place in the lower right box and first-nighters: ladies in high-fashion gowns and elegant gentlemen paying \$10 to \$20 a seat, pour down the isles for a production of "As You Like It." Thus began the rich life of the Dougherty Auditorium (top photo below) now known as the Farris Theater in Richmond, Missouri (shown at bottom, as it appears today).



Like those on that first night, patrons from Richmond and the surrounding area filed into the Farris Theater for an evening of entertain-

ment. This time, the curtain opened on May 13, 2006, and the performers were the Heart of America Chorus. This time, 69 HOA men and three quartets sang from their hearts to the people of Richmond.

The show was ambitious for HOA. Not often does the chorus deliver 16 songs on a two-hour show. And we were happy to have All In, 12th Street Rag and the 2006 Harmony Explosion quartet from Overland Park, Oakie Doakies on hand to assist. Although the audience was smaller than expected, the audience was well satisfied and HOA will likely be welcomed for a return engagement. ♥



HOA In Richmond: A Great Day Of Music & Fellowship!

Clockwise, from top to bottom:
Interior of Farris Theater.

Phil Veltkamp, Jim Clark, Gerry Garrard, David Miller (back), Bruce Foreman, Kent McClain (back), Don Peck, Tom Forsythe (outside) sure clean up good!

(Front) Marty Oldehoeft, Bob Burdick, Kent Miller, (back row) Doug Brott, and Bob Murphy are just happy to be seen in Richmond, MO

Brian Marston enjoys a quick meal; that cheezy stuff is a tenor sound squeezing out.

Park High School—who were featured on the show as well—strike a pose backstage.

AJ Meier, Anthony Fortino and Johnathan Fortino discover a necessary source of energy for the show—candy.

Heart of America Chorus

Photos courtesy of Don Fuson and Ron McIntire



Five Quartet Singing Talents

Some truths are unchanging. This 1963 piece by the legendary Lou Perry outlines the fundamental skills every quartet singer ought to possess. Taken from the LiveWire!

We are all amateurs, which means we are doing something we love. We love to sing barbershop harmony. As Bob Johnson has stated on numerous occasions, most of us are not singers, but because we love to sing, we constantly strive to sing better so that eventually we may be able to sing for the pleasure of other people. Very often efforts toward this end result in men finally becoming singers. There is no better basis for the success of your quartet than this "best of all reasons for singing."

There are other elements, however, which have an important part in determining how far your quartet can go. They are commonly referred to as talents, some of which we all have in varying degrees. They are discussed below in the order of their importance.

1. A musical ear

This talent involves the ability to mentally hear pitches, intervals and related musical sounds accurately. It does not imply any knowledge of musical theory or the ability to read music (visual identification). Like all talents, this one improves with practice so that reaction to pitch patterns is quickened. Unfortunately, a sensitive musical ear cannot be created. If you do not have one, you had better take up golf or some like pastime. You do not belong in a singing society - unless of course you have remarkable administrative talents which might be used to implement the efforts of the singers.



2. Intelligence

Singing is primarily an exercise of the mind, not the body. Explaining singing in anatomical terms makes you think of anatomy instead of singing. Physical difficulties in singing are ones you put there yourself, such as strain, poor posture and abuse of the apparatus, etc. The only muscle not relaxed is the brain muscle. We use our innate intelligence to remove hurdles and to fortify our unique and individual strong points. Here is where intelligence is needed to concentrate on the job requirements of the various voice parts. We have to think about the sound being produced, and how this sound can best be made to come to the aid of the other three parties in this joint effort.

We are called upon to weigh, balance, and make judgments in split seconds; to create ideas on the spur of the moment in order to keep a song alive; and to maintain the various tools we use under stricter discipline than in any other form of singing. We need to use our brains, gentlemen, every minute we are singing. As a lagniappe, the more we use them, the better they get, and we get, and singing gets.

Singing without thought is mere sound, and even though generating sound is one of the most distinctive characteristics of our musical form, it is meaningless unless it is applied with conscious mental effort to the end of developing the idea of a song and making that idea great enough to share with an audience.

3. Vocal Equipment

Except for the lead, who should have some characteristics of what is usually referred to as a "voice," with strength, lyricism, and controlled vibrato for added color, the first two talents are more important. A good mind and ear can improve an average voice, but a voice with no guiding intelligence very often deteriorates.

Voices in general are not fully formed until about age twenty-four. Young voices can be ruined for life by forcing them into a form they are not yet fitted for, especially in the lower registers. We should be most careful, then, to encourage interest in young people by letting them sing only material adapted to their capacities.

A good musical tone begins with the controlled expiration of breath in a balanced and relaxed body. The kind and quality of tone depends on what you mentally want to hear. Try singing a note at a comfortable pitch. Sing the same note another way. Which do you like better? With practice, you can learn to make any kind of tone you want until, at will, you can furnish the sound that suits the current need of the quartet. In short, you set the standard of what you want to hear. The sound is you. By coincidence, the more you concentrate on the sound image, the more relaxed you become and the better you sing.

Very little of music was written to show off voices. What we can bring to music to better present the idea of the composer is the important thing, and because we love to sing, we will try to bring a well-disciplined tone, guided by intelligence.

4. A Sense of Rhythm

Because of the limited number of notes in the diatonic scale, there are only about a dozen basic melodies possible. (See "Sigmund Spaeth, Tune Detective.") These few melodies are made to sound like many different ones by stretching or compressing them over a variety of rhythmic patterns. In short, 'rhythm' gives the melody both form and motion. It may demand that we stay in one place, like soldiers marking time; or that we ride it forward on the melody, making the melody walk, dance, stroll, run, fly, and even fall down.

The rhythmic pattern is named in the time signature. It tells what the basic

pulsation will be. To a large degree, the bass in your quartet will decide when the pulsation must be pronounced or implied, regular or free, accelerated or retarded, according to the motion requirements of the song. The lack of rhythmic talent in a quartet makes for pedestrian songs. Coupled with a lack of talent number five below, a song can be stopped stone-cold dead.

5. Word Sense

Singing on vowels produces sound. Singing on words makes sound with meaning. Song lyrics are words put on notes to express an idea or tell a story. Barbershoppers sing songs, especially ones that tell stories. Might we not then more properly sing even exercises like scales and warm-up vocalizing on words as they are sung. The very least it could do would be to help loosen our tongues and relax our jaw muscles.

The song lyric should be studied, analyzed, and learned to the point where we can visualize and describe the idea of it as a unit. We will thereby gain a better understanding of what attitude to take toward the notes themselves, no matter how low or high.

The interpretation of a song is affected by the ability to read and understand the lyric. This "word-sense" cannot be taught as such. And, well it shouldn't for this is the area where individual personality has widest scope. A song is arranged according to the mental attitude toward the words. Phrasing, shading and emphasis, together with all other elements of interpretation, depend on this talent. The written arrangement is only the vehicle you use to make the song your own. When you succeed, the result is a great arrangement.

Conclusions

Find three other guys and get going! With the continued development and discipline of the above talents, a true barbershop quartet emerges, with a Style all its own.

It will have a distinctive Sound, and will nurture an image reflecting the collective Taste inherent in its members.

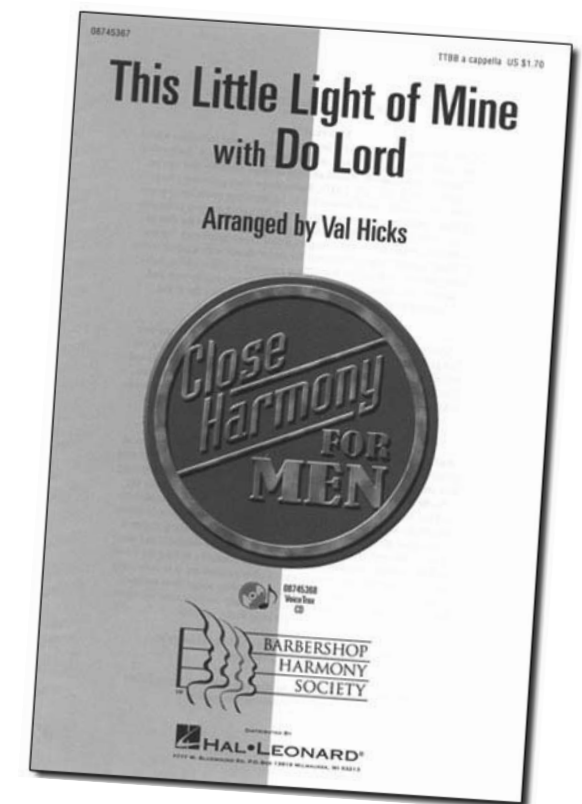
Few quartets are fortunate enough to possess all the above talents to a high degree, which opens the door for outside help. The help might come from a voice teacher, a coach, a category judge-coach, a HEP team member or someone of goodwill who is knowledgeable enough to give you what you need without destroying what you have.

In closing, may I offer one other opportunity to quartets who decide to sing for the pleasure of other people. Listen for the effect on your audience while you are singing...for attention, receptivity and empathy — instead of what they say or do after you have sung.

Applause is not always the criterion of a good performance, but how sweet it is! ♥

Commercial Publisher To Distribute Top-Quality Barbershop Arrangements

taken from *LiveWire!*



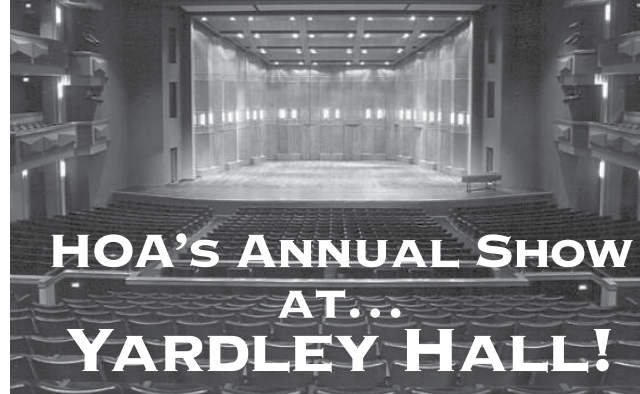
Students and music educators will now have easy access to great close-harmony!

In the Society's mission to form alliances with other like-minded organizations, a contract has been signed between the Barbershop Harmony Society and Hal Leonard, one of the world's largest music distributors, to create a new series entitled, "Close Harmony for Men." Hal Leonard has a customer base of millions and is a direct link to tens of thousands of choral music educators throughout the world.

The series, launched early this year will carry eight titles of some of the Society's best selling music for youth events. Society Director of Music and Education, Rick Spencer states, "Music educators have asked us for years if they can purchase barbershop music through their "usual channels." We are now able to better assist them and their programs by offering this to them."

Dr. Chris Peterson, director of the Midwest Vocal Express barbershop chorus and Professor of Music Education at UW-Milwaukee, will serve as the series editor. The two organizations are looking to expand the initial offering of eight pieces based on the anticipated success of the launch of this series.

SAVE THE DATE: MARCH 17, 2007



HOA'S ANNUAL SHOW AT... YARDLEY HALL!

Harmony Foundation Report

by Jim Porter



Ron McIntire

Note that we will have our raffle each time we meet in our regular location. Half of the proceeds are designated to Harmony Foundation. You can, of course, give money directly to Harmony Foundation any time we are together; just let me know.

As of Wednesday, May 24, and 27 drawings: In the past month, our chapter has raised \$231 for the Harmony Foundation. The total raised for this year (since Nov. 19, 2005) is \$2378. Last year, the total raised was \$1431. In our best year (2003), the total raised was \$1447. ♥

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

to the following chapter members!

- June 4 Kevin Tritsch
- June 6 Phil Youngs
- June 11 Don Fuson
- June 11 Maurice Smith
- June 11 Duane Lawson
- June 11 Burdett Tordoff
- June 14 Tony Strub
- June 15 Dave Hokanson
- June 17 Don Peck
- June 19 Jack Selby
- June 23 Rob Mathieu
- June 23 Dylan Mathieu
- June 25 Reed Alberg
- June 25 Al Fehlauer
- June 28 Barry Sanders
- June 29 Keith Schweer

Heart of America Chorus Sings "OK" — Say What?

by Anthony Strub, HOA President

Recent email chatter on our Yahoo Groups network referred to comments from knowledgeable, well-known and highly respected singing gurus of our Society who described HOA as a chorus that sings OK and as a model chapter because of all of our chapter activities and membership involvement. After reading most of the emails, I felt a little like a five-year-old who had just been given an "attaboy" by his mom for cleaning up his room. I had a visceral reaction to the term "OK." Being a competitor, I also felt a tinge of disrespect. I am sure that no disrespect was intended. I do believe, however, that my reaction to the comment is telling. It is easy to settle down in a comfort zone and be content with the way things are. For me, the comment was a swift kick in the pants that got my attention and gave me an attitude adjustment. Perhaps I am the one who is just OK, but could be better.



Ron McIntire

I recall an article in *The Wall Street Journal* in the late 70's that criticized the Chrysler Corporation for their declining sales and poor financial situation. The article recommended that Chrysler be "allowed to die with dignity." Rather than ignoring the comment or allowing it to damage morale, Lee Iacocca used it to create a passion for success and to prove the pundits wrong.

How do we feel about being considered OK? What can we do as individuals to be all that we can be? Our directors, section leaders and coaches are showing us the way. The rest is up to us. When we work together and put We before ME, wonderful things happen. ♥

Time To Reserve Your Own Copy Of HOA's CD!

by Jim Porter

HOA has begun recording its second CD! Six of our songs have now been successfully recorded! If you have not already done so, reserve your copies now. Just contact Jim Porter at practice, or by E-mail at JimRobPort@sbcglobal.net, or call 913-390-0995 and indicate the number of CDs you want. If you have credit card information on file with Vince Perry, we can take care of payment for you automatically. Otherwise, cash or check is fine. They make great gifts for your family and friends, they cost just \$15 each, and the money goes to the chorus to help defray the cost of production. The chorus needs your help to cover these costs, so please act now!

As of May 24, 35 people have ordered 260 CDs for a total income to the chorus of \$3,900.

The estimated cost of production of our new CD is \$19,000. ♥

HOA'S LATEST RECORDING SESSION AT UMKC'S WHITE RECITAL HALL



80 of HOA's membership turned out for the first recording session of the chapter's second CD. Under the able direction of folks like Carter Combs, Chorus Manager Vince Perry, John Fortino, Mike Neff and Jim Bagby, six songs were captured for the ages! Below, Dick Irwin and Jerry Meier can attest to how much effort was put forth by everyone. Other members are shown wasting no time in filling their plates with the wonderful variety of food supplied by our Heartbeats. Photos courtesy of Ron McIntire.

