

Mid-Atlantic District Association of Quartet Champions

October 7, 2005

Dear Quartet Champ,

If you were with us in Wildwood this past weekend then you know that the 7th annual reunion and Jamboree performance of the **MADAQC Chorus** at the M-AD Fall Convention was a fantastic success and one of the grand highlights of the year. We have received many kudos and thanks from the District leadership and Events Team who were very impressed and appreciative, and have invited us back next year to again add the appropriate crescendo to a wonderful weekend of fellowship and harmony. If you could not make it this time around, please-please plan to attend next year. You are a part of this District's great quartet legacy and we'd really like to sing and share some time with you again.

Though our members are scattered throughout the county, 70 men traveled to the Atlantic shores to join in the fun and jubilation. There was a lot of hugging and backslapping, reminiscing and telling of old lies and stories, wood-shedding, and tag singing. We have photographic proof. In a few days, check out the MADAQC web site (www.harmonize.com/madaqc) managed by Mike Kelly for a few pictures from the convention. Here is a brief recap of our great weekend together. I'll start backwards by first telling you the quartet contest results ...

Our **2006 M-AD Quartet Champions** are the **FOUR ACES** who won the title in their first attempt in a very close race among 3 top contenders who shifted positions between the Friday and Saturday night rounds. This is the first M-AD championship for Nick Aiuto (lead), Scott Risley (bass and also a champ in ILL), and Richard Lewellen (baritone and also a champ in FWD and DIX). Ed Cazenias (tenor) earned his third M-AD championship joining just 7 other men.

Now for the start of the weekend ... the MADAQC Chorus assembled on Friday immediately after the quartet semi-finals for some camaraderie and cavorting – oh, and a late night rehearsal. The group was very enthusiastic as Co-Directors Freddie and Kevin King ran us the paces – working the newest song, Freddie's beautiful arrangement of "**Somewhere**," and brushing off the now traditional celebratory standard, "**This is the Moment**." Afterwards, a bunch of guys remained in the hall to talk and catch up with old friendships.

We gathered again on Saturday afternoon following the chorus contest (won by the Alexandria Harmonizers) for more vocal fun and fine tuning of the songs. Several more guys joined us who could not get there on Friday night. Excitement was mounting as the chords began to lock and overtones started to spin overhead – we were really beginning to sound good (the bass-iest chorus you have every heard).

Following the rehearsal was the second annual **MADAQC/M-AD Showcase of Quartet Champions** held in conjunction with the Saturday evening open buffet dinner as a fund-raiser for the M-AD Endowment Fund. The Showcase was well-attended and featured *Premiere* (1997), *Iguanas in Flight* (2005), and *New Release* (2005 M-AD Collegiate Champs). Yours truly emceed and Fred Stabley promoted the Endowment and raked in a bucket of cash.

After the quartet finals, we gathered in the warm-up room to pull it all together for the Jamboree. With a little tweaking by the directors our preparation was done. While lining up backstage, we were greeted by the top three quartet finalists who were waiting nervously for the big announcement. Among those 12 men were 5 past champs. Mike Francis (Mitch's son) gave us the thumbs-up, our emcee Gary Plaag introduced the MADAQC Chorus, and we took the stage with enormous pride and spirit. The applause thunderous as the District audience expressed their appreciation. Among our ranks were men from 37 championship quartets – from the Easternaires (1955) represented by Tom Dames to the *Iguanas in Flight*. We had 5 full quartets present on stage including the *Out of Towners* (1960) celebrating their 45th anniversary, *Four-Under Par* (1986), *Reveille* (2002), *Phat Cats* (2004), and *Iguanas in Flight*, and there were several quartets represented by 3 of the original members.

As only champions can, the Chorus delivered an incredibly heartfelt rendition of "*Somewhere*" presented in loving thanks to those special people in our lives who support and encourage us to be good men. The moment was even more poignant with Freddie's personal dedication to his recently departed dear wife, Pat. The entire audience responded to the song with a rousing and spontaneous standing ovation. Following the announcement of the top three quartets, the Chorus threw themselves into the celebratory message of "*This is the Moment*" (...crushing the tag) – no doubt reliving the moment that each man won his individual championship. The joy on the faces of the Four Aces was contagious, and they told us afterwards they were blown away by our welcome and enthusiasm for their achievement. WELL DONE, my friends!

Freddie capped off the convention by directing "*Keep the Whole World Singing*" as the entire audience joined arms and sang like there would be no tomorrow. How great is that?!!!

Well, that just about does it for now. I will be talking with you throughout the year and look forward to seeing everyone again very soon. I am hopeful that next year we will have some quartet reunions, so call up your old buddies and start planning. I guarantee you a feature spot on the Showcase. So, for Freddie, Kevin, and your Board of Directors ... it is always a pleasure.

Yours in close championship harmony,

Steve White
MADAQC Prez