



The New MexiChords Barbershop Chorus

The **SERENADER**

*Celebrating 72 Years of Barbershop Harmony in Albuquerque  
Chartered September 14, 1952 - Incorporated October 2, 1953*

E-Newsletter



Editor: Fred Green poolvacman@gmail.com ■ September 2025 ■ An Occasional Publication As the Need Arises

## HOW YOU CAN SING LIKE NOBODY IS LISTENING

by Audrey Hunt

Singing Available - No Experience Necessary Introduction

When I was a child, singing was something my family would all do together. Our parents taught us how you can sing like nobody is listening. We loved to sing and it became a daily event. Besides, it was free; we had little money and times were hard.

Family dinners consisted mostly of bread and gravy made from flour, water, and sometimes a little bacon grease. On occasion, daddy would ask if he could pick some green beans for his family at a nearby neighbor's patch. Dessert was mostly bread pudding which I hated.

I was the oldest of three and responsible for washing the dishes and taking care of my little sister and brother. We all sang songs taught to us by mamma and learned to imitate tunes that daddy would sing. As I said, singing required no money so we did a good deal of it.

On weekends, mamma would take the three of us to visit "old people" that we never even knew and we would sing for them in what appeared to be some kind of hospital. I remember how the nurses and staff would smile at us and give us such gracious compliments as we sang.

I don't know if I had the better voice of the three of us, or was just more out-going, but I always ended up singing solos. Sometimes I was told that I had a mature voice and that I sounded like an angel when I sang. Mamma always loved to hear that. I guess I did too.

I learned that the sound of the human voice as it moves from one pitch to another, with "feeling", can actually touch another human being. Musical sounds produced by the voice can change a person's chemistry.

I also learned that through singing, I had the power to help heal pain and sorrow, and that a song coming from the heart can turn sorrow into joy. And I knew that this was a gift I could give to others that cost nothing and at the same time fulfilled a need within my soul. Every time I sang, I felt so good. The mental and physical abuse that I suffered daily was replaced with a feeling of happiness - I experienced a type of joy that I had never known just through singing.

I decided to keep singing for the rest of my life. This is what I was born to do. And because singing made me feel good about myself, I made a vow that someday I would help others to achieve the same wonderful feeling through singing. I would become a teacher.

Me Sing? - You've Got to be Kidding

Think back to the very first time you ever began to sing. Was it at a birthday party when you were a child? Maybe it was in kindergarten singing with the other children. Or it could have been in church when you were just a little tyke.

Singing is an important part of child development. If the feedback is positive and fun, the child grows up feeling confident when he sings. The opposite is also true. If the child sings and people laugh at him or give negative feedback, he immediately says to himself, "I am not good at singing and people don't like my sound". Then the child grows to perceive himself in such a way, and he will not sing again. His confidence has been attacked. This is very sad.

How To Start Singing With These 8 Helpful Tips

Here are 8 very easy tips to help you get started:

- Open yourself up to your own voice, without judgment or expectations. Simply allow your voice to soar, as if it had wings. The root to every successful action is desire. You must have the desire because desire is your engine, your motivating force.

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- Begin by singing a song that you know well. Even "Happy Birthday To You" is fine to start with.
- Take a breath of air before each phrase (musical sentence) to help support your singing sound.
- Articulate each word. Sing clearly, concentrating on pronouncing every word.
- Sing with an easy and relaxed feeling. Avoid pushing your voice.
- Sing within your vocal range. Singing too high will sound screechy and might strain your voice.
- Your imagination houses your desire. (Picture what you want). Will you sing with passion? Perhaps you want to sing jazz. Imagine that you are a Broadway Star, or the next Pavarotti.
- Singing is a wonderful way to give thanks to the Lord. Make up your own songs and begin exercising your imagination. You did this as a child and it was easy as well as fun. This is also a good way to exercise your brain as you age. You cannot sing what you first don't think of. Your mind becomes the control room for training.

Your desire to sing will release your energy, which is used to help manifest your desire. So when you sing - imagination, desire, and energy become one with breath and sound.

### Become a Shower Singer

The biggest hurdle to overcome is your own lack of confidence. Most adult singers are still listening to the old, negative and critical messages that linger in the mind. The other factor that is limiting is to compare our singing to others. We think that if our singing doesn't match the exact sound of a recording artist then we're not any good. This type of thinking is incorrect and self limiting. My goodness, if we all imitated one another, we would all sound like a bunch of parrots.

The beauty of your singing voice is how unique it is. As we express ourselves honestly, the tone takes on an emotion which connects with our heart. How can singing from the heart be anything but beautiful?

When we sing freely, without being concerned about what another person may be thinking, our voice sounds rich and open. Consider the shower singer. With just the right acoustics, the body soaped up with lather and very relaxed, we sing like nobody's listening. Ahhhhhhh, yes. The singing voice seems to reverberate from somewhere else - outside of us. "Not bad", we tell ourselves. Then we continue singing.

### Why Should I Sing?

Let me begin by saying that singing is your natural birthright. In fact, as you took your very first breath upon entrance into this glorious world, the first sound you made (in the form of a cry) was a descending 5 tone scale. Whaaa!..could be heard several rooms down the corridor. Your sound was supported by air from the diaphragmatic muscle and into those tiny little lungs. Furthermore, your first sound was perfectly placed, resonating with a full vibration and not an ounce of fear present. What a performer!

### The Health Benefits of Singing

Singing exercises your lungs. As you learn how to breathe by using the diaphragm (your breathing muscle), you exhale toxins (carbon monoxide) and inhale pure oxygen.

Singing is fun. A good way to start your day is with a song (Oh what a beautiful mor'nin). Professor Graham Welch of the University of London has studied developmental and medical aspects of singing for 30 years and says.

"The health benefits of singing are both physiological and psychological. Its physical benefits include increasing oxygenation of the blood stream and working major muscle groups in the upper body.

Psychologically it has the positive effect of reducing stress levels through the action of the endocrine system which is linked to the sense of emotional wellbeing."

Singing is something the entire family can do together - and it is free. As you learn to sing, you develop an appreciation for good singers. Feeling down? Just sing the blues away. Singing provides us with a way to worship and thank our Creator.

"Singing reflects a state of balance and a positive inner glow of contentment and equanimity. It is the audible resonant reality of our existence." Professor John Lennon

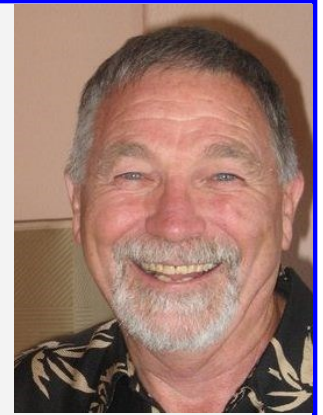
There are many more benefits that can be added to this list. But mostly, singing must be a joy to be had by all.

In conclusion, the well known song, "Amazing Grace" is provided for you to listen to. What would be even better is to sing along and experience singing itself.

And remember to - Sing Like Nobody is Listening.

## FROM OUR DIRECTOR:

### “BIFFLEISMS”



Hello, fellow Harmonizers! Hope this finds you well.

Well, we're into the dog days of summer, as they say. (Who is they, anyway???)  
And attendance is showing it. But, have no fear, we'll be back in full harness soon.  
Or, so I expect. So, come when you can. We miss you when you miss.

We've started a few of the Holiday Show tunes. Coming along quite well. And we're maintaining our repertoire, learning some new tags – some more popular with Dave than others – and working, as always, on our individual singing and ensemble skills. Through it all, I hope you're having fun. I know I am!

I mentioned ensemble skills. To that end, I'm moved to discuss barbershop tuning a bit here. (Relax, this won't be a graduate level course, or even a baccalaureate. Just a bit about how tuning differs for each part).

Simply put, the leads and basses tune their lines as if they were melodies – which they both are, as you've heard me say. They use the pitches, generally speaking, on the piano. If the leads didn't do this, the melody would sound funny. And if the basses didn't do this, the ensemble would flat a bit as we go through a song. To combat this tendency to flat a bit more, basses need to lift – sharp slightly – their note when it's the fifth of the chord. Since basses in our style sing almost exclusively roots and fifths, about half of their notes need to be lifted a bit. How to deal with this on a practical basis? Sing all the notes on the high side. When it's too sharp, I'll tell you! (To test this, the next time you sing *Down Our Way*, consciously sharp the third note in the first line. While, on paper it appears to be the same note as the second note in the line, it's the fifth of its chord while the second note in the line is the root of its chord. Lifting note #3 in the line will keep the song in tune and that chord will sparkle as it should, too. Try it; you'll like it.)

So, all of that is to say that leads and basses tune horizontally, mostly. Keeping the song in key and making the line sound like it would on the piano. Mostly.

OK, how about tenors and baris – the “harmony” parts? Well, they tune vertically, not horizontally. They tune each note they sing to make the chord sound best. (Trust me, they do.) They don't sing each note as it relates to the note before in the line – as the melody singers do – they sing each note in the proper pitch to make the chords ring. They do, really.

I expect this may be a little confusing; if it is, read it a couple of times. And, maybe, we'll talk about it some Tuesday night soon.

In the hopes of that, come as often as you can. We'll have a ball singing and learning together.

Oh, yes. Our quest for an afterglow spot – thank you, Ruth – is into its third iteration. BJs in Winrock – very close to our meeting space, still, and - we hope – suitable to our needs. Come try it; it's a really fun way to close our Tuesday evenings together.

See you Tuesday, Champs.

Bill



*Enchanted Mesa*  
Show Chorus  
presents:

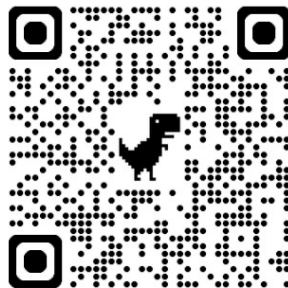
# Enchanted Dreams

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2025**  
**3:00 PM**

Valley High School  
Performing Arts Center  
1505 Candelaria Rd NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87107

Tickets:  
\$20 Adults  
\$10 Students  
Free Kids Under 5

Scan the QR Code below or visit  
[www.enchantedmesa.org](http://www.enchantedmesa.org) for options to purchase tickets





Two of our three August birthday folks (Mary Turner and Larry Butler) are sung to by the chorus. Pat Kneen was not present that evening.



Our two newest members receive their chorus name badges, Joe Iwinski and Joe Cardillo, and first time guest, Tammy Johnson receive our "Flowers in May" welcome song led by assistant director, Charlene Baker. Left to right: Joe Iwinski, Director-Bill Biffle, Asst Dir-Charlene Baker, Membership VP-Nick Maxwell, Tammy Johnson, and Joe Cardillo.

## Did You Know?

... that for five months Niagra Falls was reduced to a trickle.  
See the short version of the story plus photos here:

<https://www.niagarafallsusa.com/the-source/when-and-why-the-falls-stopped-flowing>

## 11 tips for selecting a great repertoire

1. Does the audience know/like the song? If they don't, it hardly matters how well you sing it.
2. Does the song fit your style? What's great for another group may not be the right fit for yours.
3. Are the lyrics appropriate to your group? Could any part of the lyric offend any part of your audience? Is it age-appropriate?
4. Is the song within your vocal range? Ensure the highest and lowest notes and the tessitura are well within your ensemble's range even on your worst days.
5. Is the song within your difficulty level? You will sound far more impressive when you sing a less difficult song masterfully than you would when performing a difficult song only adequately.
6. Does the song drive the quartet/chorus to get better? Balance tip #5 with the fact that you'll have more fun if you stretch a bit sometimes.
7. Is it different enough from other songs in your repertoire? Mix up the tempo, mood, and flavor of your repertoire—ballads and uptunes are not the only two options.
8. Is there a published version of the song? The songs in the BHS published library cost less, have been screened for quality, and often already have learning tracks.
9. Do you select music at the right time? Working at least one calendar year out will help immensely in planning around shows and other events.
10. Does your audience need to "cleanse the palate"? Your barbershop repertoire may sound even better when contrasted with one or two repertoire songs that have no connection to the barbershop world.
11. Is the song fun to sing? If you're having fun singing it, your audience will enjoy watching you perform it!

## Your Music Team At Work

### AUDITIONING METHOD STANDARDIZED AND SIMPLIFIED

#### Tenor, Lead and Bass audition

The image shows musical notation for a Tenor, Lead, and Bass audition. The Tenor part is on a treble clef staff, the Lead part is on a treble clef staff, and the Bass part is on a bass clef staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: "Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb." The notation includes measure numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4. The Tenor part has a 2-measure rest at the start of measure 2. The Lead part has a 3-measure rest at the start of measure 2. The Bass part has a 4-measure rest at the start of measure 2.

**Leads** will be considered for membership if they recognize the melody.

Those who actually hit the first note after hearing the pitch receive bonus points.

Those who reach measure 4 in proper key will be considered for section leader.

**Tenors & Bases** making it to measure 2 will be considered for membership.

Those making it to measure 3 will be considered for section leader,

and those making it to measure 4 will be hospitalized immediately—

(after signing them up, of course).

#### Baritone audition (simplified)

The image shows musical notation for a Baritone audition. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff starts with a 1-measure rest, followed by a melodic line with dynamics *ppp*, *A*, and *mp*. The second staff starts with a 5-measure rest, followed by a melodic line with dynamics *mp*, *V*, and *ppp*. The third staff starts with a 9-measure rest, followed by a melodic line with dynamics *ff*, *ppp*, and *ppp*. The lyrics "Oh..." are written above the second staff.

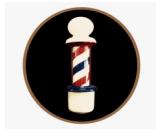
**Baritones:** It is expected that anyone applying as a Baritone already knows this simple little intro. We won't insult them by supplying the words.



Put a little Sunshine in your life.  
Come Sing with Us!!



Together   
in Harmony



The New MexiChords "Lineup" as of 1 September 2025

**DIRECTOR**

Bill Biffle

**BARITONE**

Hudson, Hal  
Iwinski, Joe  
Koury, Ruth  
Randall, Ron  
Romero, Max  
Strohl, Bill

**BASS**

Butler, Larry  
Grady, Richard  
Green, Fred  
Lobaton, Jay  
Maxwell, Nick  
Porter, Doug  
Quintana, Jerry  
Ring, Dave  
Taylor, John  
Twiggs, Leo

**TENORS**

Baker, Charlene  
Berardinelli, Bev  
Browning, Jo  
Green, Debbie  
Meyer, Cam  
Ratcliff, Hal  
Yates, Janet

**LEAD**

Andrews, Tina  
Cardillo, Joe  
Cole, Tom  
Courtney, Bob  
Green, Eric  
Kneen, Pat  
Lash, Mike  
Leverett, Juliette  
Miracle, John  
Nelson, Arlo  
Parsons, Walt  
Preston, Judy  
Stavert, Xannie  
Taylor, Lynn  
Turner, Mary  
Vertrees, Joe



Do you love to sing? Tired of entertaining only yourself in your car or the shower? C'mon out and see how much fun it can be to sing with a group of others!

See us at:

[www.NMChords.com](http://www.NMChords.com)

Our chorus and quartets love to sing for our audiences and to share our love of barbershop. You are invited to join with us to enjoy an evening of camaraderie and great barbershop harmony. Don't miss out on the fun. Come and see what it's all about!

**What?** Weekly Chapter Meeting & Rehearsal

**When?** Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.

**Where?** St John's United Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE, ABQ 87110



Here's a barbershop shout-out to our members with birthdays in September!

Richard Grady 10 Sep  
Tom Cole 13 Sep  
Mike Lash 28 Sep

**FROM THE EDITOR:** One of those occasional "oopsies" occurred in last month's newsletter when new member of the Lead section, Joe Cardillo, was identified as "Tom".... Mea Culpa.... Sorry 'bout that, my bad, and it won't happen again....



**BARBERSHOP HARMONY**

Is music that is performed in the 21st century, structured and preserved in the 20th century, uses Romantic dynamics and rubato, Classical form and structure, a Baroque harmonic plan, Renaissance tone production, and Medieval tuning practices. It is truly a music influenced by all time.

Why there are no crocodiles in the orchestra



# The New MexiChords Calendar

## Upcoming Chorus Events

### 2025

- 25-27 Sep - Rocky Mountain District Convention & Contest, Ogden, Utah  
12 Oct - Balloon Fiesta, approx. 6:15-7:00am, Balloon Fiesta Park  
5 Dec - Naturalization Ceremony, 10am, ABQ Convention Center, 401 2nd St NW  
12 Dec - Holiday Show, 7pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE  
13 Dec - Holiday Show, 2pm, St John's Methodist Church, 2626 Arizona St NE

Stay up-to-date with us by visiting our "Shows & Events" page on the website at:

[www.NMChords.com](http://www.NMChords.com)

We are a local chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) and a member of the Rocky Mountain District (RMD), which includes parts of the following States/Areas:

*Wyoming*

*Colorado*

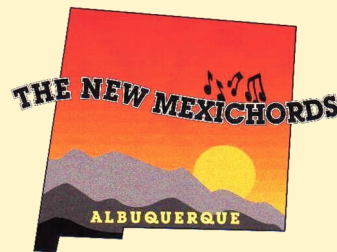
Most of *Utah*

eastern *Idaho*

southern *Montana*

northern *New Mexico*

western portions of *South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas*



### NEW WORD USAGES

**Arbitrator** - A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonalds.

**Heroes** - What a man in a boat does.

**Parasites** - What you see from The Eiffel Tower.

**Rubberneck** - What you do to relax your wife.

## [Your Chuckles for September](#)

Why do clarinetists leave their cases on the dashboard? So they can park in the handicapped zones.

What's the definition of perfect pitch? When you toss a banjo in the garbage and it hits an accordion.

What's the difference between an opera singer and a pit bull? Lipstick.

How does an oboist's brain cell die? Alone.

What do you call a guitar player that only knows two chords? A music critic.

How do you keep your violin from being stolen? Put it in a viola case.

What's the difference between a saxophone and a chainsaw? You can tune a chainsaw.

What will you never say about a banjo player? "That's the banjo player's Porsche."

What's the difference between an oboe and a bassoon? You can hit a baseball further with a bassoon.

How are a violinist and a blind javelin thrower alike? Both command immediate attention and alarm, and force everyone to move out of range.

Why are violinists' fingers like lightning? They rarely strike the same spot twice.

Tuba player: "Did you hear my last recital?" Friend: "I hope so."

What do you call a hundred Baritone's at the bottom of the ocean? A good start.

How can you tell when a Lead is at your door? They can't find the key, and they never know when to come in.

How do you get two bass singers to sing in unison? Hand them music a half-step apart.



### **Our Mission:**

**The members of the Albuquerque Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society dedicate themselves to:**

- **Continually seek the joy to be found in singing well in the barbershop style**
- **Promote the benefits of our hobby at every available opportunity**
- **Provide our community with high quality musical entertainment, and**
- **Foster continual musical growth and fellowship among the members**

To be added to our fan list, send your name and email address to [subscribe@newmexichords.groupanizer.com](mailto:subscribe@newmexichords.groupanizer.com)  
To be removed, send your email address to [unsubscribe@newmexichords.groupanizer.com](mailto:unsubscribe@newmexichords.groupanizer.com)