

# **PRETZEL CITY**

## **BARBERSHOP CHORUS**



**READING, PA**

## **INFORMATION BOOKLET**

Revised Dec. 2011



## **FOREWORD**

This booklet is intended to provide our guests and visitors with a profile of the Pretzel City Chorus, the performing unit of the Reading, PA chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

Typical chapter meetings are usually so filled with singing and vocal exercises that visitors don't have the opportunity to ask questions concerning who we are and how we go about the business of enjoying our great hobby. This booklet, hopefully, will answer many of those questions as well as provide an insight into the intrinsic appeal of four-part harmony.



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# Welcome To Barbershopping



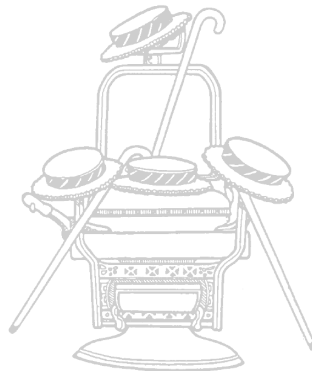
## WELCOME

Thanks for choosing to visit with the Pretzel City Chorus. We sincerely hope you enjoy yourself. We are all members of the world's largest male singing society. We love to sing in four-part harmony while enjoying a fraternal environment.

The Western Division of the Mid-Atlantic District (our District) has 21 Barbershop Harmony Chapters, which includes Somerset County on the western edge to Hazelton on the north, Pottstown on the eastern edge and Baltimore on the Southern perimeter.

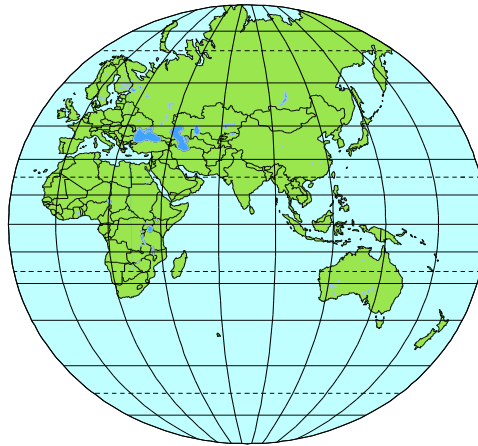
The Pretzel City Chorus is the performing unit of the Reading Chapter, and meets every Tuesday at 7:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall at the Immanuel United Church of Christ, 99 South Waverly Street, Shillington, PA 19607.

As you will see in this booklet, the Pretzel City Chorus have many and varied activities throughout the year. We welcome new members. Come join us in this great hobby. Barbershopping is something you and your family can enjoy for a lifetime.



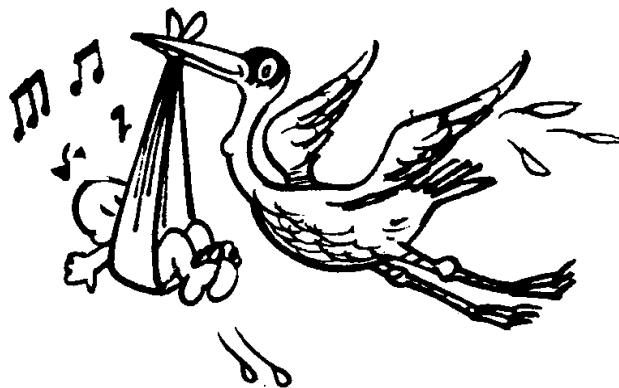


Throughout the United States and Canada, there are seventeen districts. Our district is the Mid-Atlantic District (MAD), and includes the states of Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, the eastern part of Maryland, Eastern Virginia, New York City, and western Long Island. The MAD has been in existence for over 50 years and is made up of over 3500 members in over 89 chapters.



Other worldwide affiliations are:

AAMBS	Australian Association of Male Barbershop Singers
BABS	British Association of Barbershop Singers
BinG	Barbershop in Germany
DABS	Dutch Association of Barbershop Singers
IABS	Irish Association of Barbershop Singers
NZABS	New Zealand Association of Barbershop Singers
SNOBS	Society of Nordic Barbershop Singers
SPATS	Southern Parts of Africa Tonsorial Singers



## The Early Years

In 1938, O. C. Cash and Ruppert Hall held a singing get-together of local men who had an interest in barbershop harmony. They met on the roof of a hotel in Tulsa, OK and when the singing started all activity in the downtown area stopped to listen, including traffic, much to the dismay of the police. And thus, the Barbershop Harmony Society had its informal beginning. To those who might be wondering, it was called originally (and still is officially) the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing of America or SPEBSQSA.

Word of this meeting spread throughout the nearby area then to other parts of the country. In Reading, as in many other cities and towns across the country, there were groups of men singing in backrooms of all sorts of establishments, in living rooms and kitchens and anywhere else where they were tolerated just for the fun of ‘ringing’ a few good chords together. The Pretzel City Chorus of Reading, PA received their Charter in 1948.

The first annual Spring Show was held in the Rajah Theater on April 21, 1951, featuring the *CHORDETTES* of radio/television and Mr. Sandman fame. In 1952, the Reading Chapter was honored when their own, John Millard, served as President of the Mid-Atlantic District. During the 60’s, favorite local quartets included the Penn Squares, Tone Blazers, and the Penn Tonics. Kenny Walker who sang lead in the Penn Tonics is still singing with the chorus. The 70’s found local quartets such as the Liberty Lads, Sugar Dads, and the Reading Company. New Musical Directors included Bob Seltzer, Harold Breisch and David Rutt. In the 80’s, Ralph Ziegenfuss and Bill Gilchrist make their debut as Musical Directors. The 90’s first Spring Show featured the Reading Dixieland Band as part of a riverboat ramble show theme. Bill Gilchrist returned as Director in 1997 and future Musical Director, Mark Sanders appeared with K’MOTION as one of the featured guest quartets. Ryan Breisch became the youngest member to direct the chorus during the 1998 Spring Show. In 2003 and 2004 the Pretzel City Chorus was the Mid-Atlantic Western Division Intermediate Chorus Champions.

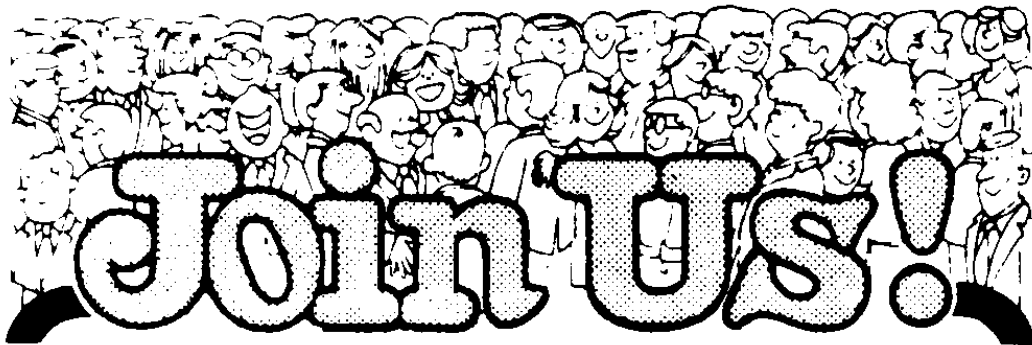
The purpose of this document is not only to highlight our illustrious past but also instill a sense of pride in hopes that it will provide us with the impetus to plan and prepare for a successful future

## THE PRETZEL CITY CHORUS TODAY

The Chapter's prime objective is to have fun singing together. Our strong camaraderie pulls our members into many different group projects. Some of these include:

- Singing Valentines – A wonderful experience for both the singers and the recipients. You should hear the new stories each year!
- An annual Spring Show performed at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in West Reading, in early April.
- Western Division Chorus Contest held in Harrisburg, PA in early June.
- Perform charitable community performances.
- Ladies' nights and other family oriented activities.
- Paid Chorus performances on many varied occasions to help defray our expenses.
- An annual Christmas Show performed at the Scottish Rite Theater in early December.
- Works together to support each other in many ways outside of singing. We are a fraternal organization.

We are a diverse and talented mix of singers who appreciate each other - an active chapter and proud of what we do. We want to grow, both in quantity and quality.



# VISION STATEMENT, MISSION STATEMENT AND GOALS

## VISION STATEMENT

The Reading Chapter – The Pretzel City Chorus – is an ever-growing fraternity of barbershop style singers trying to achieve excellence through vocal music performance.

## MISSION STATEMENT

### Chapter

- Strongly support and encourage singing for the members.
- Provide the opportunity for each member to receive training for the development of his individual talents.
- Through fellowship and support, strive to develop a sense of confidence and pride in each member for his accomplishments.
- Develop programs that will prove attractive and satisfying for our members, prospective members and the public.
- Strive to expose as many people as possible to the barbershop style of singing.
- Protect the barbershop image that it will merit respect and acceptance in our community.
- Support community and charitable institutions.

### Member

- Attend meetings regularly and be musically prepared with accuracy of notes and lyrics.
- Support and respect the talents of the Directors, Officers and your fellow Barbershopper.
- Support the Chapter and its goals with your time, talent, and donations.
- Ensure future generations will have an opportunity to sing barbershop harmony.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES – 2012

Being Updated



## MEETING NIGHT (Tuesdays)

We open each week with warm-up exercises to make sure that we're ready to sing. The Director often uses that time for instruction in holding pitch, matching vowel sounds and other points that help to improve the overall choral sound. About midway through the meeting we usually stop for a break and a brief discussion of chapter business.

We try to get in as much chapter quartet singing as we can during the meeting but you can be sure there is ample opportunity for that and for pickup quartets singing during the meeting each week. On occasion, a competition quartet will pay us a visit. We also show videos of competition quartets and choruses as well as instructional videos about our hobby.



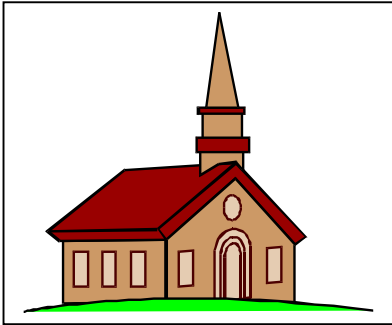
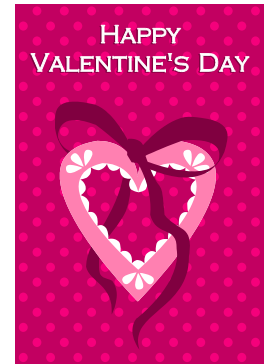
### Suggestions for Guests and New Members

- ❑ Be considerate of others, arrive on time, we start at 7:30 pm.
- ❑ During warm-up, give full attention to the Director.
- ❑ While on the risers, please no talking – 25 or 30 men can make quite a buzz.
- ❑ Ask questions before 7:30.
- ❑ Any questions during the business meeting should be short and relevant.

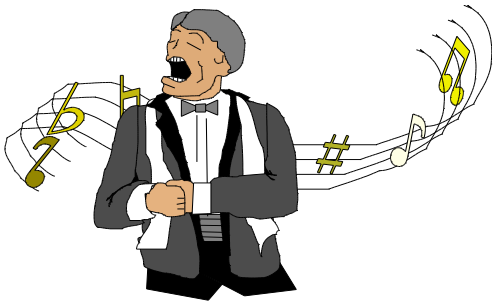


## MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Each year our quartets deliver **SINGING VALENTINES** to lucky women (and men) throughout the Reading area. This includes a quartet singing one or two love songs and a red rose. You must be qualified to sing in this program, but the songs come from the Barberpole Cat Song Book and are not difficult to learn. You will gain many memorable experiences.



In the summer when local choirs take a 3-month vacation, we answer the call by **SINGING AT FOUR CHURCHES** around the area. We actually sing for 7 or 8 churches on a rotating basis. We sing 2 or 3 songs and these performances are very well received earning us an abundant supply of coffee and donuts and even an occasional lunch. This is a wonderful way in which to serve our community.



Our **ANNUAL SPRING SHOW** is the premiere activity of the Pretzel City Chorus. Each year we present a concert or cameo/script production with input from members. It is a full stage production that requires considerable effort from many of our members. We make the sets and many of the costumes used in the shows. The show is presented at the Scottish Rite Cathedral in West Reading, in April. In addition to being a lot of fun, it is a major fund producer for the chorus, along with the Sing Valentine Program and the Christmas Show.

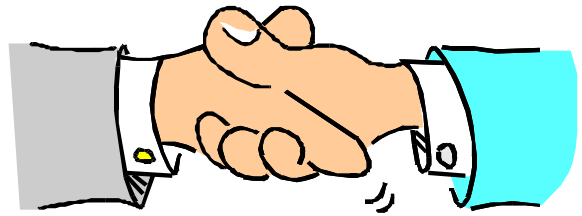
**CHRISTMAS** is a very special time when we perform a concert at the Scottish Rite Cathedral. We have been incorporating local talent to enhance this production using local high School Choruses and Church Hand Bell Choirs to add variety to the program. Chorus members donate cookies, candy, baked goods and these items are chanced-off as door prizes to members of the audience during intermission. The stage is covered with Poinsettias and with the stage decorations - "It's just a wonderful time of the year"



## CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

Our membership criteria are simply that a prospective member shall have a love for music harmony, a desire to sing, and is a congenial man of good character.

At each visit to the Pretzel City Chorus weekly meeting, a guest will be greeted by the Chapter Development VP and asked to sign a guest register. As soon as is practical, he will be introduced to the members and asked to tell us a few things about himself (marital status, number of children, work place, how he found out about us, and any previous musical experience, etc.). He will be seated in a section in the chorus that would seem to be compatible with his voice range as determined by the Music Director. He will be given a guest music book and seated next to a *buddy* in that section who will answer questions and provide assistance.



After the third visit, the Chapter Development VP will discuss membership with the guest and an application will be offered.

From there on the actual membership process is up to you. You are encouraged to become a member, and to continue to enjoy the benefits of our program. Once your completed application has been submitted, along with the necessary dues, it is presented to the chapter Board for formal acceptance. It will then take approximately 3-4 weeks for the Society processing before your membership card and related materials are available for presentation.

### DUES

The annual dues for 2012 are:

	<u>Adult</u>	<u>Student</u> Under 26	<u>Senior (70+)</u>
International Dues	\$111.00	\$50.50	\$50.50
Enrollment Fee (1 <sup>st</sup> year only)	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$10.00
District Dues	\$25.00	\$12.50	\$12.50
Chapter Dues	<u>\$10.00</u>	<u>\$ 5.00</u>	<u>\$ 5.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$146.00</b>	<b>\$68.00</b>	<b>\$67.50</b>

## NOW THAT YOU ARE A MEMBER . . .

. . . there are a few logistical details that you will want to address.

Before singing at your **FIRST PERFORMANCE**, you will need to be qualified. That is, you must know words, notes and choreography (movements and expressions) with a voice quality at an acceptable level. This is not a particularly difficult procedure, as you will be provided stereo **LEARNING CD's** on which your part is predominant in the left channel. Our Music Librarian will assign a permanent **MUSIC BOOK** to you with all of our recent songs including our current repertoire. Your Section Leader and Music Director will provide assistance and determine when you are ready to perform with the chorus.

Once you have qualified to perform, you will be issued a Chorus Uniform after a refundable **deposit of \$100.00** has been received. The uniform consists of a black tux with accessories, white shirt, white jacket and a traveling outfit. You will be expected to provide a pair of black patent leather shoes for the formal outfit and a white shirt and a pair of brown shoes for the traveling outfit. Ask your buddy for assistance in locating the shoes at a reasonable price.



Once a uniform has been issued, you are qualified to sing at all public performances unless your Section Leader or Chorus Director feels that additional qualifications are required. All of our members are encouraged to use good judgment and common sense in determining their readiness to perform. The best way to ensure your readiness to perform is to attend rehearsals. Performing well, with confidence, comes from regular practice.

Uniforms and Music Books are the property of the Pretzel City Chorus and are to be returned to the chapter if membership is terminated. Be sure you comply with all copyright laws.

## BARBERPOLE CAT PROGRAM



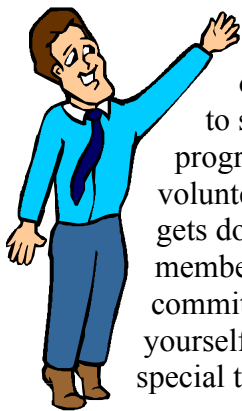
A BarberPole Cat Song Book is provided in the membership materials you will receive from the Society headquarters. This a Society program launched in 1971. Each member is encouraged to learn the 12 old favorites, which are sung wherever Barbershoppers gather. These PoleCat songs are used frequently during warm-up by the Pretzel City Chorus and three of them are used in our Valentines Day program. Learning tapes are available for the 12 songs. Once you have successfully learned your part to these songs, awards are provided (6 songs earns a certificate, learning all 12 songs earns a tie tack).

## COMMUNICATIONS

Six times a year you will receive the **HARMONIZER** magazine in the mail, published by the Society in Nashville, Tenn. It keeps us up to date about happenings on the national scene and is full of useful articles and discussions of interest to Barbershoppers everywhere. Six times a year you will receive the **Mid'l Antics**, which is the Mid-Atlantic District magazine, as an email distribution. In addition, the chapter issues a weekly newsletter, published by Joe Purdin, and is either emailed to your home or a hard copy is available at meeting night.



## LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



There are ample opportunities to serve the chapter. The Pretzel City Chorus has a rich history of being a ‘can-do’ organization and we want to keep it that way. Every one of our chapter officers is dedicated to doing the best possible job he can, but, needless to say, they cannot do it alone. They can each use help, and depending on the season or the program in progress, they can use a lot of help. So don’t be bashful, be proactive by volunteering your services. We are a volunteer organization so don’t wait to be asked. Nothing gets done unless someone volunteers to do it. The chapter can be as good as its enthusiastic members choose to make it. You will find making yourself available to help existing officers or committee chairmen is a sure-fire way of being asked to serve in office or chair a committee yourself. We encourage new members to participate in leadership positions and/or use any special talents they may have.

## CHAPTER OFFICERS (2012)

President .....	Grant Wickert
Past President .....	Bill Shunk
Program VP .....	Don Springer
Chapter Development VP .....	Kirk Haas
Communication VP .....	Chuck Shaner
Music & Performance VP .....	Don Springer
Secretary .....	Joe Purdin
Treasurer .....	Bill Elder
Board Members at Large .....	Russ Amalong, Bob Seltzer, Jim Shaner
Delegate .....	Roger Warner
Director .....	Gary Mishler
Assistant Director .....	LeRoy Scheffler
Assistant Director .....	Bob Seltzer
Uniform Chairman .....	Kirk Haas



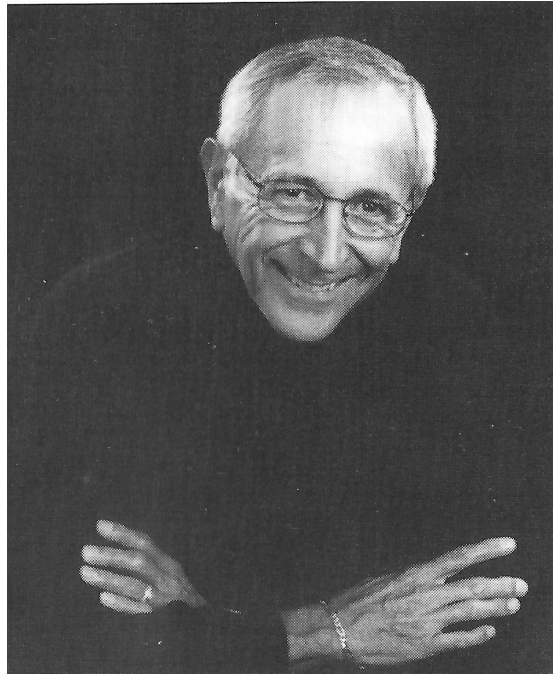
## **Meet Our Director Gary Mishler**



Gary Mishler was a music educator for 36 years. For the last 24 years of teaching, he taught high school choral music in the Twin Valley School District. His interest in barbershop music began as a 10<sup>th</sup> grader when his high school choral director asked him to be part of a quartet. Gary has directed numerous high school barbershop groups, loves barbershopping, and is now the Director for the Pretzel City Chorus.

Gary also plays trombone in several local groups, including the Berkshire Brass and Reading Pops Orchestra. Spending time with his family, playing with his grandson, exercising, and reading are favorite activities when he's not making music. Gary is thrilled to be working with the men of the Pretzel City Chorus and is looking forward to a rewarding relationship with the group!

## Meet Our Assistant Director Bob Seltzer



Bob has been a member of the Pretzel City Chorus for 46 years. He had served as Music Director of the chapter from 1974 to 1985 and, after retiring from that job, has assisted the four Music Directors who have served the chorus since then. He has been directing in 42 of the 46 years.

Bob has also served the chorus, at one time or another, as Music and Performance Vice-President, Spring and Christmas Show Chairman, Show Director, Chapter Secretary, baritone section leader, and Director of the Pretzel City Nuggets, a smaller chorus of retired men who perform for various daytime engagements.

An avid quartet performer, Bob has sung with the *Liberty Lads*, *Reading Company*, and *J & R Music Company*. Bob has also been named Barbershopper of the Year on three different occasions.

Bob retired from the Governor Mifflin School District where he taught for 32 years. In retirement, he keeps busy with his family, barbershopping, yard work, traveling, exercising and hiking.

## Meet Our Assistant Director Le Roy Scheffler



LeRoy Scheffler has always been “Mr. Music”. His interest in music started in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade when he began with flute lessons and vocal training with Dr. Kathryn Morgan. In High School, he was selected as student conductor of both the Concert Band and the Concert Orchestra as well as musical coordinator for the High School musical productions of “Bye Bye Birdie” and “The Sound of Music”. Through the years he has preformed with numerous theater groups.

In 1974 while in the US Air Force, he heard the Regents Quartet (International Barbershop Champions) and caught the Barbershop bug. While on temporary duty in Atlantic City, he visited the local chapter and was hooked to this style of music.

After leaving the Service he located to new Ringgold, PA and joined the Pottsville, PA Barbershop Chapter and in less than a year became the musical director. He has been their director to this day. During the last 33 years he has helped other chapters by filling in as director when situations left them without directors. While directing he also made time to sing in several quartets.

He now (being retired) looks forward to the challenge of doing what he can to help the Reading Chapter achieve their goals as an Assistant Director.



## 2011– 2012– Pretzel City Chorus Repertoire - 12/22/11

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. <b>Ain't Misbehavin'</b><br>Any time I find I'm feeling lonely                             | Key Eb (Bass-up)   |
| 2. <b>American Medley</b><br>Oo, Oo, This is my country                                       | Key Eb (Bass-up)<br>Bass starting note Eb                                      |
| 3. <b>Carolina in the Morning</b><br>Nothing could be finer ...                               | Key C (Normal tune-up)   |
| 4. <b>Dear Hearts and Gentle People</b><br><b>There's a place I'd like to be</b>              | Key G (Normal tune-up)   |
| 5. <b>Eternal Father Strong to Save</b><br>Ahh ..... Eternal Father                           | Key D (Bass-up) <b>(with Music)</b>  |
| 6. <b>Everything's Coming Up Roses</b><br>Things look swell, things look great                | Key Eb (Octaves) basses-baries - low<br>tenors-leads –high                     |
| 7. <b>Gospel Medley</b><br>Oh Lord my God when I  | Key A (Unison) starting note is 3 notes<br>below tune-up                       |
| 8. <b>Holy God, We Praise Thy Name</b><br>Holy God, we praise they name                       | Key G (Normal tune-up) <b>(with Music)</b>                                     |
| 9. <b>I Love The Whole USA</b><br>This is my country, land...                                 | Key Bb (Normal tune-up)  |
| 10. <b>Irish Blessing</b><br>May the road rise to meet you,                                   | Key F (Bass-up)  |
| 11. <b>Just In Time</b><br>O well, well I don't mean  | Key Eb (Basses start – no tuning)  |
| 12. <b>Keep the Whole World Singing</b><br>Keep the whole ...                                 | Key Eb (Bass-up)   |
| 13. <b>My Wild Irish Rose</b><br>My wild Irish Rose,  | Key Bb (Normal Tune-up)  |
| 14. <b>Orange Colored Sky</b><br>I was walkin' along  | Key C (Normal tune-up)   |
| 15. <b>Shenandoah</b><br>Oh Shenandoah, I long to hear you                                    | Key F (Bass Up)  |
| 16. <b>Star Spangled Banner</b><br>Oh say! Can you see, By the                                | Key A - <b>Blow Eb</b> basses-baries - low<br>Starting note - pitched down 1/2 |
| 17. <b>That Old Feeling</b><br>Oo-oo-oo-oo, I saw you   | Key Eb<br><b>Blow F (Unison – starting note is F)</b>                          |
| 18. <b>They Wrote Em' In The Good Old Days</b><br>Oh, the greatest songs of all               | Key C (Normal tune-up)   |
| 19. <b>When There's Love at Home</b><br>Be it ever so humble                                  | Key Ab (Normal tune-up)  |
| 20. <b>You're As Welcome As the Flowers in May</b><br>You're as welcome as the flowers in May | Key C (normal Tune-up)   |
| 21. <b>Zip A Dee Doo Dah</b><br>This is just the kind of day                                  | Key C (Normal tune-up)   |