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What a gala!

By Chuck Alexander,
Ontario music & performance V. P.

It was called “A Gala of Barbershop Harmony” and indeed it was as over 200 performers took to the stage of the *Orillia Opera House* on the night of January 10, 2004, to fill the *Gordon Lightfoot Auditorium* with the sounds of four-part harmony.

Participating in the show were choruses from all three barbershop organizations. *Lake Country Harmony* from Orillia represented the *Harmony Inc.* society while the *Barrie Huronia Sound Waves* attended on behalf of the *Sweet Adelines, International*. The *Barrie County Chordsmen* represented

our own Society.

Featured were our three quartets who were participating in our Top Gun coaching program which was going on at Geneva Park at the same time as COTS. They were *Play It Again*, *Conspiracy* and *Impact*. We were also blessed with having *Kindred Spirits*, a quartet from the Barrie Sweet Adelines.

Opening the evening was a *Joe Barbershop Chorus* made up of the first 60 chapter members who registered for COTS, who were lead by the Joe Barbershopper class instructor, **Rick Snouten**. Keeping the show moving with stories and jokes was our very own **Brad Brown**.

What a wonderful experience as a mass chorus of both the ladies and men accepted the applause from a spontaneous standing ovation following their combined voices having sung, *Lida Rose*.

While the COTS weekend is known for its snowstorms, we were blessed with only having to put up with cold temperatures that dipped to minus 38 degrees.

The success of this event was evident as the public and media acknowledged the show for several weeks after the event. It is my aim to keep this event as part of the COTS weekend, as it certainly will give us the opportunity to showcase our quartets and choruses. ❁

Congratulations on the best COTS ever!

By Paul Tamblyn, chair CDDC

Congratulations on the new revised and improved COTS program It is OUTSTANDING A 47 percent increase in attendance speaks for itself! Those who were not there missed a real happening.

Chuck Alexander, your organization of the concert on Saturday evening was fabulous. Many do not know how much goes into a show like that. I do! From the front line performers to the bussing of the men it was fabulous. What a great showcase for the public to see what we are all about. *Joe Barbershop Chorus*, *Harmony Inc.*, *Sweet Adelines*, Barrie chorus, champion and top gun quartets, what a coming together. What an opportunity for the COTS attendees to perform or sit and enjoy.

Rob Arnold, your enthusiasm is infectious and spreads like a wonderful virus to others. Keep the format and thank you.

Wylie Forster, I so enjoyed your closing remarks. Keeping it simple and clear and planned and focused will make lots of good stuff happen.

George Shields, you continue to be one of my heroes. Your selection of the guest speaker was fabulous. She is an inspiration for us all. There is no better way to inspire the district to support *Harmonize For Speech*.

John Kirby, the children's chorus on Friday evening was inspiring. All who drove in and got there were truly rewarded for their efforts. It is such a great way to start the weekend.

I know there are many more to thank but **Doreen** and I are packing for four months so we have a few details to look after. ❁



Photo – Waldö Redekop
Sunday morning sunrise at COTS. ❁