

# UNIVERSAL HARMONY

## 1993

**T**WO OF the geographically-outlying chapters answered the call to participate in the Geographically Outlying Chorus (GOC) Contest at the 1993 International Convention. The volume in the hall was delightfully deafening, compliments of the standing-room-only crowd chanting messages of friendship, love and encouragement to the two contestants: JUNEAU JUBILEE of Juneau, Alaska, directed by Jane Mulready; and PACIFIC BELLE CHORDS of San Diego, California, directed by Mike Spencer. The atmosphere was absolutely electrifying! By the conclusion of the brief contest, there wasn't a dry eye to be found among contestants or audience members. The PACIFIC BELLE CHORDS was named the highest-scoring chorus and the GOC qualifier for the International Chorus Contest that took place two days later (where Mike won the Jerry Dunlop Memorial Award and the PBCs won the G. Ruth Geils Memorial Award!). Both choruses, however, were victorious; both choruses won the hearts and admiration of their Harmony peers who applauded their pioneering spirit.

For the sixth time in its history, the VILLAGE VOCAL CHORDS Chapter hosted the International Convention, returning to Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Illinois. As "Olympics '93" Convention Chairman Beth Ramsson ran (with lighted torch in hand) into the "coliseum" to proclaim, "Let the games begin," she was followed by a parade of chapter banner-bearing representatives of every chapter in attendance. The VVCs made a special banner which represented World Harmony and signified representation at this convention by dignitaries from S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc., LABBS and Sweet Adelines International. Marilyn Penketh of England, a member of both LABBS and Harmony, Inc., proudly carried this banner into the Annual Membership Meeting.

It was at this Convention's Annual Membership Meeting that the International Board of Directors initiated ways in which to make its members (physically) more visible and more easily accessible to the general membership. The Board acted as the reception committee at the Annual Membership Meeting, joined the membership seated in the auditorium for the President's report, then assembled on stage for the Installation Ceremony. These changes from the traditional seating at tables on the stage (separated from the membership) during the meeting and Installation helped to remove the perception of distance between the Board and the membership, and promoted the realization that Board members are elected by, and representatives of, all members of Harmony, Inc. It is through communication and cooperation between both parties that business can be conducted efficiently, and the principles and ideals of the organization can be upheld.

The Contest venues for the "Quartathalon" and the "Chorathalon" were buzzing with excitement! Area I foursome SPECTRUM (ScotianAires and Citadel Chimes Chapters) provided a broad range of entertaining performances and became the 1993 Harmony Queens. Although the VVCs were busy fulfilling innumerable hostess duties for this Olympic festival of choral prowess, they also managed to wrestle their way to the Chorus Championship!

The 1992 LABBS Quartet Champions from Leeds, England, DOWNTOWN EXPRESS, also contributed to the international flavor of the Convention, entertaining us royally throughout the weekend's events.

The "Sandi White International Membership Award," donated by the WOMEN OF NOTE Chapter in memory of its former member, was first presented at this Convention. The

award was initiated to be presented annually to the chapter that attains the highest percentage of growth in membership from one renewal period to the next. The first recipient of this incentive award (with a 41 percent increase!) was the TEMPO TONES Chapter of Hamilton, Ontario.

It had become increasingly difficult to find qualified people willing to give up their time on Thursday at International Convention to judge the History Book Contest. The Board received a recommendation from the International Historian to discontinue the Contest; however, the recommendation was postponed to allow for a survey of this current year's participants, including information on why chapters did/did not participate and if the rules needed to be reviewed.

For a number of years, Harmony, Inc. and S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc. had exchanged invitations to its respective International Conventions, offering all-events tickets and priority seating to its President or designated representative(s) in attendance. With a goal of sharing organizational experiences, knowledge and ideas, the annual invitation would now be extended to additional organizations within the World Harmony Council. Harmony's President, Aura Daye, received invitations from Sweet Adelines International to attend its International Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana and its Directors Seminar in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Aura's attendance at both events helped to strengthen communication between the two organizations' administrative leaders.

The CAPITAL CHORDETTES, hailing from Canada's capital city of Ottawa, added a Canadian touch of class to the list of international performers when they represented Harmony, Inc. in Calgary, Alberta, at the S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc. World Harmony Jamboree. Their performance, topped off with a pride-

filled medley of Canadian songs, brought the crowd to its feet for a well-deserved standing ovation. The International Board selected the 1992 Championship Chorus, CHAMPLAIN ECHOES, to represent us on this program in Pittsburgh in 1994.

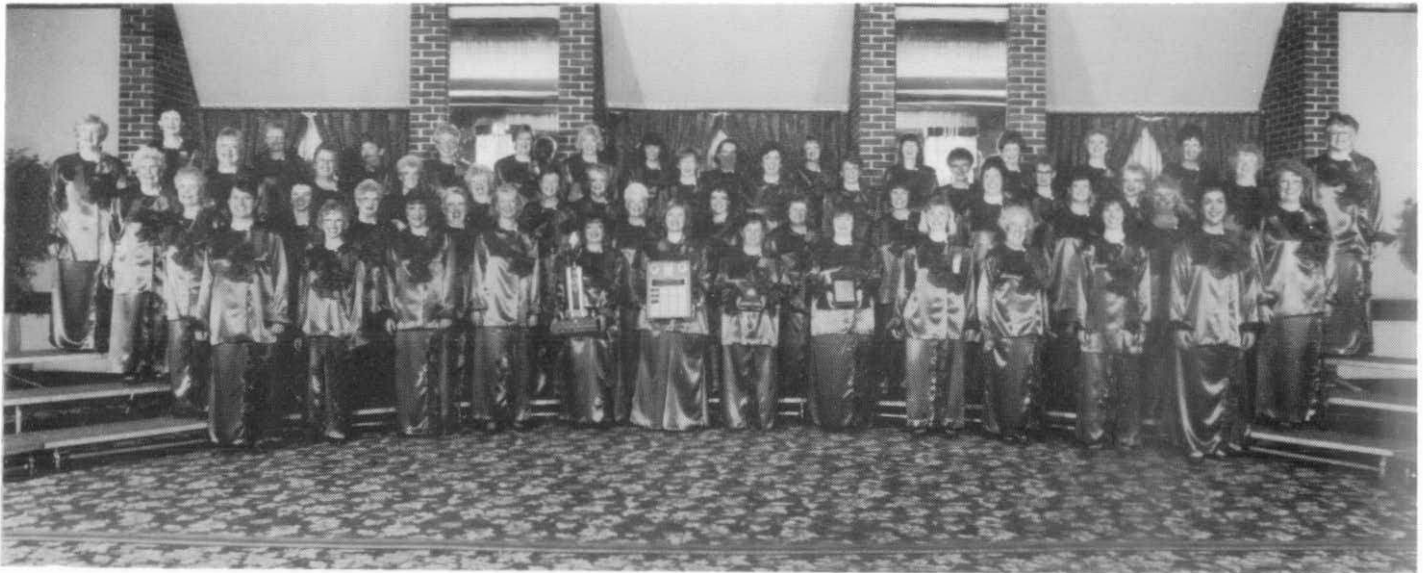
After monitoring the newly-adopted S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc. judging system, our International Contest & Judging Committee strongly supported the philosophy of this new system and recommended its adoption by Harmony, Inc. to the International Board, effective 1995. Upon the Board's decision to adopt the new system, means of providing training and education to the

membership began, including plans to have two official double panels at the 1994 AC&Cs: one in the current categories to determine the results of the contests; and a second panel in the new categories (Music, Presentation and Singing) to familiarize the contestants with the new categories before their implementation. Also effective in 1995, each Area would fund its own double panel through its AC&C budget.

Four of our Judging Program Category Specialists attended the S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A., Inc. Category School to receive training in, and gather information on, the new categories soon to be introduced.

Their participation in this School assisted our organization in determining the implementation of, and transition into, this new judging system, with the initial steps scheduled for the following year.

As the activities, innovations and decisions of another year became history, it was increasingly evident that, along with joyful music, "change" was a way of life in Harmony, Inc.; for without change, we would cease to grow; without growth, we would have no future. Like the eternal flame of the Olympic torch, Harmony's future was radiant!



*1994 International Chorus Champions – PRIDE OF NIAGARA (Regional Municipality of Niagara, Ontario)  
Linda Hilko-Baker, Director.*

