

TRIBUTE TO THE ALEXANDRIA
HARMONIZERS

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 19, 1995

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give much deserved recognition to the Alexandria Harmonizers Barbershop Chorus, a 130-voice barbershop chorus from Alexandria, VA. Led by Scott Werner, the Harmonizers have been entertaining audiences since 1948. This year the Harmonizers have been recognized for the seventh time since 1979, as the International Barbershop Chorus Champions, distinguishing them as No. 1 among over 825 men's barbershop choruses internationally. I admire their efforts to preserve this piece of American culture where synthesizers and electronic instruments would have taken over. I submit for the RECORD an article from the Washington Post which further expands on the history, and essence of the Harmonizers.

[From the Washington Post, Aug. 3, 1995]

HARMONIOUS HOTSHOTS—BARBERSHOPPERS
HIT PRIZE-WINNING PITCH
(By Lan Ngyen)

Strike another high note for the Alexandria Harmonizers.

The all-male singing group just won its third international barbershop chorus championship in nine years, beating out 21 groups from the United States, Canada and England.

With its performance of "I'll Be Seeing You," a song above love, familiarity and remembrances that was written for soldiers in World War II, the 130-member chorus again wowed the judges at the annual contest sponsored by the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America.

The Harmonizers also staged a dazzling rendition of "Sweet Georgia Brown," which was widely popularized as the Harlem Globetrotters' theme song and is about a woman who comes to town and stirs a commotion among the men. Along with their booming four-part harmony, the singers sway side to side, snap their fingers, dance in a chorus line and synchronize the flashing of their purple-sequined vests.

"We want to be the best we can to bring to people not only an excellent singing group but an entertaining group at the same time," said Scott Werner, the group's director of more than 20 years. "It's not a professional group, but the level of our singing is comparable to a lot of professional groups. We've worked very hard at perfecting our hobby."

The Harmonizers is one of more than 800 groups in the Wisconsin-based barbershop singing society, whose motto is "Keep the World Singing." Their form of music is based on the four-part harmony of a bass, a baritone, a tenor and a lead, who sings the melody. The songs have simple versus and are sung a capella because the blend and the richness of the four tones require no instruments to embellish the sound.

This type of singing dates to the late 1800s, according to Brian Lynch, the society's public relations director. People on street corners and in churches would sing four-part harmony to pass the time. Yet barbershop singing began to fade with the demise of vaudeville in the 1930s, around the time the national organization was formed by two barbershop singing aficionados.

Part of the Harmonizers' mission is to keep barbershop music alive in an era of

MTV, synthesizers and other electronic equipment that can play the sound of many instruments at once. For their part, the Harmonizers try to attract a wide range of audiences by singing more than traditional barbershop tunes, such as "Sweet Adeline." At a free concert last week at Fort Ward Park in Alexandria, for example, they crooned their version of "Music of the Night," a popular song from the play "Phantom of the Opera."

And unlike other barbershop chorus groups whose performances more resemble something you'd expect from a staid Sunday church choir, the Harmonizers emphasize pizzazz in their pieces, with the help of Geri Geis, an actress and choreographer. In a remake of the 1950s rock-and-roll tune "Little Darlin'" by the Diamonds, all the singers sport sunglasses. In a medley of selections from "Guys and Dolls," they don 1930s costumes and act out scenes.

The Harmonizers range in age from 15 to 93, and they come from all walks of life—doctors, lawyers, students, architects and military colonels. Many grew up singing in church groups or performing in school musicals.

"Choruses like ours are made up of a bunch of Joes who like to sing," said Bob Sutton, a 10-year member. "There's a tremendous reward for those who join. It's a part of my life. As long as I can continue to get the thrill that you get singing four-part chords, I'm going to continue to do that."

The Harmonizers practice three hours a week, give two performances a month and stage two full-blown shows in the fall and spring to finance their trips and costumes. They've taken their act on the road for Supreme Court justices and for performances at Wolf Trap, Carnegie Hall and the Kennedy Center, where they've sung with the likes of Perry Como.

Members of the Harmonizers, founded 47 years ago by a dozen or so members, attribute their success and longevity to the fraternal bonds the men have forged practicing and singing together. They say they make lifelong friendships and keep in touch through a monthly newsletter that notes births, weddings and funerals.

"A lot of [the organizations' success] has to do with camaraderie and friendships that you build in an organization like this," said Tyce Light, 29, a D.C. computer analyst who joined the group three years ago. "When members of the chorus are sick or wives have babies, the Harmonizers do pull together with strong family spirit."

A POEM BY RITA RUDOLPH OF EU-
LESS, TX, TO HONOR THE MEN
WHO FOUGHT IN THE D-DAY IN-
VASION

HON. JOE BARTON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1995

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following for the RECORD:

D-DAY, 6TH OF JUNE; FIFTY YEARS LATER

White crosses, thousands, all in a row; how still.

Beneath them, young men who never grew old.

Heroes; some say, who died so that others could live in freedom.

Look closely at these crosses and listen to the voices of all these young men.

I died so that you might live in a free world. I died so that you could do greater things with your lives.

I died so that this earth could be a better place for you and your children, so that peace, love and respect for each other as brothers would reign.

I gave you the rest of my life so that you could build a peaceful world. Each man living their lives for good; enjoying all the good things life has to offer.

I gave you the most precious gift I had; I gave you my life, my future.

Oh, if only we could rise up from this place where we have laid so long; we could show you what life should be like.

All of us here, could show you what life really means.

RYAN WHITE CARE ACT
AMENDMENTS OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 18, 1995

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, passage of the Ryan White CARE Act Amendments is the culmination of more than 20 years of untiring work by the HIV/AIDS community not only to reauthorize this landmark legislation, but to make it stronger. In a time when divisive politics has become the norm, the Ryan White CARE Act is a rare example of the good work that can be accomplished when individuals, despite different socioeconomic status, locales, and politics, come together in a strong partnership to work for a common goal.

This past Sunday I had the wonderful opportunity to join over ten thousand supporters of the Ryan White CARE Act at the Wisconsin AIDS Walk. Some walked to remember a loved one or coworker that had died of the disease; some walked in the hope they could raise money for research to help find a cure; some walked to promote awareness, or to show their support for the HIV/AIDS community. But they all walked together. And together they raised over \$700,000 for the cause.

Similarly, because we all worked together, Republicans and Democrats, Members from urban areas and those from rural districts, the Ryan White CARE Act is even stronger than the original legislation. For example, the new funding formulas that were so carefully fashioned will increase Federal AIDS funding in Wisconsin by over \$3 million.

It is through the commitment of the Ryan White CARE Act, that the Federal Government joins State and local governments in an inclusive partnership with health care providers, religious organizations, people afflicted with the AIDS epidemic, and members of the Wisconsin community who came out on Sunday to walk for a good cause. This partnership has afforded people with the HIV disease access to a comprehensive support structure that includes housing, medical care, legal and social services, and most importantly, hope.

I am proud to have been a part of this important bipartisan effort to reauthorize the Ryan White CARE Act. It is truly gratifying to see this bill pass overwhelmingly in both Houses. But on this important day, let us remember that we could not have reached this important goal if we had not all worked together.