

Sacred Harp Colorado

March 2010

Who We Are and What We Do

The Rocky Mountain shape note singers exist to preserve and promote the music and the traditions of American shape note harmony along the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. We sing principally from the 1991 Denson revision of the Sacred Harp (Red Book), but use some songs from the Cooper Book (Blue Book). From time to time we will sing from other traditional books such as the Missouri Harmony and Norembega Harmony depending upon the spirit and the occasion. We welcome any and all to join us at our monthly singings held in the cities along the Front Range. Loaner books are available for use or purchase. Our monthly singings are usually held to the schedule supplied at the end of this newsletter, but holidays or special circumstance may dictate that we move a singing date. If you are new to us, please contact one of our members listed below for current location, day/date and time of a singing in your area.

Editorially Speaking

Short ,sharp and to the point this month – Go forth from thy nest and be a singer. First at the 6th annual Tucson singing 6 and 7 March the details of which are provided in the attached flyer. Great weather, nice folks and two days of singing from the Denson Book which has improved with each passing year. As good as any singing becomes, it can always benefit from new faces and fresh perspectives of our music. Take them yours this year and hopefully we will gain theirs at some of our singings later in the year. Next, attend the 5th annual Pikes Peak on the 27th of March. A two book singing, this year we are once again blessed with the Chapel Of Our Saviour's parish hall as a venue with its elegant Edwardian setting and excellent acoustics. This singing does not yet offer a two day format, but this year does add a singing school Friday evening [the 26th] taught by Gaylon Powell of Austin, Texas in addition to the regular Saturday evening social and singing from the Harp of Ages. As an additional feature this month we are expanding the Where We Sing section to include other regular [monthly] singings across the Southwest for those of you who do have occasion to travel out of state. In this issue we lead off with the singings in Arizona and New Mexico and will expand this list as we find the information.

Quote of the Month

"A living tradition changes. If it stopped changing, it would be because it died." -- David Lee

Arkansas Valley Update

The group in the Valley continues to grow. Our singing on the 22nd of February had 10 singers and 4 children in attendance. Welcoming the Martin Family of Las Animas. If this continues we will have outgrown the living room.

2010 Rocky Mountain Convention News

New Mexico Sacred Harp advises that this year the convention will be held in Los Alamos, NM – Something which had been rumored at the Denver convention, but not confirmed by them until just recently. This move makes for some absolutely lovely travel for the Colorado singer that chooses to drive to the event. For the singer based in Denver or north of there, making the trip on US285 presents a leisurely day's drive on good two lane blacktop with a wide variety of scenery including the mountains west of Denver to Buena Vista and on thru the San Luis Valley into northern New Mexico. Continuing south on this road will connect you into the Enchanted Circle the western portion of which leads to Los Alamos. Much of this drive is available to singers in the Colorado Springs area by taking US24 west to Buena Vista and then turning south into the route described above. If you insist on taking I25 South, do turn off the interstate south of Raton, NM and proceed west on US64 to enjoy the wonders of the Enchanted Circle – Eagle's Nest, Angel Fire, Taos and a excellent side trip from Espanola to see the mission church at Chimayo. Anyone traveling thru the town of San Luis on US285 is well advised to stop and see the Stations Of The Cross Shrine sculpture garden installed by its creator Humberto Maestas on a hillside above the town. Food at the diner there is not bad either.

How We Can Make A Difference

Recently, Carol Selleck of Santa Fe and I exchanged a couple of e-mails to get a singer in Cloudfcroft, NM in touch with her family and the singers in Las Cruces. We discussed the progress that had been made here in the Arkansas Valley since our first all day singing in November and my hopes for expansion next into Pueblo. Carol allowed as how she was going to have to start calling me the Pied Piper. I told her we may think that we have a big hand in what is happening, but it seems that we just go where it pleases the Lord to send us and do what he gives us light to do.

Carol then provided the very response that makes her the beacon that she is in our community of singers. Quoting Carol now:

You just struck a major chord with me on how to reshape one's life in retirement. My retiree crowd in Santa Fe, mostly eastcoast relocaters, devote many hours as society contributors. They are the helping hands that serve food at the soup kitchens, furnish clothes for the homeless, read to elementary school students, provide English-speaking assistance, man the desk at museums. They meet a critical need. But there are other areas, other needs. I've been watching the undertow: a massive undercurrent of people who, though fortunate enough to cover the basics, pay their taxes, and depend on no assistance, find themselves in a society that is polarized and fragmented, where moral fiber has coarsened.

When I was really young, Mother and Daddy (family of 8) met with the church people --the Scotts (6), the Milligans (5), and the Harrises (5) -- every Tuesday night to sing. I couldn't wait to go because when I got sleepy Mother would let me fall asleep in the middle of the mound of coats on the coatbed. That coatbed, precursor to the coat closet, was in the bedroom next to the living room where everyone was singing. The same at every home. I couldn't wait to fall asleep in the middle of the coat pile listening to the music and the laughter. The music was ingrained in me.

My retirement, like yours, is back to the music. Our singings are soup kitchens for the soul. They give new life. If we spend our money to travel and be with others who sing loud, speak softly and understand the art of civility to one another, there is a shoring up at the core, a softening up of the brittle edges, and a mending of the fabric.

When I sit in the alto section at a big convention, I am sitting next to someone who has served their country, who has protested the wars, a PETA, a Vegan, a Hunter, a Liberal, a Conservative, an Independent, a Libertarian, a Christian, an agnostic, and a recovered alcoholic. But listen to the music. It's startling. Many of us are devoting our retirement to the healing power of spiritual music. As we follow the notes cross country, we hear the guidance of the spirit and see channels open and widen and deepen as people come together for the fun of it. We don't cross each other's personal boundaries nor step on each other's personal beliefs, if we can help it. How could this be, but for the spirit.

What you are doing with organizing those Colorado city singings, I saw my nephew and his friends do in Boston while they were getting their PhDs. What you are doing, I saw the Lees do by giving up the tranquility of rural Georgia to share their uncontaminated music with the rest of us. I saw the Carla and Jerry Schreiber take a spark of fasola from Alabama and fan it all over California. I saw the Alabama bus singers zigzag back and forth from New England to New Mexico. I saw David Ivey push and pull singing schools together. I saw the tenaciousness of the Owens family to hold the tradition and grow the crowd. I don't know how it happened in Minnesota, but that state it is a hotbed of singers. It's everywhere now, and it's a worthy cause for for retirees to go and lend a helping hand just by sitting in the square.

As I prepare these words for inclusion in the newsletter I am thinking of others who do this as well – Gaylon Powell, Mike Hinton, Leon Ballinger...the list can get to be quite long. May we never lose this, Carol, may we never lose this spirit.

Looking Ahead

Tucson Annual Sacred Harp Singing Convention 6 - 7 March [Denson Book] Sonora Co-housing 501 E. Roger Road, Tucson, AZ 85705. For information contact: Paige Winslett [520]743-1268.

Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing 27 March [Denson and Cooper books]. Chapel of Our Saviour in the Broadmoor, Colorado Springs, CO 80906. For additional information, contact: Pete Mathewson [719]469-5241 or 71mgbgt41@gmail.com.

110th Annual Southwest Texas Convention 29 – 30 May [Cooper Book] Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, McMahan, TX. For additional information contact: Tom Owen, (512) 398-6075, or Curtis Owen, (512) 398-2017.

Camp Fasola - Sunday, June 13 (5:00pm) through Thursday, June 17 (8:30am) – Programmed for Adults – Camp McDowell near Double Springs, Alabama (<http://campmcdowell.com>).

Canp Fasola - Monday, July 5 (4:00pm) through Friday, July 9 (8:30am) - Programmed for Youth (ages 10 and up) and Adults under age 30 and families who wish to accompany their Youth – Youth will have priority – Camp Lee near Anniston, Alabama (<http://camplee.org>).

Registration will begin January 1st.

Rocky Mountain Convention 25 – 26 September 2010 [Denson Book] Fuller Lodge, Los Alamos, New Mexico. Other details TBA.

Arkansas Valley Harvest Singing – Saturday 23 October 2010 [Denson and Cooper Books] Harmony Hall #13 5th Street, La Junta, CO 81050. 24 October singing from the Harp of Ages Location TBA. For additional information, contact: Pete Mathewson [719]469-5241 or 71mgbgt41@gmail.com.

Where We Sing and How to Find Us

In Colorado

Arkansas Valley Regular singings are 4th Mondays of each month from 6:30 – 8:30 pm at the home of Pete and Susie Mathewson 417 Carson Ave. La Junta. Contact Pete at 719/383-9056 or 71mgbgt41@gmail.com.

BOULDER Regular singings are 2nd Friday of each month 7-9 pm, at the home of Peter and Mary Lou Van Laanen. Contact Mary Lou for details at 303-447-9379 or e-mail her at vmarylou@indra.com

COLORADO SPRINGS - Sings regularly on the 2nd Sunday from 1:30 to 3:30 pm at the Pikes Peak Primitive Baptist Church 12th and Pikes Peak on the Westside. Please bring a dollar donation to the book fund. Pete Mathewson is the contact at 719-469-5241 or e-mail him at 71mgbgt41@gmail.com.

DENVER Sings weekly each Monday except the first Monday from 6:40 – 8:40pm at St. Mark's Orthodox, 1409 S. Vine, Denver. Special singings may be arranged [in addition to the regular Monday evening singings] for out of town visitors to the Denver/Boulder area. Out of town singers should call Sharon Kermiet at 303-931-8445 or email her at skermiet@goodwilldenver.org and at coral96@indra.com to arrange a special singing. Bring a dollar as a contribution to the book fund. For the location of any specific singing, please contact Pat Dolan at 303-778-6297 or e-mail him at ruralplain@aol.com or Sharon Kermiet at skermiet@goodwilldenver.org.

FORT COLLINS - The singing is normally the first Monday of each month 7-8:30 pm at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 2000 Stover Street. Contact Hill Grimmert for specifics at 970-231-1197 or e-mail him at hill@sacredharpcolorado.org

Elsewhere in the Southwest

Albuquerque, NM - Second and fourth Sundays, 2:00-5:00pm at the Immanuel Presbyterian Church 114 Carlisle Blvd. SE Albuquerque, NM 87106 For general info, contact Nancy Nortz (505)281-0267, nnortz@nmia.com

Las Cruces, NM - Meets every 2nd and 4th Thursday at 6 pm, remember 2 - 4 - 6. They meet at the Universal Unitarian Church building on Solano Street in Las Cruces. From I-25 South, take the University exit (exit 1). Continue on University through 3 stop lights at Triviz, Locust, and Jordan. The 4th light is Solano. Turn right (north) and go about 1/2 mile. The church is just after Wofford street on the left. We park on the north side of the church and use that entrance. For additional information please contact Janet Morgan at 505/795-9614.

Tucson, AZ - First and Third Saturdays - 2-5 pm Sonora Co-housing Common House 501 E. Roger Rd. just west of First Ave. in Tucson. For additional information please call:

call Erika Roush (520) 887-0589 or Paige Winslett (520) 743-1268

Sacred Harp On The Web

Our local websites are Sacred Harp Colorado at www.sacredharpcolorado.org and the Rocky Mountain Shapenote Singers at <http://lamar.colostate.edu/~dakspk>. The national web site is www.fasola.org

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Sixth Annual Tucson

SACRED HARP
SINGING CONVENTION
Singing from *The Sacred Harp*

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

MARCH 6 - 7, 2010

9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Sonora Cohousing Common House

501 E. Roger Road, Tucson, Arizona
(between N Stone Ave and N 1st Ave)

EVERYONE IS WELCOME ~ NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

THE SACRED HARP continues a 200 year old American tradition
of singing non-denominational hymns and gospel songs, written with shaped note heads.
Singers sit in a hollow square facing the center and sing four parts, a cappella, with uninhibited vigor.

THE MUSIC has a distinctive open and modal sound, and the singing is exuberant, rhythmic, and full of feeling.
Visitors are encouraged to join in the singing, or they are welcome to just listen.

~TUNEBOOKS will be available on loan, or you may purchase a book at the singing for \$20~

~POTLUCK DINNER ON THE GROUNDS at 12:30 ~ locals, please bring a covered dish to share~

MORE INFORMATION AT www.tucsonfasola.org/

or contact Paige Winslett (tucsonfasola @earthlink.net or 520-743-1268)

~ JOIN US FOR OUR REGULAR SINGINGS ~

1st & 3rd Saturdays: Sonora Cohousing Common House, 501 E Roger Rd, Tucson, 2:00-5:00
p.m

Come Join Us At The Foot Of Pikes Peak For An All Day

Sacred Harp Singing

Saturday March 27th 2010

9:00AM to 3:00PM

Chapel of Our Savior

Episcopal Parish in the Broadmoor
#8, 4th Street, Colorado Springs, CO 80906

The Fifth Annual Pikes Peak Sacred Harp Singing is an opportunity for you to sing at the foot of the mountain that inspired Kathrine Lee Bates to pen the lyrics to one of our most beloved patriotic hymns – America The Beautiful. On Saturday the 27st of March 2010, we will again sing from both the Denson and Cooper books. Come share a great day of shape note singing and our fine Front Range hospitality including dinner on the grounds at noon.

Sacred Harp is four part a cappella harmony using a four shape notation. Since we sing for ourselves rather than an audience, new singers are always welcome and encouraged to participate. Interested listeners are equally welcome. Books are available for loan or purchase. Admission is free with donations accepted. Come and bring a friend.

Directions from Interstate 25 North or South: Take the Circle Drive exit [#138] and proceed West on Circle which becomes Lake. Continue on Lake toward the Broadmoor Hotel. Turn right on 4th Street to the Chapel.

For lodging information, please contact: Joyce Wood at 719/332-1162 or joycewood@q.com.

Other Activities: Friday evening singing school taught by Gaylon Powell. Saturday evening social with singing from the seven shape Harp of Ages. Sunday services at Pikes Peak Primitive Baptist Church 12th and Pikes Peak on the West side. Seven shape singing at 10:30AM, preaching at 11:00.

For additional information please contact: Pete Mathewson at 719/469-5241 or 71mgbgt41@gmail.com

Come Sound His Praise Abroad And Hymns Of Glory Sing