



# **QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

There are many questions that run through a prospective member's mind as he contemplates joining our Society and the Southern Gateway Chorus. Some of these are addressed here. If there are other questions, do not hesitate to ask any member or the Vice President of Chapter Development (VPCD) (aka Membership V.P.). This Q&A addresses many initial questions.

## **Q. Who do I talk to about questions?**

**A.** The Vice President of Chapter Development directs the chapter's membership system and can lead you through your guest process.

See the SGC website [www.southerngateway.org](http://www.southerngateway.org) to learn more about our chapter and the Barbershop Harmony Society [www.barbershop.org](http://www.barbershop.org) to learn more about our chapter and the Barbershop Harmony Society. Our district website is [www.singjad.com](http://www.singjad.com). (More on that later.) Note that you may still see the traditional SPEBSQSA name and logo used on some literature. But the new "Barbershop Harmony Society" name and logo are official now.

## **Q. How do I join Southern Gateway?**

**A.** The Chorus requires that the prospective new member attend at least three regular weekly rehearsals before making a decision to join. This will give you an idea of what the atmosphere at rehearsals is like and of the time and level of commitment is required.

### **First guest visit:**

You will have your voice range checked and then you will be assigned a section (singing part) and a "Buddy" within your section if you are new to barbershopping. Your Buddy will help you in many aspects of being a guest. If you choose to join our Society and chapter, he will be your mentor during your first year of membership. He will introduce you to your Section Leader and our Music Director.

Assigned Buddy (name and Phone #) \_\_\_\_\_

My Section Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

You may be issued a Guest Song Book depending on the time of year and the current chorus activities. We encourage you to sing with the chorus as much as possible. You may be assigned a temporary riser position next to your Buddy. Ask any questions you have. Just have fun!

### Second and third guest visits

Sing with the chorus as much as you feel comfortable and also ask questions. You will be given access to the SGC “Members Only” website where you can access printed “Music” and recorded music for you to study and learn. All of our music and recorded singing are on the SGC website. Ask the V.P. of Music about what songs to focus your learning on.

### **Q. What happens *after* my third visit?**

**A.** You will receive a vocal audition, and you will be given feedback by a member of the SGC Music Team. The V.P. of Music is Jeff Legters.



Jeff Legters

After feedback, you may repeat your audition if necessary. Our hobby is about total performance. Therefore, SGC auditions have both a singing and a visual component.

After passing your audition and attending the third weekly rehearsal you may obtain an application for membership from the Vice President of Chapter Development.

**Q. Then what?**

**A.** Upon completion of your membership application, it, along with your dues payment, will be passed along to the Chapter Secretary who will present it to the Board of Directors for approval at the next monthly Board Meeting. Once the Board approves your membership, your application and dues payments will be forwarded to Society Headquarters for processing. In a few weeks, you will be presented with a membership pack and inducted into the Society at one of our regular rehearsals, at which time you will be recognized as a new member!!!

**Q. How much does it cost to join?**

**A.** Current fees will be discussed with you by the V.P. of Chapter Development at the time you receive your application. An outline of these fees is included on the website under “Becoming a Member”. Payment plan options may be discussed with the VPCD at the time of your application and are also discussed on a separate page.



**Q. When do I get a uniform and perform?**

**A.** As you learn our repertoire of songs and gain confidence with it, you will become aware of up coming performances and competition events. You can expect to be ready to perform on stage in approximately 10-15 weeks from the time you start rehearsing with us. Remember that you have to be able to PERFORM about a dozen songs! This will depend largely on how much time you are willing to work with the printed arrangements, recordings, and choreography. Our uniform coordinator, Bette Ramsey, will work with you on assembling your uniform and other needed items. There are 3 forms relating to uniforms. These need to be completed and given to Bette before she can issue uniform parts.

**Q. What about rehearsals?**

**A.** Rehearsals take place every Tuesday night, starting promptly at 7:30 P.M. and last about 2.5 hours. Extra rehearsals are sometimes scheduled prior to the Annual Show and prior to a competition. Notification of these extra rehearsals is made well in advance. Occasionally, a Saturday workshop is scheduled for special coaching work. A level of 90% attendance is generally considered necessary for competence in our performances.

**Q. How do I learn barbershop technique?**

**I've never had any voice lessons.**

**A.** This will be taught during rehearsals by the coaches from within the Chorus, plus several District/Society schools are available. This is an ongoing process with repeated references made to breathing technique, vowel production, sound production and other elements needed to produce the desired ensemble sound. The first half hour of rehearsal is devoted to vocal craft. Also, you can check out the Barbershop Harmony Society website at [www.barbershop.org](http://www.barbershop.org) for materials and tips.

**Q. What if I can't read music?**

**A.** Our teaching methods are such that a singer can learn his music by ear. This is accomplished by repetitions in rehearsal, and the use of "Music" section of the SGC website. Here all songs are recorded and sheets music is available to print.

**Q. What if I have other questions?**

**A.** Contact your Buddy or the VPCD. If they don't have the answer, they should know who does.

**Q. Who are the other key Chapter officers?**

**A.** See the SGC website for current officers and for rosters generated by both the Society and by SGC.

**Q. What events and activities does the Chapter have each year?**

**A.** The first major event each year is our Spring Show around the third weekend of March. This is usually a musical comedy written and designed by SGC members and attracts about 2,000 SGC fans. After the Spring Show, we begin to prepare for International Convention and Competition, which is held around July 4. Here, the top quartets and choruses compete for medals and bragging rights. This is a 5-6 day event and moves to a new city each year. In September and October, Divisional and District competition take place. SGC is a part of the Western Division of the Johnny Appleseed District. The Divisional is a "qualifying" contest and the top choruses go on to the District contest. The top scoring chorus at the District competition qualifies for International competition the following July. Other choruses qualify as at-large competitors based on their point scores. You will come to understand scoring as you gain experience. Quartets have a separate qualifying competition in the spring.

Around the Holidays, SGC participates in charitable sing-outs and shows as determined by the Board of Directors, the Music Team, and the VP of Marketing. Throughout the year we take part in shows around the local area and sometimes the state of Ohio. SGC has entertained at such events as the Tall Stacks Festival, lighting of the Fountain Square Christmas tree, the Cincinnati Pops Orchestra performances, for live local television, and many other occasions.

**Q. Who are the directors and coaches for SGC?**

**A.** SGC is blessed with many great directors and coaches, most of whom have judged at the International level. These men and their work are discussed on the chapter website.

Joe Connelly, Paul Gilman, Garrett Hilsinger, and others direct and coach SGC's musical performance. They have earned multiple internationals medals for their individual quartets.

**Q. Is there a women's auxiliary for SGC?**

**A.** Yes. The Gateway Gals support SGC with many activities and outstanding fund-raisers. They meet monthly to conduct their business and hold social events for their members. All spouses of members are welcome and will be invited to join once you are approved for membership. Their website has a link on the [www.southerngateway.org](http://www.southerngateway.org) website under "Quick Links".

**Q. How do I keep up with what is happening with SGC?**

**A.** Our weekly bulletin is available for Guests on a table in the entry to the rehearsal hall upstairs at the Lodge. Once you are a member, you will be added to the chapter's e-mail group. Our website also has the weekly bulletins, the calendar, and other information about events, people, etc.