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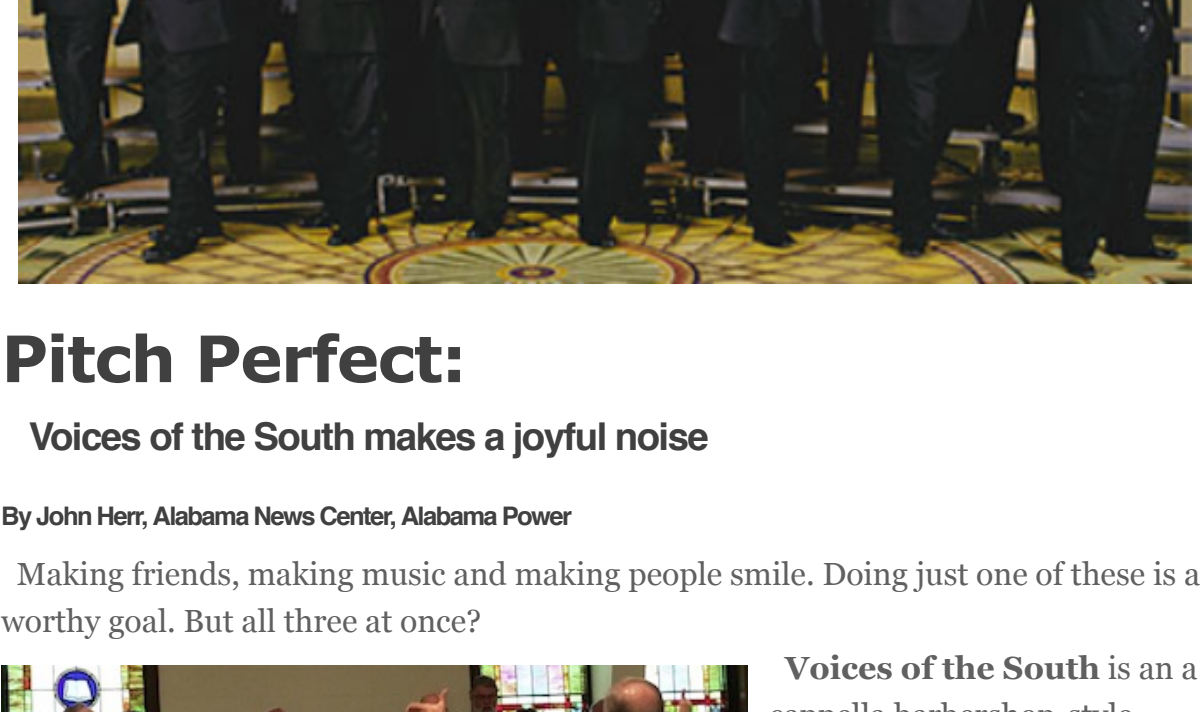
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Monthly newsletter of the Voices of the South chorus

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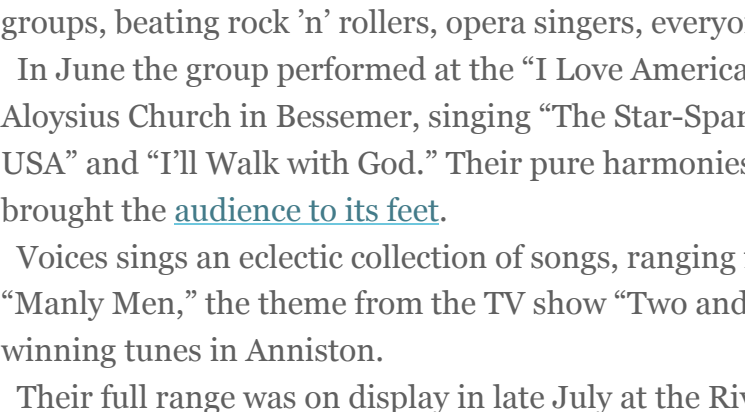


Pitch Perfect:

Voices of the South makes a joyful noise

By John Herr, Alabama News Center, Alabama Power

Making friends, making music and making people smile. Doing just one of these is a worthy goal. But all three at once?



Voices of the South is an a cappella barbershop-style singing group based in Birmingham, with 24 members at the moment. They practice out of the Saint Mark United Methodist Church in Vestavia Hills on Monday nights, honing a sound that

has won competitions and wowed crowds throughout the Southeast.

“My favorite was the Anniston’s Got Talent show,” said **Kenny Hatton**, director of **Voices**. “There were no empty seats. We sang two songs and came in first out of 26 groups, beating rock ‘n’ rollers, opera singers, everyone.”

In June the group performed at the “I Love America” Independence Day show at St. Aloysius Church in Bessemer, singing “The Star-Spangled Banner,” “God Bless the USA” and “I’ll Walk with God.” Their pure harmonies and tight intonation repeatedly brought the [audience to its feet](#).

Voices sings an eclectic collection of songs, ranging from a “Temptations Medley” to “Manly Men,” the theme from the TV show “Two and a Half Men” That’s one of the winning tunes in Anniston.

Their full range was on display in late July at the Riverchase Galleria in Hoover, where the two-hour set put smiles on the faces of camera-clicking shoppers.

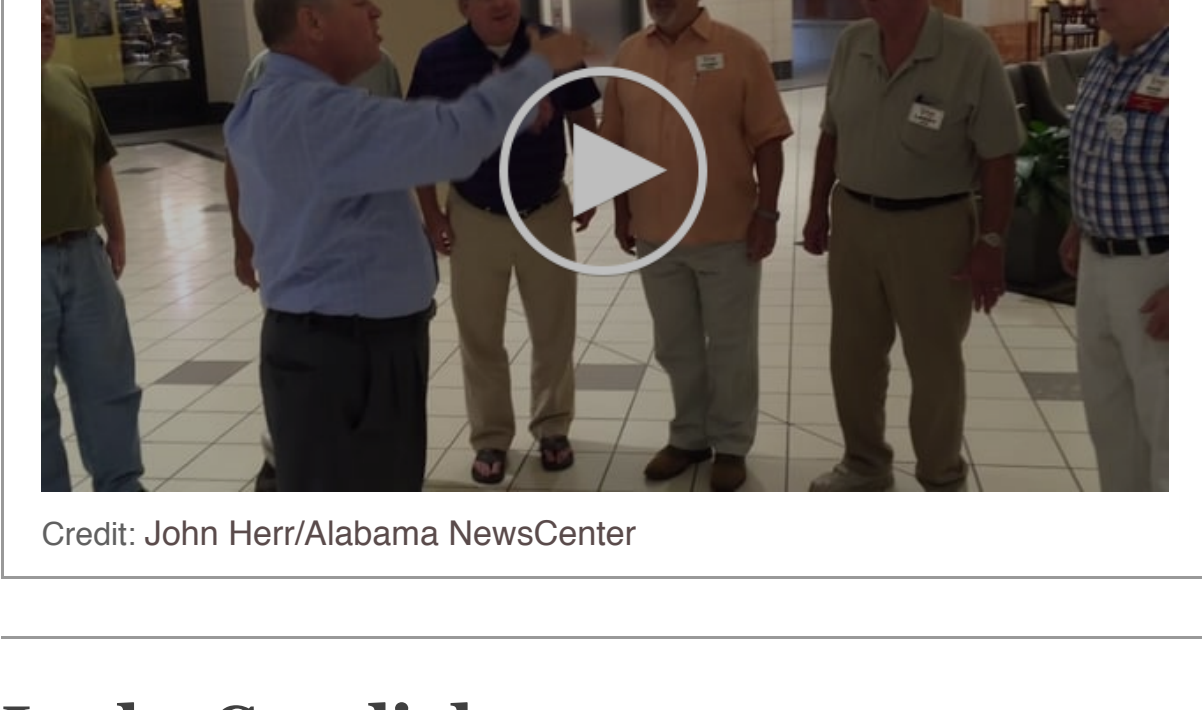
“It’s just good a cappella singing, barbershop harmony. It’s a lot of fun,” said baritone **Frank Buttlr**, who has been singing barbershop for 49 years. His sons, one a retired Georgia Power engineer, and grandson also sang for a time.

The group’s official mission is “to enrich lives through

singing.” The members engage easily with audiences and welcome new people to practice with them, reassuring them that they do not have to be accomplished singers.

“We want everyone who loves music to be able to share the same thing we get out of it, which is the ability to entertain and have fellowship with others who enjoy music,” said tenor **Darrell Mansfield**. “This is our common bond.”

Click here to view the entire story, video and pictures at Alabama Power’s [Alabama News Center](#).



Credit: John Herr/Alabama NewsCenter

In the Spotlight

Tom’s been singing his whole life!

Why do you sing?

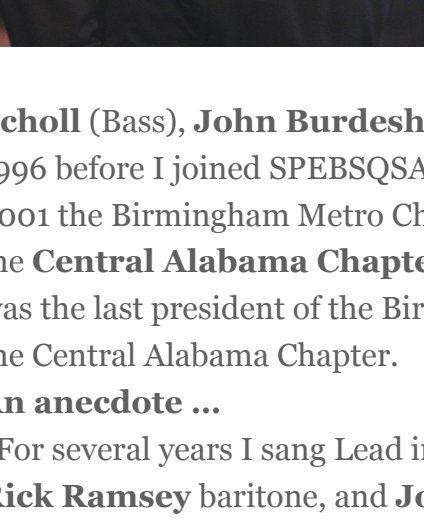
You’ve got to be kidding! Why are you asking me a question like that? Everybody sings. Somehow, some way, whether you hear someone’s voice or not — Everybody Sings!

Why sing barbershop?

Singing barbershop allowed me to perform popular music. I had always been limited to the religious genre of music. More specifically quartet singing gave me the means to broaden my public performance experience. I am very happy and thankful that it also opened up a whole new world of friendships for me.

Who are you?

Thomas B Brown III. I was born Nov. 26, 1946, in Sylacauga, Ala. I have been married for 25 years to **Joan Pierson Brown**. I have a daughter, **Laura Sykes**. She and her husband **Mike** and our two grand-children live in Austin, Texas. I have two step-sons, Joan’s boys, who live in the Birmingham area. I retired after 35 years as a real estate



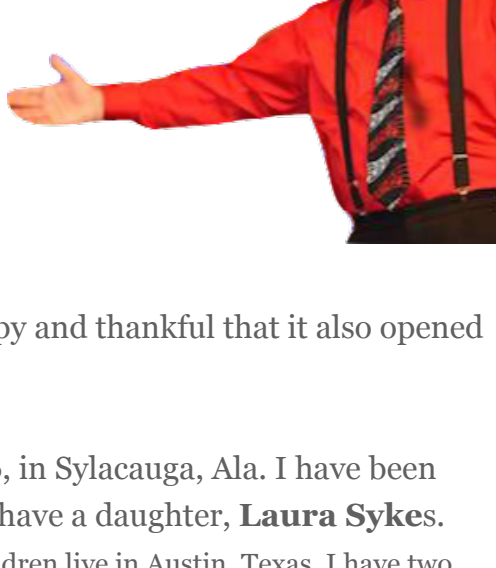
appraiser and former accountant.

Got experience?

I started singing with the children’s choir at the First Methodist Church of Sylacauga. I would guess that from that choir, through my college years, followed by marriage and business careers, there has rarely been a year I wasn’t active in a nearby church choir. I think of my “vocal range” as **Baritone**, but I am most comfortable singing Lead in barbershop arrangements. I started singing Lead in a Barbershop Quartet in about 1980 with **Dick Scholl** (Bass), **John Burdeshaw** (Baritone), and **Sonny Holt** (Tenor). But it was 1996 before I joined SPEBSQSA, Inc., in the **Birmingham Metro Chapter**. In 2001 the Birmingham Metro Chapter merged with the Tuscaloosa Chapter to become the **Central Alabama Chapter**. We took the chorus name **Voices of the South**. I was the last president of the Birmingham Metro Chapter and the first president of the Central Alabama Chapter.

An anecdote ...

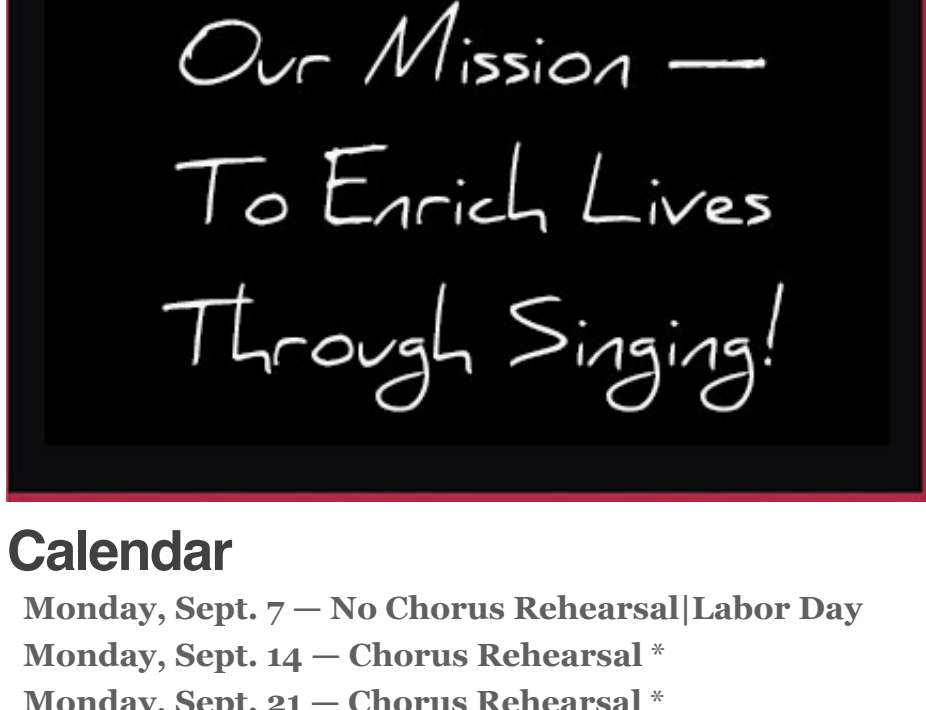
For several years I sang Lead in the Spectrum Quartet. **Allen Reynolds** was tenor, **Rick Ramsey** baritone, and **Joe Ezell** bass. We placed third in the **Dixie District Fall Contest** in 2002. That was a pretty good feeling and, to some degree, payment for the long hours we had spent rehearsing. We went on to sing many memorable gigs, including performing on the revered stages of music halls in St. Petersburg, Russia, in 2004. But that wasn’t the best part. That came when I was singing at an “Afterglow” following a contest in Chattanooga. A nice crowd sat at tables scatter throughout the place. We sang “Imagination.” When we finished we got a nice round of applause, but one lady in the audience looked me straight in the eye and mouthed the words, “Thank you.” We all hope to make a connection to the audience when we sing, and that moment was a special example of “the connection.” I’ll never forget it.



You're Invited!

Come join **Voices** for an evening of music and fellowship as we host our **Family & Friends Night**, Friday, Oct. 16 at 7:30 p.m.

We invite you to be our guest as we perform the contest songs we will be singing at the **Dixie District Fall Contest** in Atlanta Oct. 24. After the singing please join us for refreshments and fellowship. The evening’s activities will be at Saint Mark United Methodist Church, 2901 Columbiana Road, Vestavia Hills, Ala.



Calendar

Monday, Sept. 7 — No Chorus Rehearsal|Labor Day

Monday, Sept. 14 — Chorus Rehearsal *

Monday, Sept. 21 — Chorus Rehearsal *

Monday, Sept. 28 — Chorus Rehearsal *

Monday, Oct. 5 — Chorus Rehearsal *

* 7 to 9:30 pm, Fellowship Hall, Saint Mark United Methodist Church.

Upcoming

Friday, Oct. 16 — Family and Friends Night, 7:30 p.m., Saint Mark United Methodist Church, Vestavia Hills

Oct. 23 and 24 — Dixie District Fall Convention and Competition, Atlanta, GA

Dec. 12 — Voices of the South Annual Show, Spain Park High School, 7 p.m. - Hoover, AL

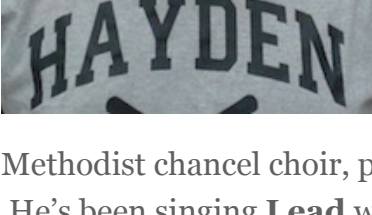
Dec. 18 - Performance at Oxford Performance Arts Center - Oxford, AL

Please welcome our new members

Two’s company, three’s a crowd! And **Voices** has added a “crowd” to our membership. Three new members joined the group last month.

Ean Nazarchyk became the youngest member of the chorus, **Alex Garrison** also dropped the average age of the group, and **Jim Weldon** added some appreciable experience.

Ean Nazarchyk



Ean is a 17-year-old senior at Hayden (Ala.) High School.

He says he was looking for more vocal training than he could get in his church or at his school. He told his mom, a former **Sweet Adeline** singer, he wanted to join a singing group. She found **Voices**. Ean and his mom showed up one Monday night for practice.

“This is the best thing I’ve ever done. I’m learning a lot of new skills,” Ean says.

He is involved musically with his church and his school. This is his fourth year in marching band at Hayden. For the past three years he’s been playing the piccolo. He also sings tenor in the Gardendale-Mt. Vernon United

Methodist chancel choir, plus he sings second tenor in their Men’s Ensemble. He’s been singing **Lead** with **Voices** for about two months.

Alex Garrison



Alex is a 22-year-old senior at the University of Alabama. He lives in McCalla, Ala., and will graduate from UA with an accounting major in December.

He’s been singing in school since he was in the 10th grade at Bay High School in Panama City, Fla. Alex is good friends with another **Voices** singer, **Daniel Hipps**. When Daniel got married Alex went to the ceremonies. Daniel’s quartet sang at the reception and that’s where Alex first heard barbershop.

“That’s when I knew I had to sing with **Voices**.” He started coming to practice and is now singing **Tenor**.

Jim Weldon

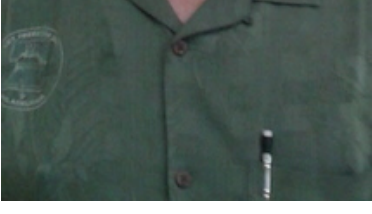


Jim is from Helena, Ala. He is a seasoned barbershop singer. He’s been performing barbershop music for more than 35 years. He not only sings with **Voices** but he also is a member of the Tuscaloosa chapter.

He’s recently retired from BellSouth and can now spend more time singing. Jim sang barbershop internationally and has performed all over the United States. He’s also competed on the international stage four times.

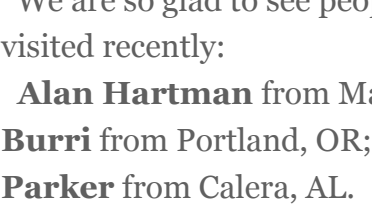
“Barbershop has taught me a lot about emotions,” he says. “I am happy to tell you that I sang to both of my daughters in the hospital when they were born. I live Barbershop.”

He’s singing **Lead** with the group.



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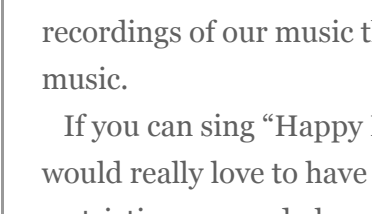


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If you can sing “Happy Birthday” we can teach you the rest you need to know. We would really love to have you sing with **Voices of the South**. There’s only one restriction — you do have to be a male. Sorry ladies.

We rehearse from 7 to 9:30 p.m. each Monday in the Fellowship Hall of Saint Mark United Methodist Church, 2901 Columbiana Road, Vestavia Hills 35216. You can also call us at 205-252-SING (7464).

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Our mailing address is:

2901 Columbiana Road
Vestavia Hills, AL 35216

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