

This crew doesn't need handlebar mustaches

By LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER
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Four Clarenceville High students learned being in a barbershop quartet doesn't require handlebar mustaches in front of a Bo Riser. They don't even need handlebar mustaches.

Nonetheless, the C-4s have found sheer bliss in singing songs in a style of yesteryear. The teenage quartet has performed at school concerts and at the district's Realtor Luncheon March 14.

"Performing the National Anthem at a Red Wings game would be sweet," said Brian Renchenski, who sings baritone.

The C-4s (the "C" stands for Clarenceville and the "4" is the number of members) formed on a bus trip to the airport en route to Disney World last year.

In a fit of whimsy, then sophomores Rob Simpson, Eric Neal,

Gary Telin and Renchenski started singing Tennessee Ernie Williams' "16 Tons." They became hooked.

Renchenski, who is from Redford, was enamored with barbershop singing after performing a similar role in a school production of "Music Man."

"I thought it was awesome," Renchenski said.

A friend from Clarenceville United Methodist Church suggested he contact the Renaissance Chorus. Renchenski convinced his three friends to join him.

His cohorts expressed reluctance at first.

"I didn't think we'd be able to do it because of our age," said Neal, who sings lead. "I just thought we'd have to be older."

Simpson had his own concerns. Until his vocal foray on the bus, neither Simpson nor his friends realized he could sing.

■ While eschewing the traditional straw hats and red striped vests, the C-4s like wearing tuxedos or blazers. Their choreography comes straight from the hip, which appeals to the group's quieter member.

He plays percussion in the high school band and plays football and baseball.

He was intimidated at the prospect of performing with a group of vocal veterans. His fears were unfounded.

"These guys are really great," said Simpson, who sings bass. "They really like having us there."

With the Renaissance Chorus, which rehearses at Newburg United Methodist Church in Livonia, the foursome share their muse.

The C-4s attribute their sweet harmony to enduring friendship. They've known each other since sixth grade.

"You have to find the right group of people," Renchenski said. "We're all friends. It's a great group."

They hope others at school are inspired to follow their lead and continue with a barbershop group. All four are juniors and will graduate next year.

The Clarenceville district, which includes parts of Livonia, Farmington Hills and Redford,

boasts strong vocal and instrumental music programs.

"You can ask anyone at school, 'Have you heard the barbershop quartet?' Many would say yes," Renchenski said. "It makes us feel proud."

The group's repertoire includes chestnuts like "In My Room," "Hello Marylou," and "New York, New York."

The hardest part is finding time to rehearse, they say. All four are involved in band and sing in the 28-member "The Choraliers," the high school's vocal group that has qualified for state finals.

"We find a way to practice," Neal said.

While eschewing the traditional straw hats and red striped vests, the C-4s like wearing tuxedos or blazers. Their choreography comes straight from the hip, which appeals to the group's quieter member.

"You just go up there and get people involved," said Telin, who sings tenor. "And have fun."

Consumers have lots to talk about

By PAT MURPHY
STAFF WRITER
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Consumers had plenty to tell Oakland County lawmakers about local telephone service.

Some of their comments were favorable to Ameritech, the company providing more than 90 percent of local service in Oakland County and Michigan.

But other comments were critical, with complaints varying from excessive charges to incomprehensible monthly statements.

Those critical comments prompted State Rep. John Pappageorge (R-Troy) — one of seven state representatives to host a public hearing on telephone service Monday at the Oakland County Complex — to offer a bit of advice to members of the audience wearing yellow buttons touting Ameritech as "Oakland County's Home Team."

You have demonstrated your allegiance, Pappageorge said. "But you've also heard complaints," he said, "and people (customers) are mad. And when they're mad, you have a problem."

"And if (Ameritech) doesn't fix the problem," the state representative said, "the legislature will. And the answer won't be as good as the one you could have provided."

The legislature is expected to rewrite the 1995 Michigan Telecommunica-

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CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN ZONING AMENDATORY ORDINANCE ORDINANCE NO. C-3-2000

An Ordinance to amend the City Code, Chapter 34, Zoning Chapter, of the City of Farmington Hills, to amend Section 34.32 to reclassify certain property as hereinafter mentioned:

The City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, hereby ordains:

Section 1. That the City Code of the City of Farmington Hills, Chapter 34, Zoning Chapter, is hereby amended in part to amend Section 34.32 to reclassify certain property in the City as follows: to show OS-1, Office Service District classification where RA-1, Single-Family Residential District classification is now shown in the area described as follows:

Sidwell #23-08-351-032

A part of the Southwest ¼ of Section 8, T1N, R9E, City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan. The parcel is located on the north side of Twelve Mile Road, east of Haledale Road, containing 5.79 acres.

Section 2. All ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed only to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

Section 3. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby ordered to take effect twenty-one days after their enactment.

Section 4. This Ordinance is hereby declared to have been adopted by the Council Members of the City of Farmington Hills, at a duly called meeting held on the 20th day of March, 2000, and ordered to be given publication in the manner prescribed by law.

AYES: BATES, BARNETT, ELLIS, OLIVERIO, BRICKNER, McRAE
NAYES: NONE
ABSENT: GRANT
ABSTAINED: NONE
ADOPTED: March 20, 2000

ZR 9-11-99

Effective: April 10, 2000

KATHRYN A. DORNAN
City Clerk

Published March 28, 2000

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN ZONING AMENDATORY ORDINANCE ORDINANCE NO. C-4-2000

An Ordinance to amend the City Code, Chapter 34, Zoning Chapter, of the City of Farmington Hills, to amend Section 34.32 to reclassify certain property as hereinafter mentioned:

The City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, hereby ordains:

Section 1. That the City Code of the City of Farmington Hills, Chapter 34, Zoning Chapter, is hereby amended in part to amend Section 34.32 to reclassify certain property in the City as follows: to show RC-2, Multiple-Family Residential District classification where RP-2, Planned Residential District classification is now shown in the area described as follows:

Sidwell #23-20-400-007

A part of the East ¼ of Section 20, T1N, R9E, City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan, more commonly known as 36130 Grand River Avenue (Historic District Site #314).

Section 2. All ordinances or parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed only to the extent necessary to give this Ordinance full force and effect.

Section 3. The provisions of this Ordinance are hereby ordered to take effect twenty-one days after their enactment.

Section 4. This Ordinance is hereby declared to have been adopted by the Council Members of the City of Farmington Hills, at a duly called meeting held on the 20th day of March, 2000, and ordered to be given publication in the manner prescribed by law.

AYES: BATES, BARNETT, ELLIS, OLIVERIO, BRICKNER, McRAE
NAYES: NONE
ABSENT: GRANT
ABSTAINED: NONE
ADOPTED: March 20, 2000

ZR 10-11-99

Effective: April 10, 2000

KATHRYN A. DORNAN
City Clerk

Published March 28, 2000