



The MVEer Monthly August 2021

The Power Stance

Bryan Ziegler teaches us to stand with our feet apart, grounded, head resting above our shoulders, upright, imagining we are sitting as if our tush were on a barstool, but he told us of an opera singer who really exemplifies a power stance. He is **Dmitri Hvorostovsky**, known as the *silver-maned baritone from Siberia*.



Bryan asked us to consider Dmitri's wide stance. Unfortunately, brain cancer took him at age 55 in 2017, but you can watch his singing stance, breathing, and command of his body in the following YouTube compilation video. Watch his stance.

<https://youtu.be/Mt7wYGysu0Q>



MVE Social Event – July 7, 2021 – Carol Lietke

Had a great time hosting the **One Hope** winetasting fundraiser with **Mike Lietke** for **Midwest Vocal Express** chorus. It was great to visit in person and chat with those participating via Zoom and the wine was excellent. Many thanks to **Dave Baxter** for making a wonderful smoked salmon for us to enjoy with our tasty beverages, while others joined online. What a wonderful evening together.

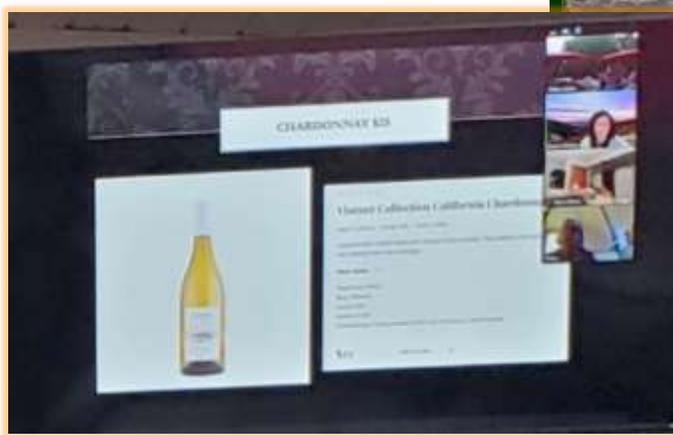


Chin-chin

Skol

Prost

Salud



Wine Tasting, Helping the Chorus, & Helping Others Continues

Thanks to everyone who spent yesterday evening sampling **One Hope** wine to benefit our chapter and other good causes! Special thanks to **Mike and Carol Lietke** for having some of us out on their lovely new patio! And thanks to **Gwen Wolken** for her wonderful presentation!

Here is the link ANYONE can use to order wine from **One Hope** that benefits our chorus as well as other good causes such as education to prevent heart disease and helping reunite veterans with a sense of purpose through disaster relief.

CLICK: <https://bit.ly/MVEWine>

Cheers!
Matt Nagel

Ordering Together Saves on Shipping

I got the wine order out this weekend, and was then asked if somebody could slip another two bottles in. Here's the gig - Carol and I are good for our order for a while, so we do not need to order more.



However, I will be happy to do another order if it can save you all some money. Basically, by pooling orders we can save you on shipping and even purchase price. Price breaks are at 4, 6, or 12 bottles.

I will be happy to pool orders that get us to those numbers, and just hand them over to you at practice and split up the invoice according to your purchase.

Please let me know. I will see if we have enough to drop the price via the volume purchasing mentioned above and if so, order at the end of next week (August 6).

Thanks, all,
Mike Lietke

SHOP TO SUPPORT THE CAUSE

**10% of your purchase will be donated to
the Midwest Vocal Express**

The Wedding of Max Mutza and Maddy Ogren



Max is the only MVE member to join the Might MVE chorus during COVID.

The chorus applauded **Max** (via Zoom) on Monday, July 26, for their July 17, 2021 wedding.

We all wish **Maddy** and **Max** much joy, love, and health.



Get Ready MVE for our Great District Contest Set – Mike Lietke

You may recall the rollout of our fall contest package concepts the first week we were back together unmasked. Here is **a recap** of what we are doing:

The set described below has many advantages:

- Easy to implement.
- Has a true emotional core that does not need to be "faked."
- Does not require extensive choreo.
- Music is simple.

- Costuming is a "slightly-better than everyday" attire. Possibly a color scheme, but TBA.
- It will play on feelings that are not only present in our guys, but also in the audience. It has the opportunity to really show the crowd that we are them and they are us, and that we took the time to care about them.
- We actually get to SAY SOMETHING IMPORTANT!
- This kind of theme could be a real calling card to those who are on the sidelines who have been aching to see more people and such. You know... Like all of us.
- It could be used in Charlotte and we can pause the big set for the year after to build up our membership, etc...

OK - if we have a curtain or not - it is not important. Ways to do it either way. Let's just say with curtain for this bit.

1. Together Again



Interestingly, I found it was written by Jeff Moss, who also wrote "Rubber Ducky", "I Love Trash", and "The People in Your Neighborhood." Great company of catchy songs drives us toward a winner.

1/3 of chorus is on stage. All on stage are in masks, socially distanced. Our shoulders slumped, some guys sitting on the risers. Downstage Right hanging on the railing facing the audience is a calendar. Bryan makes himself known by moving differently than the guys already on stage.

Bryan walks over to the calendar and turns the page (passage of time). Rubs his arm and pantomimes counting to fourteen with his fingers, then points back to the calendar. Smiling broadly, he takes his mask off and whistles a measure like in the recording. After that he starts doing the doodly-doo humming as in the recording. He mimes while singing to some of the people near him as if to say, "*you got the vaccine, right?*" and encourages them to take their masks off - at which point they join in the doodly-dooing. Of course, these are other excellent singers who will be joining him immediately, parts begin adding one by one.

It spreads throughout the chorus and others are joining from the wings. It all starts with masks on, but then they realize what is happening! People move closer together. Of course, when all are nearly on, the actual words start. Arm in arm and friend meeting friend. Hugs and high fives as greetings, maybe some awkward at first because people are not used to that physical contact anymore.

Broadway finish? Triumphant Kick line. Big happy. Splashy but simple as the song itself.

Implication: Can you believe we are all here, able to sing and stand next to one another and dang it - we made it through this thing! We took our shots. We wore our masks. We distanced. AND NOW WE ARE BACK TOGETHER WITH THOSE WE LOVE DOING WHAT WE LOVE!!!!

Between songs, really just reveling in each other's company. Slapping backs, *etc.* Take a deep breath. Close together on risers, possibly arm over shoulders. Get serious, but happy serious.

2. Auld Lang Syne (recast)

Rewritten from the original **Clay Hine** verse. It will not be about parting and looking forward to getting back together, but rather to what we have all endured and ARE back together... and that we knew we would be back together like this one day, no matter how bleak it looked. Ditto changes to the B section to serve our message - as a tribute to those who passed due to the disease and how we honor them by getting together to LIVE.



Huge lift to finish out the tag. Smiles and tears. Standing Ovation.

2021-2022 Season Auditions

Auditions Are Going On

Come sing with SE Wisconsin's premier Barbershop chorus! Midwest Vocal Express has a limited number of openings for our 2021-2022 season. Auditions will take place on the following dates/times at **Elm Grove Evangelical Lutheran Church** at **945 Terrace Dr., Elm Grove, Wisconsin**. The first was on Tuesday, July 27th but two more are coming up:

Saturday, July 31st – Noon -2 pm

Tuesday, August 3rd – 7 pm-8:30 pm

Head here for all the details: <http://www.mve.org/auditions> or go to [Midwest Vocal Express Auditions \(google.com\)](https://www.google.com/search?q=Midwest+Vocal+Express+Auditions) to sign up.

The audition process will include a vocal range test, pitch matching, and sight singing. Please come warmed up and ready to sing.

For in-person auditions, you must show proof of vaccination for COVID-19. For those unwilling or unable, a virtual audition option is available.

Those who pass their audition will be eligible to rehearse with the chorus. Those who wish to perform with the chorus will have to pass a second audition after attending a minimum of three rehearsals



Darius Sanders and Kristen Valentin – July 19, 2021

Darius paid us a visit one night. He is currently at the **Peabody Conservatory**, part of **Johns Hopkins University** in Baltimore studying Vocal Performance and Pedagogy as a grad student. Kristen Valentin is a music educator in MPS.



Darius Sanders leads us in Keep the Whole World Singing.

Great to see our chorus members flourishing.



Humor Corner



\$18.95 see: [Barbershop Harmony T-Shirt / In My Head I'm Singing | Etsy](#)