

Annual Show

Believe It Or Not was the name of Sound of the Heartland's annual show on Saturday, September 10th, at Bethel College in North Newton, KS. Dressed as a biker gang, the chorus performed songs from a wide variety of music genres, including some made famous by Elvis Presley.

As preparations began, LaDonna Cheatham, Master Director of the chorus contacted the Lincolnaire Chorus in Lincoln, NE and invited them to join her chorus on stage. The timing was right, and thus began an amazing collaboration that led to a wonderful musical and comedic production.

LaDonna Cheatham and Karen Randall, Lincolnaire's director, did most of the behind-the-scenes communication to find common music between the two choruses. They also compared the script to the repertoire of music for both choruses so that it would fit in with the story line of the show.

During the weeks leading up to the show, Sound of the Heartland worked on the actual production of the show: script, sets, facility, promotion, etc. Lincolnaires rehearsed their own music and modified costumes to fit in with the script.

Both choruses came together for the first time on Friday night for a dress rehearsal. All of the performers were excited to be in the auditorium together, patiently working out some of the logistics of having both choruses on stage. The script called for two groups who had differing opinions about Elvis. Even so, the two choruses worked as one. During breaks in the rehearsal, members chatted with old friends and made new ones as the choruses mingled backstage.

Saturday was a full day of rehearsing and running through the entire show. With no previous combined rehearsals, extra care was needed to make the most of available time. The energy built during the day as the performers could see and hear the show coming together. Lunching together and sharing the dressing room facilities it soon became clear that, for this weekend at least, we were working together as one unit and having a blast doing it.

JAZZ! Quartet was also a part of the show and spent Saturday rehearsing with the two choruses. Three of the members, Pam Mallard, Sherry Jean, and Tawny Brown are from Springfield Metro Chorus in Springfield, MO. LaDonna Cheatham

is the fourth member. JAZZ! is the current Region 7 third place quartet. They blended right in and became one of the gang!

Finally, it was show time! The effort expended over the course of rehearsals paid off as the show was seamlessly presented to a fabulous audience. They laughed and applauded, even screamed when “Elvis” showed up for a surprise performance. In all ways the show was a big success. And for the performers of Sound of the Heartland Chorus and Lincolnaire Chorus the biggest success was making friends and sharing our love of Barbershop harmony with each other.