

Local residents step on stage and sing

CHARITY JOHNSON

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How often driving along the street has a melody come across the radio and unexpectedly stirred something within you? Depending on their musical taste many use their imagination to take the stage along with the artist to belt out a soulful tune, play an electric guitar or maybe even masterfully perform what they believe to be a magical rendition of Bach.

For most, our musical talent or lack of talent is kept within the walls of our imagination or at least the walls of our car or our home.

However, some De Pere residents have taken their passion and love of music to a different venue. Instead of playing tunes in their heads, these De Pere musicians are performing in front of local audiences. With much work and practice these musicians have come together to blend their tal-

ent and create a variety of musical groups.

Scott Crevier of De Pere sings baritone for the GQ4 Barbershop Quartet. Crevier said the group has been together since 2000 and emphasized his feelings on the need to practice. "Its (practice) worth it...when we hit the chords correctly you could swear you hear five voices."

The quartet performs for a variety of events including service organization functions, holiday parties as well as several home games for the Green Bay Gamblers. All of the members have full time jobs and come together once a week to practice.

"We usually practice for a few hours each week. Our families have to be pretty understanding, since we always practice later in the evening and rotate between each member's home," Crevier said.

Barbie and the Earthshakers is another local group that practices in a member's home. Members of

the blues and classic rock band gather once to twice week in the basement of the home of Barb Hanky.

"My husband is very patient," Hanky laughed. "We do have a big fan in the house. Our one dog, the golden retriever, comes down every practice to listen to us sing and play."

Hanky admits that practice is only part of the mix to make a good band. "We have had members come and go and than somewhere along the line someone knew we were looking to fill a position and they would send someone over. We are a home for wayward musicians."

According to Hanky each musician has a reason for seeking out a group. "Keeping the blues alive," Hanky explained. "I used to play duet with Fat Mike and the Blue Cats. When Mike passed away in 1999 it was hard to lose a good friend. This is my way of carrying on what he started."



Members of the GQ4 Barbershop Quartet practice at one of the singer's homes. From left to right: Brian O'Neil (tenor), Chris Nimmer (lead), Nathan Falk (bass) and Scott Crevier (baritone).
(Charity Johnson/The De Pere Journal)

Second nature is the reason Ann Mattern of the Nicolet String Quartet stays involved with music. Mattern is a retired music teacher who taught at Dickinson Elementary, the De Pere Middle School and the De Pere High

School.

Mattern is not the only musician in her family. Mattern's husband plays in a separate group called The Abbey Brass and her son Phillip is a fellow member of the Nicolet String Quartet.