

## **PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS PRESENTS 56th ANNUAL SHOW:**

# *Life on the Farm*

*Featuring the Rural Poetry of Charlie Smith of Massey, ON*

The **NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS**, the Sault Ont. Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society, will present its **56<sup>th</sup> Annual Show Sat. April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023** starting at 7:30 p.m. at the Sault Community Theatre Centre. More show info can be found here: [www.northlandchorus.com/annual-show.html](http://www.northlandchorus.com/annual-show.html) A short video piece about the show courtesy of Zoe Sanguinetti of “Shaw Spotlight” is posted here: [https://youtu.be/n5dCqNUou\\_Y](https://youtu.be/n5dCqNUou_Y)

*Life on the Farm - First planned for Apr. 4, 2020, now finally onstage...*

...after a 3-year hiatus imposed by Covid! This show takes its inspiration from a series of performances by local (retired) auctioneer Vernon Bailey. Vern’s shows combined his recitations of poetry written by Canadian rural poet, **CHARLIE SMITH** of Massey ON, with music that related to the poem’s themes. The Northland Chorus has expanded this premise to include an original play written by Chorus Director **BOB SHAMI** with assistance from Soo Theatre Workshop’s **HARRY HOUSTON**. Stage direction will be handled by **JEANNINE JEFFERSON**.

The show is a rural take on the biblical story of the prodigal son set on the family farm of Floyd Gibson (**VERNON BAILEY**), who took over the farm from his father, Grampa Gibson (**BOB TISDALL**). Writing and reciting rural poetry runs in the blood. Every Saturday night, Floyd and Grampa get together over coffee at the farmhouse to regale each other with their latest poetic efforts. Will Floyd’s son Brandon (**LEO MOORE**) eventually take over the farm and continue the family’s farming tradition while also creating his own poems that reflect their way of life?

There are 11 poems in this show, 9 of which were written by Charlie Smith. One epic poem by Robert W. Service is also featured. The play will run as the show’s first act and will include 9 songs performed a cappella in 4-part harmony by the **NORTHLAND CHORUS** whose shows always feature a wide variety of music from across the musical spectrum.

Barbershop is not an era, rather it is a style of singing any kind of music from pretty much any era – so long as it’s got the potential for four-part harmony. Songs in this show include: a song from the musical Porgy and Bess (George Gershwin’s **SUMMERTIME - 1935**), and songs from Elvis (**CAN’T HELP FALLING IN LOVE- 1961**), Eddie Cochran (**SUMMERTIME BLUES - 1958**), Bobby Vinton (**BLUE VELVET - 1951**), Ian and Sylvia Tyson (**FOUR STRONG WINDS - 1961**), Mommas and Papas (**CALIFORNIA DREAMIN’ - 1965**) and more.

The show’s second act will feature a performance by a dynamic young quartet from Toronto: **MAPLE RESERVE**

Since 1995, a major portion of the show proceeds go each year to the Speech-Language Pathology Unit at Sault Area Hospital in support of local speech therapy programs. In 2019, the Northland Chorus reached a major milestone, with more than **\$100,000** donated to this cause since 1995. Several thousand more has been donated to the Speech Dept at War Memorial Hospital in Soo, MI. Support of local speech therapy services is in keeping with the Chorus’s motto:

*“We Sing ... That They Shall Speak.”*

**Revenue derived from the annual show is only source for Northland Chorus’s donations to the Hospitals.**

## FEATURED MUSICAL PERFORMERS

- **NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS:** Now in their 62<sup>nd</sup> year. Bob Shami – Music Director  
[www.northlandchorus.com](http://www.northlandchorus.com)
- **HEADLINE QUARTET – MAPLE RESERVE:** Award-winning Quartet from Toronto ON.  
(formerly Yonge Guns) <https://maplereservequartet.com/>

All Tickets: General Admission – **\$35.00\* CDN Funds**, available at:

- Theatre Centre Box Office\* (Station Mall)      Hess Jewellers (Churchill Plaza)
- Any member of the Northland Chorus      Soo Theatre/STARS (534 Ashmun St. Soo, Mich.)
- Tickets may also be available at the door.      Doors open at 6:45 p.m.      Curtain is 7:30 p.m.

\* A \$4.00/ticket service charge is added by the Mall Box Office to all tickets they sell. Box Office price is \$35.00 + \$4.00 = \$39.00

More information about the long history of support of the local Speech Therapy services by the Northland Chorus can be viewed on their website here:

<http://www.northlandchorus.com/about/our-service-project-we-sing-that-they-shall-speak.html>

### Northland Chorus - General Information

Barbershop singing had its beginnings in American barbershops of the 1890's through 1920's. Barbershops served as "tonsorial parlours": places where men gathered to share news, camaraderie and a song or two.



Above, at left, the logo of the Barbershop Harmony Society, an umbrella international organization which serves 15,000+ members in 700+ chapters across North America. It granted the Sault Chapter its charter in 1961.

At right, the logo of the Sault Ste Marie Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society. It represents an iconic barbershop singer whose International Bridge/handlebar moustache is symbolic of our membership coming from both sides of the border. The red, white and blue colours represent the colours of the flags of both nations. The four bars in the hat represent the 4-part harmony that is the hallmark of the barbershop style, and recall the stripes of a traditional barber pole. The "oh" vowel being sung is the first sound in each country's national anthem.

## Northland Chorus – Sault Ste Marie’s 2010 Medal of Merit Winner



The City of Sault Ste Marie awarded the Northland Barbershop Chorus the 2010 Medal of Merit, the city’s most prestigious honour, in recognition of community service given over 5 decades.

The award is given to nominees for “outstanding achievement in a chosen area which has resulted in making a valuable contribution to the community”. The award was officially presented to all then-currently active chorus members by Mayor Debbie Amoroso at a civic ceremony and dinner held May 7, 2011.



Northland Barbershop Chorus 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Show, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023

### *“Life on the Farm”*

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#### For Ticket Information:

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