

Community Advocate

Your Hometown
News Source.
Since 1974.



'Barbershopper' to bring harmony to Northborough Senior Center

By **Community Advocate Sta** - April 3, 2019

By Christine Galeone, Contributing Writer



*Manoj Padki (far left) poses with his fellow Fireside barbershop quartet members
Photo/submitted*

Northborough– In the spring of 2017, Manoj Padki stood alongside his Fireside Barbershop Quartet members and sang a stirring rendition of Billy Joel's "Lullabye (Goodnight, My Angel)" to a captivated audience and judges at the Boston Regional Harmony Sweepstakes A Cappella Festival.

"We knew we hit our groove on stage and did a good job; we did not know how good our performance was," recalled Padki. "We went in there with no expectations and were really flabbergasted when they announced us as the winners! That win afforded us the chance to go to the national competition and gave us a small grant to produce our first CD."

That exciting springtime evening was one of the highlights of the Berlin resident's journey as a barbershop quartet singer. This spring, he'll share what he's learned from that journey with members of a new class he will teach at the Northborough Senior Center. "Singing in Rounds" is scheduled to start Wednesday, April 17, and continue every Wednesday for eight weeks.

In the class, Padki will lead his students in singing rounds of varying levels of complexity. The class will explore everything from relatively easy songs such as "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" to more challenging ones like "Dona Nobis Pacem." But, ultimately, the class will be about more than singing rounds.

"This class is about building a community of singers," Padki said. "Although my class targets singing rounds, I intend to use rounds as a starting point to get more and more people singing together a cappella."

Padki, who's a baritone for Fireside, has known for many years how much joy that form of singing can bring. He joined the Barbershop Harmony Society in 1992. Since then, he has sung with various barbershop quartets and choruses, and he currently directs REHarmonix, an a cappella ensemble in Hudson. He has also traveled throughout the country and parts of Canada to perform in competitions, and he has sung at nursing homes and has delivered many Singing Valentines.

However, what he enjoys the most are the friendships he's made.

"Singing together opens you up, and you connect with your fellow singers on a deep level," Padki shared. "And to add to my joy, my daughter and son are also barbershoppers now. I am happy to pass on the legacy of this wonderful art form to the next generation."

In the class, he hopes that singing together will bring his students benefits such as a greater sense of wellbeing, improved memory and new friendships.

"Singing in a chorus literally rejuvenates your whole body, mind and spirit and has the potential to change your life," Padki said. "That is my hope for the participants in this class."

For information and to register for the class, call the Northborough Senior Center at 508-393-5035. For more information about Fireside barbershop quartet, visit www.firesidequartet.net.