

# The ADVOCATE

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## Tonic Sol-fa follows a cappella tradition

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STAFF WRITER

Guido never knew what he started. The five-man a cappella group Tonic Sol-fa will be performing at 8 p.m. in the Underground on Oct. 11 as part of MSU's Homecoming celebration. It is co-sponsored by the Campus Activities Board.

"This is a show for all ages. There's a song for everyone," said Robin Cawarecki, the CAB member who arranged for the group to perform at MSU.

Tim Hoback, Mark McGowan, Shaun Johnson, Greg Bannwarth and Cheston Lance, the five members of Tonic Sol-fa, perform varying styles of music, including jazz, rock, pop, country and opera. Last year they were nominated as Entertainers of the Year at the National Association of Campus Activities conference.

Tonic Sol-fa entertains audiences around the Midwest about 250 times each year at festivals, colleges, private shows and recently the Minnesota State Fair. The members of Tonic Sol-fa pride themselves in their ability to pull the audience members in and make them part of the show.

"We try to go with the moment on the stage. We like to take chances on improvisation and go with the moment. That makes it more fun ... if we do things that don't happen every day," said Lance. "I think our strong point is that we have fun. Every time we get up on stage, that's the highlight of our day."

The group has definitely met some inter-

esting people and had some unusual experiences. During one performance, a man brought a 220-pound mountain lion up on stage while they were singing "The Lion Sleeps Tonight." At another performance, while attempting to get a married couple on stage to act out the lagoon scene from "The Little Mermaid," something that no Tonic Sol-fa member will forget happened.

"We've got the people up on 'Kiss the Girl' and have them kiss or whatever. Well, we've got the wife up there on stage, and the husband saw that he was going to be brought up on stage, and he just took off sprinting for the back of this big open park

thing ... and the guy is like 250 pounds, he's just a big guy. Shaun takes off after him, jumps on his back, and they go down on the ground. I talked to him after the show and he's just like, 'I thought I had a bigger lead on him than that,'" Hoback said.

Tonic Sol-fa travels far and wide to entertain, but according to Hoback, they try to be themselves on stage and off, not putting on fake stage personalities. They realize how lucky they are to be doing what they love and don't take it for granted.

"There's no reason for [taking it for

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granted) I mean, you're just like everybody else, you just happen to be doing this ..." Bannwarth said.

All five members of Tonic Sol-fa gain inspiration from their families and remain fairly close.

"I think all of our parents show up a lot and support up as much

as they can," said Johnson. The group members also rely on other past experiences to enrich their vocals.

"I'm gonna relate wrestling to singing. ... What [my wrestling coach] said was if you can't picture yourself on the number one rung at the state tournament,

then you're not going to be able to do it ... I always have this attitude, I want to be better, I want to be the best there is and I want to go places. ... If you can picture it in your mind, I think you can attain that goal," Hoback said.

Sol-fa=A Cappella  
Friday, October 11-8p  
In The Underground  
Admission for MSU students w/  
\$2 for non-MSU students  
CAB, CMU and the Homecoming Co