

Wally Moves to Chapter Eternal

By **Ron Dudley**, Yeoman at Large

On the evening of February 25, 2013, Tenor **Walter Costello**, 81, succumbed to his battle with cancer at the Marion County Hospice, Tuscany House in Summerfield, Florida.

Wally is survived by his wife of 8 and ½ years, Margaret; three children, Kelly, Kim, and Michael, and five grandchildren. Wally was a lot of things to a lot of people--a loving husband, father, and grandfather as well as an avid golfer, although we knew him best as a dedicated showman and talented barbershopper.

I first met Wally during the early eighties at a gigundous inter-chapter bash the Beverly chapter staged annually over the VFW, Elks or some such hall on Rantoul Street in Beverly, Massachusetts.

Traditionally, they'd invite up to a dozen other chapters and we'd have a parade followed by selected quartets, then followed by one of the biggest comestibles layout I'd ever seen at one of these occasions. At the end of the formal program, pickup quartet mania ensued with simultaneous quartetting going on, spaced six to eight feet apart, all over the hall. Great fun! And Wally was right in there, *all the time*.

He was a communicant of St. Timothy's here in the Villages when he passed and the chorus was privileged to sing *Irish Blessing* for him as we wished all was well with his soul. Following the ceremony, I went over to the house and found myself in a fascinating conversation with his charming sister, Kitty, who shared with me the secret to Wally's amazing stamina; i.e., he walked 13 miles a day for 35 years delivering mail in Swampscott, Massachusetts.

Wally sang with the Spruce Creek barbershop chorus, and then joined the Central Florida Chapter at its inception. He sang some lead with **Doc Weir** I understand but he's remembered mainly as Tenor with the **Northeast Extension--Jim Lawrence**, lead, **Dave Mann**, bari and **Moe Foisy**, bass. Their all-New England vowel matching gave them an extra advantage as I remember it.

Wally often quartetted in the meeting hall lobby and I sometimes managed to sing with him there. His pitch accuracy, balance, and voice production was a pleasure--a delight--to share.

As a resident here in Spruce Creek, Wally often sang *Danny Boy* on the annual variety show; so often, in fact, that he was *aka* Danny Boy to many of his friends, Margaret told me. This accounts for his friend, Craig Mosier's, selection of *Danny Boy* as his bagpipe tribute to Wally at the beginning of the funeral service. What a nice thing. And recalling the service, I'd be remiss not to mention his granddaughter, Emily's, beautiful and plaintive, *a capella* rendition of *Amazing Grace* during the ceremony.

We thank Margaret, for most graciously making time for an **HOF** Heartbeat interview as a basis of this article. Margaret, who is also a former **HOF** Heartthrob, wants everybody to know that she's doing OK, thanks everybody for their support, misses Wally terribly, and just knows that he's singing with the angels now.

Editor's Note: Contact Margaret at 9815 SE 173rd Lane, Summerfield, FL 34491