



Healthy Rock

A local nurse anesthetist moonlights in a medical spooft band

As a certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) at Lakeview Hospital in Stillwater, **Richard Leyh** also knows a thing or two about barbershop quartets and a cappella singing. In 1998, he joined the Laryngosperms, a musical group that “creates and shamelessly performs medical parodies for anyone who will listen.” Now, he’s an expert in both patient care and the art of punning popular songs that relate to his field.

Inside an operating room at WestHealth in Minnetonka, the scene is set for the cover band’s music video. The tune is immediately recognizable: Neil Sedaka’s “Breaking Up Is Hard To Do.” Band members Keith Larson, Dave Kimball, Doug Meuwissen and Gary Cozine join Leyh around the surgery table, singing in perfect harmony. But something about the song is different.

Glossary

A laryngospasm is an involuntary contraction involving a group of muscles in the throat. The spasm usually occurs when the anesthesia tube enters a patient’s throat, causing irritation—it is no accident that the group of nurse anesthetists chose the goofy name. — VE

FOR A LAUGH > Listen to snippets of Richard Leyh and the group’s parodies at Laryngosperms.com or Youtube.com.

Along with the fact that five certified registered nurse anesthetists—each between the ages of 40 and 60—are singing in scrubs, the lyrics to the popular song have been changed. Instead of singing “If you go then I’ll be blue, ’cause breaking up is hard to do,” the nurses twist the song into a medical

spoof, singing “If I wake I’m going to sue, ’cause waking up is hard to do.”

“Waking” isn’t the only song they’ve changed. With two CDs and almost 30 tunes, the satirical nurses have a lengthy list of melodies turned parodies. Dreamed up by Cozine in 1990, today Leyh says the core members enjoy “getting together and having fun rehearsing, writing and recording the music, and, of course, performing.”

—VALERIE ENGLER



LARYNGO-WHO? > The four founding members of the musical parody group.