




BIG CHIEF CHORUS
SMOKE
SIGNALS


Pontiac/Waterford Chapter
Meetings on Tuesdays: 7:30 to 10 PM

Bulletin #25, May 13, 2003

Report from Lansing, District Competition

What a day this has been...

What a rare mood I'm in...

Why it's ... almost... like ... being ...VM!

Yes, could Vocal Majority be any happier? The day started in the Capitol room at Holiday Inn West, warming up, feeling confident, stuffing in those last calories. Then six miles east to Eastern High School, an old red school with big hallways. We listened to the first half of the program, believing that after so much straight sober singing, the audience would be ready for our parody and shtick. We move all our paraphernalia on stage. Our groupies in the auditorium beat their tom-toms in anticipation. Curtains opening, with Chris parading confidently in Indian gear. It was critical at this moment that the audience really have time to catch the spirit, and Chris milked the moment until they did. Big CHIEF chorus?? Big CHEF chorus?? Oh, no! What has our dumb director done now?? Bravely we begin our first song...Let's Get Away From It All. "I'm so tired of this dull routine(-aH). Aint gonna cook no chili beans(-aH)! Back in Paris at cooking school, they said we'd be famous... and (heh-heh) make money too. (How did we end up in THIS greasy spoon?) Let's cook a chicken piccata....

Can we repair the damage? Let's get rid of these stupid chef outfits and just sing straight! OH, NO, Chris is 180 out of phase again! This is terrible. Well, DON'T BLAME ME. I didn't choose this song, the chords just wont ring, no 7ths to sing...7ths to sing...7ths to sing-n-n-ng. AH, there we got it! That sounds barbershoppy enough to satisfy these bossy judges. DID YOU HEAR ALL THOSE 7TH CHORDS???(My god! They're practically rolling in the aisles at this inside joke.)

In six minutes it's all over. We feel good, we await our score. 5th place out of 15! And a score of 764 (63.7%)! We're neck and neck with Grosse Pointe, despite that we played the music gambit, sacrificing points on MUSIC while elevating our PRESENTATION and SINGING scores substantially.

How many people came up to us during the rest of the day to say how delighted they were? How much they enjoyed it?

Hospitality room in the Regency A Ballroom. Ross Ensign had invited all the Pioneer quartets, and wow did they show up! FERMATA NOWHERE, SINGING WITH DAD, CROSSFIRE, INFINITY, NIGHT SHIFT, MACH 1, POWER PLAY, BORDER CROSSING, TODAY'S SPECIAL, ANTIQUES ROAD SHOW. And two Sweet Adeline's quartets: SPOTLIGHT, AND MUSICALITY.

Each year, PROBE (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors) judges chapter bulletins. Our entry of **SMOKE SIGNALS** won 3rd place this year. What felt even better than the place was the excitement it gave the chapter to have a 3rd place finish announced from the stage!

Prez Pete offers special thanks to:

John Cowlshaw for placing 3rd as Bulletin Editor.

Gene Downie for the props.

Jeff Doig for the sound effects (and clean T-shirts).

Ron Clarke for costumes.

Linda Liddicoatt for her coaching.

Jeff Taylor for his wonderful addition to our song and his coaching.

Art Carinci for arranging the contest, dinner, the cake & MCing the Hospitality Room (the best one at the convention).

Jeff Spires for assisting Art in getting 26 quartets to sing in the H.R

Our BCC quartets: Harmonic Progression; Sunny Side; & B Natural.

Bill Pascher for founding the P/W chapter 60 years ago.

Dick Johnson for Associate Director.

Bruce Collins for Associate Director.

Our Executive Board for supporting: Fun, Fellowship, & Good Singing.

Section Leaders: Roger Holm, Dick Johnson, Len Barnes, Mike Frye, Mike Keith, & John Smith.

CHRIS MILLER for his twisted ideas, but hilarious sense of humor, leadership, and Direction.

We should all be proud. Yet, we have now raised the bar in order to take our performance to higher level.

Keep up the good work! Smile your ___ off and sing well.

AROUND THE PATCH

MEMBERSHIP (at 58)

Birthdays: May: Bill Dabbs (17th), Dave Willett (22nd)

June: Bob Legato (13th), Bruce Brede (22nd), Al Monroe (24th)

Barbershopper of the Month – May – Art Carinci, for his work as chorus manager and emcee in Lansing

Renewals: Art Carinci (4), Jim Owens (4), Jeff Spires (4), Jeff Doig (11), Bert Cederleaf (13)

...but also ... **Losses:** ...we've lost 5 members this month to non-renewal: Walt Bachmann, Russ Parry, Dennis Robinson, Tom Tailford, and Joe Voynar. "Say it isn't so, guys!"

Illnesses: Ted Prueter had catheterization on Wed, May 7.

MIA's

I looked over our roster from a year ago, and noticed these people missing lately:

Ron Arnold (now a member of Huron Valley district champs)

Chuck Barrett (moved to Madison, Wisconsin)

Don Denoyer (deceased)

Jan Graham (temporary job-transfer to Albuquerque, New Mexico)

Bruce LaMarte (busy with his new silver-medal quartet, INFINITY)

Don Sheridan – medical issue?

Russ Parry – job conflict

Dave Willett – self-employed aircraft mechanic with long hours

Marv Wilson – busy over at D.O.C.

Also, we don't see much of Dennis Robinson, Jerry Twomey, or Jack Cavalier.

What year was it?

when income tax withholding was introduced?

when FDR, Churchill, and Stalin met for the Casablanca conference, the Cairo conference, and the Teheran conference?

when Frank Zappa was born?

When the Pontiac chapter of SPEBQSA was founded?

Yes, the year was 1943. In fact, Frank Zappa was born on our birthday, April 17th, 1943.

Here are Bill Pascher's memories of our founding:

“When the Engineering Building was built, which was a new building – to me and to the company, just for engineering purposes, this would give us a shop, an experimental department, test labs, drafting rooms, conference rooms, all this kind of thing – that was the building facing South Blvd. And the lobby receptionist, Ace, was a bass. And at noon hour we'd hurry up with our sack lunch, a few of us. (We were still using the lobby in 1950, when Leonard Barnes joined us.) And we'd sing old songs. We didn't know what Barbershop was; we'd just try to harmonize, woodshed stuff, you know? And that evolved to a realization that there was something going on in the world besides impromptu singing. And a couple of the guys, one from Material Control, and one from Purchasing, had joined Oakland County (chorus) unbeknownst to us, in fact we didn't even know these guys, but their friends heard us singing and said to them, Why don't you go up there and see what they're doing? Well, of course, they brought it to us, and there were 3 or 4 of us guys got interested in finding out what it was all about and what it took to be a Barbershopper. Found out how many people it would take to organize; it was twenty then (now you don't). We finally got twenty together and organized our own chapter. Oakland County was the first chapter in the state. Number one. Our number is seventeen. The date on our charter is April 17, 1943.... There were already 16 other chapters in Michigan, but they were in bigger towns – like Lansing, Kalamazoo, Battle Creek. Nothing in the boondocks.

(“Why didn't you join that Oakland County chapter instead of starting a new chapter?”)

“Well, there was yanking and pulling, you know. It was either that or building our own. I always thought it was better to be a big ripple in a small puddle.”

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Harmony Roundup and **A Cappella Blast** have been cancelled this year for lack of registrations.

METROPOLIS was in town May 10th for the **Macomb County Chapter show**. Last year's international medallist and standing 2nd this year going into Montreal, it gave us Michiganders a chance to hear another quartet of POWER PLAY's quality. And to see Tenor James Sabina get literally thrown across the stage a couple times, and Bass Brian Philbin sing his “country” song (in which he names every country in the world ... I think, but who's counting? It's all too fast!) The Harmony Heritage Chorus sounded strong and confident as it prepares to represent the Pioneer District in Montreal. Good wishes to our dual-members, Chuck Murray, Wally Plosky, and Jeff Spires.

Minutes, Executive Board Meeting, May 7, 2003, by Jeff Doig, (abridged)

In attendance: Pete M., Chris M., Irwin M., Jeff D. Gene D., Dick J., Chuck M., Walt D., John S.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Current balance is \$5,616.

VP CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT & MEASUREMENT: Doc Mann

VP MUSIC & PERFORMANCE: John Smith gave his report from the delegates meeting. Was decided to reinstate the position of Program Vice President (PVP) on a trial basis.

YMIH: Chuck reported that we had offered Linda Pratt of Onstead \$160.00 to send 3 students and one chaperone to Harmony Round up.

Picnic venue: Possibly Independence Oaks.

Rehearsal Venue: Dick reported that Central Methodist Church is available for \$ 30.00 per meeting. Dick will check further on storage, piano, media, etc.

Fall Show: Nov 8th. The Clarkston music department and Mr. Peterson should be invited to perform in the show.

Shirts: Gene's search for shirts and jackets is ongoing.

Absentees: It is the responsibility of the absentee to secure any materials and make up what he has missed.

Spring Training: Pete will call the MacMullan Conference Center and request date. The request will be for at least 35 people.

Exec. Board Job Descriptions: Some of our Board positions need job descriptions.

BSOM for May: Art Carinci

Recommendation to the music committee for coaching by Jeff Taylor for the chorus.

Decided to provide the means to send Bruce Collins to Harmony Collage.

Walt D. has placed **chorus information in some local papers** and would like those of us who get them to show him those articles.

Chuck Murray said that we are getting to be a desirable chorus and may start getting more people from other choruses.

FROM THE PREZ

Congratulations and Thank You to:

1. Chris Miller for surpassing our goal for Spring Contest: 764pts & 5th place.
2. Art Carinci for BSOM for May. Great job = Spring Contest, after glow, & MC.
3. John Smith for accepting the PVP position.
4. Jeff Doig for coordinating a remake of our fall show videos with his digital soundtrack.
5. Chuck Murray & Jeff Spires for their YMIH effort to let the BCC sponsor four students, from Onstead HS, to attend Harmony Round Up.
6. Gene Downie for drafting our new Chorus Publicity policy.
7. Our Music Comm. (Chris, Dick, John, & Bruce C.) for your hard work.
8. Bruce Brede for getting our quartet activities off and running.

Comments on Board Actions:

1. The Executive Board reinstated, on a trial basis & appointed by the pres., the position of Program VP (PVP). This person will run the rehearsals. Anyone

wishing to be afforded time, must clear it with John. For example: business mtg.; chorus director; tags; quartet activity; coaching; warm ups; woodshedding; announcements; etc. He will keep us on task!

John will be seeking at least two understudies to assist him in this endeavor.

2. Any requests for the BCC or quartets for sing outs should be presented to our Marketing/PR person, Walt DeNio.

3. Absenteeism: If you are absent, please contact a buddy or your section leader for info, music, etc.

In our continuous effort to Improve Chorus Rehearsals we are asking:

1. All members learn the words and 'be off the paper' after three rehearsals.
2. Eliminate talking and side comments during instructional time.
3. Bring and use your tape recorders.
4. Sectionals will begin at 7:00pm.
5. Attend all coaching opportunities.

From **Bruce Brede:**

“Pete has asked me to chair a renewed Chapter effort in encouraging and facilitating our members to become active in **quarteting**...the benefits to both the member and to the Chapter are obvious. SPEBSQSA recommends an apprenticeship approach with ensembles, octets and quartets involving both new and established quarteters. [Established quarteters'] role as quartet mentors will be limited almost exclusively to rehearsal nites. The Chapter has decided that this activity is sufficiently important to devote some rehearsal time most weeks. Last rehearsal, without much direction, four ensembles each with a mix of experienced and new quarteters chose a polecat, rehearsed for 15 minutes and performed during 15 minutes. Next, for a few weeks, we will follow the same procedure but with mix-and-matched octets...then down the road with quartets, after we have determined those that are interested in quarteting and at what level...contest, public singing, rehearsals only and no interest.”

VP of Music and Performance, **John Smith**, would like the chapter to start a **Tag Contest**, modeled after Burt Szabo's in The SUNBURST. Burt wrote a line of lyric “If the stars go out tomorrow, I will still have you, my love,” and asked his Florida members to compose their own music to go with it. BCC, let's try it. Start with a lyric. All we ask is one poetic line from each of you. Entries will be printed next month, in anticipation of full tags to follow.

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(all still available online at www.pontiacchapter.com)

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Calendar

May 13	Rehearsal
May 16-18	Harmony Round-up, Mich. St. Univ.(CANCELLED)
May 20	Rehearsal
May 27	Rehearsal
Jun 3	Rehearsal
Jun 6, Fri	Return the Jug Night – DOC Host
Jun 10,	Rehearsal
Jun 13, Fri	Send-Off Show – Windsor host
Jun 17	Rehearsal
Jun 19	Bd mtg at Zaven Melkonian's
Jun 24	Flint Chapter's Picnic, Frankenmuth
Jun 28	Great Lakes Chorus (Sweet Adelines) Show
Jun 29 – July 6	International Convention, Montreal
Mar 26-8, 2004	Spring Singing Retreat, MacMullan

Chapter Executive Board**Officers**

Chorus Director: Chris Miller ((248-960-5101)
 President: Pete Mazzara (313-563-4026)
 Immediate Past President: Gene Downie
 VP, Chapter Development: Doc Mann
 VP, Music and Performance: John Smith
 VP, Program: John Smith
 Secretary: Jeff Doig
 Treasurer: Dick Johnson
 Members at Large: Chuck Murray, Zaven Melkonian

Chairmen

Associate Directors: Dick Johnson, Bruce Collins
 Bulletin Editor: John Cowlshaw
 Chorus Manager: Art Carinci
 Grants: Dick Johnson
 Historian: (open) Cowlshaw's bulletins for now
 Music Librarian: Bill Holmes
 Picnic: Gayle Mohler
 Pole Cats: Zaven Melkonian
 Quartet Activity: Bruce Brede
 Service (Charity): open
 Singing Valentines: Wayne Cheyne/Gene Downie
 Sunshine (Chaplain): Bill Dabbs
 Tagmeister: Mike Frye
 Uniform Manager: Ron Clarke
 Woodshedding: Len Barnes