Public Relations Officer of the Year

Jack Teuber
Pontiac-Waterford Michigan Chapter
Pioneer District

Jack Teuber served his chapter as Vice President, Marketing and Public Relations from 2005 to 2008. The 58 members of the Pontiac-Waterford MI Chapter celebrated its 65th Anniversary in 2008. Jack Teuber submitted an outstanding PROTY entry for Year Long Activity, replete with numerous chapter activities and strong public relations support.

The Big Chief Chorus had 36 public performances including two Annual Shows. Five chapter quartets — B Natural, Celebration, 4WD, Northbound Sound, and Ensign Four — had a record of 83 performances for the year. Chapter groups sang at one or more performances each of the 12 months to a total audience of 8,858. Performances were at senior centers and residences, community festivals, Orion Twp. Library, churches, the Detroit Princess Cruise, and Oakland County Parks.

Jack used promotional material and the chapter website and bulletin in addition to electronic and print media releases to publicize the Pontiac-Waterford chapter. Newspapers that covered the chapter activities included The Oakland Press, Clarkston News, Lake Orion Review, Oxford Leader and West Oakland Spinal Column. The annual chapter show and library performance were shown on Waterford local cable and Lake Orion local cable. News articles with photographs included Singing Valentines, officer elections, guest night, 52nd Annual Woodshed Contest, and Christmas Chorus.

Jack included 14 news articles, yearly and charity reports, thank-you notes, and promotion flyers as part of his entry. The Pontiac-Waterford MI Chapter ended the year with a schedule forecast that included a chorus or quartet performance in virtually every month of 2009.

Jack’s award was announced in Anaheim at the International Convention. Check it out at:


Our Smoke Signals bulletin also did well, coming in 8th in the International Bulletin award.


Cheers to Pontiac-Waterford! Thanks to Art Lane for coordinating our entries in the Pioneer District.

BHS INTERNATIONAL

The week in Anaheim is history. And what a history. In the International Quartet Finals, CROSSROADS won Gold with 8433 points out of a possible 9000, for a score of 93.7. (This despite one judge penalizing them 5 pts for singing a “religious” song, “That Lucky Old Sun.” Hear it and judge for yourself at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7mGjSZpdpk.)

Ten of us gathered at Jim Owens’ home to watch and hear. (Thanks to Jim for hosting and Doc for supplying pizza.)

From what we could see and hear on webcast (really good quality!), it looked like top quartet would come from The Allies, CROSSROADS, and a young Swedish quartet called RINGMASTERS. I think it’s fair to say we didn’t think STORM FRONT would be 3rd, and we thought the scores of the top eight would be closer than they were.

The top five are medalists.

Two other things of note:

RINGMASTERS and STATE LINE GROCERY were absolutely tied for fourth. There are tie-breaking rules, such as who does better in the “Singing” category, but they were tied there too.

RINGMASTERS is the first “affiliate” (non-US quartet) to medal.

In chorus competition, AMBASSADORS OF HARMONY beat out VOCAL MAJORITY. Their 97.5 was the highest score ever. It included a 498 one song
The Vocal Majority's score of 2889 would have won every other contest in history. And this broke their string of eleven straight victories: 1979-1982-1985-1988-1991-1994-1997-2000-2003-2006. (Winners must sit out for two years.) It was also the first time six choruses scored 90.0 or more. It was also the highest score for an affiliate chorus. (Zero8, from Sweden, 7th, 89.7) This year's 8th place finisher (Voices in Harmony) would have finished third last year. For a clip of our new champions, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmDGntpZC3I

A California college quartet, The Vagrants, won the Collegiate competition. On YouCast, Mike and Brian interviewed them, who, rather surprisingly, said that they have always loved the old-time quartet names, and that their choice of Vagrants was in honor and memory of The Vagabonds, a regional quartet and 1976 International Silver Medalists. "While never winning the gold medal, The Vagabonds were yet one of the top quartets of all time. Their harmony was superb, and their delivery of phrases exuded an elegance that is emulated still today."
- David Wright

How did Pioneer District entries do? The Party did the best. They scored 79.8, which is 6 pts higher than their Prelim score in Traverse City, an almost unheard-of improvement. That wasn’t enough to move them into the Semi-Finals (top 20), yet it was only a few clicks beneath Voce (83.7), who were mike-testers for the Finals.

In chorus competition, The MountainTown Singers finished twenty-sixth out of the twenty-nine contestants, with a 76.6.

Finally, in college quartet competition, When In Rome from U of M scored 64.9, placing 26 of 26.


In a big plus for the district, Roger Lewis, past International President, and member of the Battle Creek chapter and Harmony Hounds, was inducted into the Barbershop Hall of Fame.

AROUND THE PATCH

The chorus visited two metro choruses, July 14 to Grosse Pointe Fun Night, and July 27 to the D.O.C. picnic.

Jim Owens writes: “138 members from 5 choruses attended The Grosse Pointe Fun Night, July 14. Dorn McTaggart and his gang showed up. Dorn was his usual witty self. The site was a beautiful park on Lake St Clair. The weather was cool and breezy, beer was cold, brats were well done and the beans were outstanding. (I would like to have the recipe). There were 32 members from the Big Chief Chorus in attendance. We also fielded pick-up quartets from members of B Natural, Local Color, and Vintage. Dorn McTaggart thanked the BCC for making the largest donation to support our district champions at the internationals. Bruce Brede added a short reminder to all that both Jack Teuber and John Cowlishaw were selected for high awards. From the many smiles on BCC member faces, I would have to say that a very good time was had by all!"

Scott Turnbull has died. Brian Philbin says Scott introduced many people to barbershop, including Bob Hartley and Paul Hanson, and that they sang together in The Ivy League, 1985 Pioneer District Champions. Linda Liddicoatt adds, “I can vividly remember working with him in one of his very first quartets when he was still in High School and a member of the Pontiac Chorus when my husband, Dick Liddicoatt, was directing.”

Bob Butcher had another grandchild, July 7, Finley Ann.

QUARTETS

On Saturday, July 25th, our Celebration Barbershop Quartet sang for the third year in a row at the annual Pioneer Days at the Oakland County Historical and Pioneer Society. The event is held at the former home of Gov. Moses Wisner on Oakland Ave in Pontiac and includes historical exhibits and brief classes. The Quartet wanders the grounds stopping and singing appropriate numbers for groups of visitors including God Bless America for soldiers in Civil War uniforms. About 140 visitors applauded the quartet as well as the Church Street Singers with Bill Nevaux and Bob Marshall. The visitors included a couple of people who had received a valentine visit from Celebration two years ago. The Quartet was also interviewed by an Oakland Press reporter who was on site for the afternoon.

Vintage sang an eight-song set July 29 to the folks at Independence Village, Oxford, during their ice cream social in their acoustically wonderful dining hall.

MEMBERSHIP (at 67)

New Member: Charles Perry, Welcome, Charley!
Renewals: Doc Mann (10), Neil Braun (20), Bill Dabbs (39)
Pending: Brain, DeVries, Ensign, Flatoff, Mersino, Tailford.
Birthdays: Mike Keith (5th), Bill Auquier (24th), Jeff Doig (29th), Tom Tailford (29th), Terry Jamison (30th)
Medical: Charley Perry broke his leg.
AROUND THE DISTRICT
In you’re around Grand Rapids September 12, you can hear Crossroads at the Harmony Gold Sweet Adelines show.  www.grsa.net

AROUND THE WORLD
Jay Giallombardo has retired as Musical Director of the New Tradition Chorus (Northbrook IL).  Jay directed the New Tradition for 26 of its first 27 years, and achieved 18 medals (including a gold championship in 2001).

Big Chief Jeopardy, #31. (Try these.)
1.  **Answer:** He has tenored with the **Four Hats, Sound Objective, The Very Idea, The Chord Reporters, Back Porch Majority, The Very Quick Idea, Michigan Assembly, and B-Natural.**  **Question:** Who is Fred McFadyen?
2.  **Answer:** He and his wife have both taught math and science, he in the Bloomfield Hills school system, she at O.C.C.  **Question:** Who is Wayne Cheyne?

BCC Exec Bd, July 15, 2009, excerpts from Bill Auquier’s minutes:
Members present were: Mann, Holm, Holmes, Cheyne, Dick Johnson, Clarke, Butcher, Domke, and Auquier.
The treasury stands at 10,548.72.
Approval of Bill Holmes welcome letter to all new visitors.
The letter was approved by consensus.
A letter concerning church sing–outs was approved after deletion of any chapter-related performances from any worship service.
Approval to waive the eight-week pre-show moratorium for the Lake Orion performance only.
The official fall show title is “GOING HOLLYWOOD - Featuring Songs of Disney.”
Ron is researching the cost of new light weight shirts for the chorus.
Eric Domke reported a lack of response from local educators to his inquiries about participation in the district’s “Rockin’ Barbershop” camp. He attributes the problem to the late introduction of the program in the school year.
Approval of reimbursement for Tom Blue to attend the BHS training session in September.

MEMORABLE EXCERPTS
FROM 100 ISSUES OF SMOKE SIGNALS

From Issue #1 – May, 2001
As Director Chris Miller said, going into it, “We may not win, but two years from now, we’ll be the show everyone remembers.” Presenting the only parodies in the District competition, audience responsiveness was high! Judges’ adrenalin may have risen even higher when Ron Arnold shot a puck into their midst that they couldn’t have known was foam, (or were their heads down, writing notes?) and Mike Keith whacked Art Carinci’s “candy teeth” into the crowd.

From #2
The Anatomy of a Breath  by J.C.
So this Barbershopper walks into a pharmacy and asks for a complete breath. The pharmacist hands him an upper and two downers; “Take these and call me when you’re ready to expire.” (You know, exhale)
It’s that simple, there are just three sets of muscles to work with.

From #3
Smitty’s tone memory.  A couple weeks ago, Smitty suggested playing a tone on a pipe and then trying to re-sing that pitch some time later. How long has your accurate memory lasted?

From #4,5,6,7
Bill Pascher is our most senior member, having co-founded the chapter in 1943. Yet he still attends almost every chapter rehearsal and performance, nowadays riding in with Bill Nevaux and Mel Parrish. I visited Bill at his home in Indian Lake Village Apartments, in Lake Orion. We talked in his living room, where he brings orange juice in the morning to sit and read the paper. And where he can watch and name the birds outside his front window. Bill began:
BP  My stepdaughter has been wanting me to do something like this, cuz I’ve been in so many things and she is going to need to write an obituary. So I’ve jotted down an outline including the seven hobbies I’ve been in, including my accomplishments and awards. I think I can be helpful to you, cuz I’ve been in your shoes. I was editor of the PowWow for 3 ½ yrs.
JC  What is your first memory of Barbershop?
BP  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 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. We finally got twenty together and organized our own chapter.

JC Moving on, some historic names. What about O.C. Cash?
BP Yes, I remember O. C. I met him one time, at a convention. But I never got to meet Rupert Hall, his partner. But I got a good story from O.C. Cash about their first meeting in a hotel in Kansas City. Rupert died just two or three years after this Society was founded. O.C. Cash was a character. He was a lead. And he couldn’t improvise.

JC Hah-hah, that’s funny! Couldn’t woodshed?

From #5
(Just after 9/11) At this time of such overwhelming national and human tragedy, I have found it hard to keep singing. Yet it is important to keep singing, to use our voices to affirm the values we believe in: joy, melody, camaraderie, trust, harmonious interaction. Manhattan Barbershoppers are able to help in more direct ways. At this distance we can do our part by singing. Furthermore, our hearts go out to those who were directly affected. In a world where only “six degrees of separation” lie between us and the most remote villager, there are surely members of our chorus who have friends and relatives who have died or been injured.

This Big Chief chapter Bulletin now has an appropriate name, Smoke Signals, thanks to Jerry Twomey.

As I sing all my vowels with care,
This is my most fervent prayer
‘Dear Lord, help me blend
And right at the end
Please don’t let me run out of air!”
[David L. Labar]

From #6
We’re presenting five in-house quartets in the show (“Fortune in Dreams”). Not bad from a chorus of 50!

1. HARMONY WAY – Denoyer, Brede, Spires, Berton
2. CHIEFTONES – Barrett, Downie, DeNio, Holmes
3. HIGH OCTANE – Barrett, Arnold, Cowlishaw, Melkonian
4. SUNNYSIDE – Smith, Barnes, Johnson, Holm
5. Show Quartet – Denoyer, Doig, Braun, Carinci

From #8
Bob Woodward passed away December 7th of pancreatic cancer. Bob would have been 64 on December 12th. Bob was a society member for 33 years from Ohio to Indiana to Michigan. He was an Area Councilor in the Cardinal District and Pontiac-Waterford Chapter President in 1991, 1992, 1995, 1996 and 1997. Bob sang in several quartets including The Chordials with Bruce Brede, Bill Dabbs and Harold Lanning and The Model-A-Four with Larry Hornsby, Bill Dabbs and Don Denoyer. An ensemble from the chorus sang at the funeral December 10th. (Dick Johnson)

From #9
From the President: Gene Downie, The Year Ahead
As our chorus has improved so has the need for a better venue to showcase our talents. Our present auditorium of 400 seats is just too small. We are looking into several possibilities. Some of these sites may require that we examine our entire years schedule and make some adjustments in order to move to a larger site. The executive board has their work cut out for them for the coming year.

From #10
Wally Plosky and Russ Parry seem to have found a new location for afterglow - The Lodge. On Feb 5 about 20 chorus members met there after chorus rehearsal. Wally writes: “It meets our requirements for food, beverages, relative privacy, lack of competing jukebox, hours of operation, and most importantly, supportive management. We had a BALL and so did a number of patrons who came over from the “younger”, sport bar-ish side of the restaurant to listen and applaud...you could tell by the look in their eyes that with careful cultivation, we might get some more new (and younger) blood into our chapter.”

Monthly Quiz:
1. Name our chapter director before Chris Miller, our President before Gene Downie, our Bulletin Editor before John Cowlishaw.
   Ans: Director Dick Johnson, President Bill Dabbs, and Editor Bob Woodward.

From #11
Valentines Day Singouts. What a successful event! As a chapter, we delivered some 42 paid valentines (that’s up from 28 last year) including eight
floral deliveries from Waterford Hill Florists. Total income was $1380. Not bad considering all the fun we had. Bob Marshall chaired the whole thing. The participating quartets were: Harmony Way, Harmony Knights, Acapella Fellas, and Sunnyside. Harmony Knights think they may have sung for a couple of Mafiosos at one Restaurant (better left unnamed). Sunnyside got to sing “Babyface” to the Waterford Police. Acapella Fellas enjoyed serenading “Boomer” at the motorcycle shop. One check arrived two weeks late with the explanatory note that the gentleman’s marriage had been wobbly beforehand but now has never been stronger.

Gene Downey reported that the chapter has received the Minigrant we applied for to fund half of Linda Liddicoatt’s coaching, thereby reducing the cost from $1500 to 750. Oakland Country distributes Minigrants from money received from the Michigan Council of the Arts.

Sunnyside sang in two school programs in the Florida Keys that raised nearly $2000 for the schools, one in Sugar Loaf Key, and the other in Marathon Key.

As Bill Pascher led us in a tag, he declared that he is dedicating his remaining days to a study of the original tags. They don’t all follow the Barbershop rules.

From #12
If you did not hear the March 18 NPR Morning Edition feature on the roots of barbershop, you can still listen to it on the NPR web site at: http://www.npr.org/programs/morning/features/pate/barbershop/

There’s also an extended audio of Jim Wildman’s interview with David Wright, plus much more.

From #14
I asked Chris (Miller) about his musical talents. “I don’t have perfect pitch. I didn’t have early musical training. I sing by ear. I couldn’t even hear harmony for the first ten years; I’d just learn the parts. Then in St. Louis, in ’83 or 4, a prize-winning quartet invited me in as fourth man, and suddenly I couldn’t hear my own voice, it was just an experience that felt like my hair being swept back. I thought, Wow, this is expanded sound!”

From #15
One of (Linda Liddicoatt’s) images that caught my mind: Singing soft rather than loud is like a train whistle far away rather than near – still powerful, just distant.

From #16
In a moment of inspiration, I realized that when chimps do their hoot-hoot-hooting, they are using all the characteristics of good vocal practice. First of all, they are vocalizing “from the belly,” they are hooting WITH the body THROUGH the throat, they are projecting their voice against the upper palate, their upper lip is off their teeth, they are forming a square with their lips, and all the lip motion is “between the goal posts” as we say, their eyebrows are lifted, their eyes are wide and bright and entertaining, they’re on the balls of their feet.

Try it out. Find a chimp as your partner and co-hoot. If no chimp is available, look in the mirror. Start hooting. But, there is no need to bellow. Hoot like a chimp in love, not like one at war. Try it. You’ll like it.

From #17
The new Hollywood movie, Barbershop, opens this week in neighborhood theaters. I’ve asked our Big Chief movie reviewer, Mr. Simpering Idiot, to write a review.

“Yah, well, thanks, editor-man. I thought this was gonna be pretty cool when I heard the lead actor’s name was “Ice Cube.” You know, ice is cool, and a cube has got 6 square sides – you can’t fool old Sim, this is code for quartets – lots of quartets. So the movie opens and I see it takes place in this barbershop on the south side of Chicago. That’s cool, Chicago’s a bluesy musical place. But I get suspicious when I see there’s seven barbers and a sharp cookie named Terri (and she is sharp! not flat, if you get my drift), but that’s a strange way to do a barbershop octet, or even “dueling quartets.” Well, I gotta tell yah, I like these guys but, as that little old lady in the beef ad said, “Show me the barbershop!”

From #19
SHOWTIME – Dorothy Returns to Oz
Weather forecast at Clarkston HS: Thunderstorms with a Tornado watch in effect...poor Dorothy!

By the end of our first song, “Over the Rainbow,” as the cheers and applause from 700 patrons filling the first floor of the voluptuous new auditorium rolled
over us on the stage, we knew we had a winner. Penny Savage’s witchy cackle had opened the show with such fierce reality that little children screamed! Jeff Doig’s pre-recorded storm spilled Dorothy onto the stage, and the crowd roared at little Toto’s tossed entry. The Munchkins tittered. Mayor Chris told Dorothy to follow M-59 home to Waterford, but warned of those horrible Barbershoppers. As Chris tried to collect on some old debts, Dick Johnson led the Munchkins in “I Feel a Song Coming On.” Then the straw-covered Scarecrow appeared. “You talkin’ to me?” With a replacement for his politician’s brain, he’ll “begin to see the light.” The wanderers encounter their first obstruction, Harmony Knights, who lay “Let’s Get Away from it all” on them. What’s that creaking tin can? It’s the Tin Man, who oils his lawyer’s heart with an indigestible bag of sliders. Perhaps now he can have “The Heart of a Clown.” With a blood-curdling roar, the Lion joins them. Only, he’s still afraid – of the Dark. A second obstruction appears – Four Wheel Drive – who, happy for ANY audience, sing “I Love That Old Barbershop Style.” It makes our reluctant heroes blue, of an indigo hue. A third blockage, road construction, but “Don’t Blame Me.” Followed by a fourth obstruction, B-Natural who sing “Once Upon A Time.” Finally! the wizard, in a cloud of smoke, rotating in a giant chair to show neon lights and realistic twin flames. “Hey, that’s not the wizard, that’s Bill Pascher!” Bill grants their wish – if the Scarecrow will remember the words to songs, if the Tin Man will sing with feeling, if the Lion will stay on pitch, and if the Munchkins will help by singing, “I’m Sittin’ on Top of the World.”

From #20

Gene Downie's outstanding four-year presidency, in which membership tripled, ends as Pete Mazza takes over. In addition, Doc Mann is the new VP for Chapter Development, Art Carinci, the new Chorus Manager, and Chuck Murray and Zaven Melkonian are new Members at Large. Thanks to outgoing Walt DeNio, Jeff Spires, Wally Plosky, and Pete Mazza.

From #23

Bring your music, your pipes, and your long-johns, as the temp takes another nose-dive as we gather at Ralph MacMullan Center on Higgins Lake for our Singing Retreat 2003 with Dr. Jeff Taylor, Choral Music Director of the Unionville School of the Arts in Toronto.

Smitty writes from Florida: “Hi Just Thought I’d Let The Chapter Know That I’m Still Barbershopping. At this point in time I am getting ready for a series of shows, Tenor with Naples, Bari with Cape Coral, and Tenor in Music Man. I have a 450 mi round trip every Wed for practice with the cast of Music Man and Rehearsal of one kind or another all the rest of the days of the week. Then shows on the weekend, Barbershop demos at the schools during the day, and B-natural is coming for a few days and we have several singouts and a show to do while they are here. I had to drop the mixed chorus this year (didn't have time this year 'Need more days in the week) Sorry I will miss the retreat, but I'm doin' Music Man that weekend. Running into a lot of Barbershoppers from the PIO District. I have to go as I have about 20 new songs to finish up, and a couple of quartets to shine up for the shows, Singerely JES.”

From #24

47th Annual Woodshed Contest

The 49 barbershoppers present mixed and matched to form 18 quartets, all assembled according to the usual rules that no more than two members can be from the same chapter, and no more than one member from the same registered quartet, though multiple quartettes were legal and common.

Personally, I think that the hour spent figuring out and memorizing a barbershop version of some melody is wonderful. But listening to the results is not. Even quartets whose combined years of experience exceed fifty struggle to sing fifty (our commonly agreed standard for public performance). And one of our chapter members mentioned to me that there is evidence of an old-boys’ mentality, that the old-timers seeking another badge are not so eager to sing with new-timers.

Of course, barbershopping originated in woodshedding and is maintained by such events as our own, and by such organizations as (AHSOW) Ancient and Harmonious Society of Woodshedders, of whom we have four members, Bill Dabbs, Chris Miller, Bill Pascher, and John Smith.

Higgins Lake Singing Retreat

Jeff Taylor spoke of the tremendous history and potential of our chapter. We have the ability; what we need now is better discipline. There is an institutional self-perception that needs to be raised.

We don’t sing freely because we lack trust in our voice; we fear it may crack, so we tighten against that possibility.

From #25

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 CHIEF 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
7th’s to sing…7th’s to sing…7th’s 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
lifting our PRESENTATION and SINGING scores substantially.

Hospitality room in the Regency A Ballroom. Ross Ensign had invited all
the Pioneer quartets, and wow did they show up! Fernmata 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.

From #26
**Sing-outs: An old boys’ quartet** sang out May 13 at the Oxford Big Boy at
its once-monthly seniors-free breakfast. Bill Pascher, Mel Parrish, Mike Keith,
and Len Barnes called themselves the Eldermen. And they did a reprise that
evening at the BCC chorus rehearsal.

With a summed age of 327, they sang “55 yrs ago” and “From the First
Hello.”

From #28
**POWER PLAY wins it all!** Scoring 8099 points, a 90.0% score, “our”
Power Play is the 2003 International Barbershop Quartet Gold Medal winner in
Montreal. Many of us sat glued to the webcast, and came unglued with the final
announcement! They beat out: Gotcha!, Metropolis, Uptown Sound, and Riptide.
Power Play is the 4th gold medal quartet from the Pioneer District. Others were:

Despite his illness, **Bill Pascher** received his 60-yr recognition in Montreal,

**[Dick Johnson]** gets nearly as much enjoyment from encouraging and
hearing others, especially children. “The activity and therapy have got to be

invaluable to young and old alike.” Despite today’s highly technical approach to
barbershop singing, Dick still believes there is room for anyone who wants to
participate in our hobby to the best of his ability.

**SLAMKA'S pig roast and victory party** (from Chuckles Murray)

Motor homes, tents, etc. were camped behind the barn. One man had driven
a motor home all the way from Texas just to be there.

The picnic dinner was delicious and plentiful. Roast pig, turkey breast, hot
dogs, were the main meats, along with super potato salad, other salads, fruit, and
a full dessert table loaded with home baked pies, cookies, etc.

Kittie Slamka started the evening off by having all the kids perform on stage.
Some sang, some danced, some wanted to run away from the microphone.

Then, several quartets…. The highlight of the evening was, of course, when
Power Play took the stage (an old hay wagon) and wowed the crowd with some
of the songs from their new CD, "Love at Home". I bought their new CD, and got
all four guys to autograph it!

From #30

**In Memoriam, Chris Miller, September 19, 2003**

Our dear friend, our inspirational director, our Big Chief, Chris Miller, died
September 19th at age 52 of a pulmonary embolism. Our shock and grief are
profound. He was so many things – Nancy’s husband, Ryan’s father, director of
Pontiac/Waterford barbershop chorus for six years, and member of the Grosse
Pointe chorus. At the Lynch Funeral Home Tuesday night, the combined
choruses of Pontiac/Waterford and Grosse Point, eighty-strong, sang an
emotional set, comprised of “Irish Parting Prayer,” “Shine on Me Medley,”
and “God Bless America.”

From #31

**THE BIG CHIEF CHORUS REMEMBERS**

**“THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW”**

(...but our memory isn’t very good!)

It’s show time! I know some of us are having a hard time following the
story line, but it’s a pretty straightforward script as far as I can recall (though my
memory isn’t very good). We open with the Beedles flying Delta to America,
while singing “Darkness in the Delta” with the June Taylor dancers. Then the
MC introduces Jackie Gleason who rushes in from coaching his football team’s
playoff game, and he’s just nuts about commercials, beginning with that
Chardonnay ad that we love to yak about, at the end of which we cleverly take
“swallows in the air” before throwing the glasses behind us. Emmett Kelly
reprises Chordiac Arrest’s “Heart of a Clown,” before being shot out of a
Volkswagen, thus requiring cardiac surgery from the Ajax medical team. Then
Elvis arrives, but his pants split, as the chorus sings, “Shine on, harvest moon.”
We are so amused that we follow with “New Yuck, New Yuck.” Then Aura Lee
sings Something, I don’t remember what, while applying Brylcream to her “golden hair.” Let’s see, what’s next? Oh, yah, the Coca Cola and Faygo quartets duel it out. Then Frank Sinatra comes on stage to moan about “Old St. Louie.” We conclude with “Back in the Old Latrine.” Now is that so hard, guys? Come on, come through, New Yuck, it’s up to you!

From #32
Harmony Knights…
…have been busy boys this holiday season. On November 21st we drove out to an old barn in the Hadley area for to sing for a Hunters’ Annual banquet. We found a bunch of hunters that actually hunt on this farm each year and as part of their tradition take one evening to dress up in formal attire (tuxes or suits), prepare themselves a fabulous prime rib dinner with all the trimmings and hire some form of entertainment. What a treat for us as well as the hunters. They were late getting the meal served, so we sang and kibitzed with them till after the meal was finally served (great cooks these guys) and then did our repertoire. What was supposed to be a 45-minute performance turned into an entire evening of interaction with these great fellas, and we didn't actually get home until about 11 pm. (from Ross Ensign)

From Prez Pete Mazzara: A chorus which: competes at District Convention; puts on an annual show with comedy and shtick; participates in singing retreats; chooses contemporary and classic songs; sings parodies; continues to improve our singing; recruits new members; and does it with Fun, Fellowship, and Good Singing. Men: Here is my report card on how I think the Big Chief Chorus did on our 2003 Goals #1-3, (Despite loosing Chris Miller) - This is a Great BCC report card. Congratulations!

What kind of “musical gravity” drags our pitch down so much?

From #34
John “Smitty” Smith died the evening of Friday, January 30th. To lose two of our leaders in such quick succession is heart-wrenching. John had been part of barbershop since the late 1950’s and his influence on the Pontiac-Waterford Big Chief Chorus and the Pioneer District can be felt everywhere, not the least in the 11 new members he brought in as Man of Note.

From #36
Spring Training Singing Retreat
We gathered, 37 strong, on the shores of Higgins Lake, for the second straight year, for fun, fellowship, and good singing. Don Bazely of Sault Ste. Marie was our coach this year. Mike Frye created a new tag with the help of Lead Jim Troeger, Bari John Cowlishaw, and Bass Zaven Melkonian. For those of you who haven’t heard it (I’m just kidding, nobody hasn’t heard it by now), it’s called “The Autumn Leaves Drift by my Window.”

BCC how has a Class B uniform: Blue blazer, gray slacks, and special tie.

From #37
Buying a pitchpipe:
My Bb became a very flat B flat last month. No one seems to know why a pipe suddenly goes south. I’ve opened it up, cleaned it out, put it back, and it’s still bad. So I went to Dick Johnson for his advice on buying a new pitchpipe. Dick bought his first pitchpipe for $5.95 and it lasted for years. Now they cost about $19 and don’t last that long.

Aviation connection.
I am astounded at how many barbershoppers have had some connection with aviation, folk who took flight training, were pilots or navigators, owned a plane, or worked in the aviation industry. In our chapter, I know of Walt DeNio, Jeff Doig, Dick Johnson, Howard Lynn, Doc Mann, Zaven Melkonian, Dave Willet, Neil Braun, Chris Miller, Jim Troeger, and myself. If I’ve left you off this list, let me know, because I want to do a story about it in a later edition.

The Society for the Promotion and Encouragement of Italian Cooking in America, by John Cowlishaw
Listen up, all you Italian chefs. The SPEICA competition is coming and you will be judged in three categories, cuisine, presentation, and cooking.

The cuisine judge will be evaluating how well you cook in the Italian style. You’ll be expected to use pasta, antipasti, Asagio and Parmigiano cheeses, pestos, cold-pressed olive oil, and fresh vegetables and spices. At least 35% of the dishes should have the requisite tomato sauces. The various courses and dishes should complement each other, such as choosing a wine that matches the dishes you’ve prepared. Use dynamic variety, alternating mild dishes with strong, pungent dishes. Look here - you can cook Tex-Mex or French or nouveau cuisine all you want with your friends, but for competition you must cook in a manner that exemplifies and does honor to the Italian style of cooking.

The presentation judge will be evaluating how you present your meal to the diners, including your engaged manner, bright eyes and friendly smiles, your tempo in the delivery of the various courses, your use of color, a pleasing table setting including flowers, the manner in which you offer the wine. If your waiters are costumed, they should fit the type of dishes chosen. Judging begins at the moment the diner is seated with menu. In summary, the presentation judge will be asking how effectively you have brought Italian cuisine out of the cookbooks and into the diners’ hearts, causing them to exclaim, “Mama Mia, what a meal!”
The cooking judge will be evaluating your ability to cook the ingredients. The pasta should not be mushy. The vegetables should be crisp. The wine should be mellow. The individual tastes should synchronize together. You don’t want some of the asparagus spears to be undercooked while others are overcooked, but rather each dish should have a “unit taste.” Of course, your cooking expertise affects your score in presentation and cuisine also, since proper cooking enhances the presentation and the recognition of Italian cuisine. In Italian cooking, we are proud to say, the combination of all these elements will create what we like to call “expanded taste.”

Some advice to new chefs. You won’t be judged on the difficulty of the recipes, so choose recipes that are within your skills and abilities. Better to cook a simple spaghetti well, than to fail at a polenta or risotto.

Some chefs are still having trouble distinguishing the categories and thereby understanding the basis of their resulting scores. Perhaps it would be helpful to use a simple musical analogy. Our musical brothers, (the “barbers of Seville,” we might say) have obviously used our judging system in formulating their own, (replacing our Cuisine, Presentation, and Cooking with their Music, Presentation, and Singing), and from which I therefore will quote so that you may more easily understand the fine art of culinary judging.…

Ciao!

From #38

For over three years, Yong McDowell has built and maintained our web site. Now his involvement in ballroom dancing in the Ann Arbor area has led him to move to Pittsfield Twp between Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor and he is leaving our chapter. Like a good soldier, he put the May issue of Smoke Signals on the Web site before handing over the reins to Russ Ensign and Jim Troeger. Thanks for all your good work, Yong.

From Pionet:

**BASS VIRUS CONTINUES TO SPREAD IN MICHIGAN WATERS**

"LANSING, MI -- State officials today announced Largemouth Bass Virus (LMBV) continues to spread in south Michigan, and called upon citizens to help contain the disease."

So there you have it. Some of us basses may be in trouble! As a largemouth variety, I probably should learn to keep my yap shut for my own health. But I don’t think that’ll ever happen, especially when I’m singing.

Doug Pearson
Largemouth Bass, Patch Chords Quartet
…which drew this response from Derek Hatley:

Doug - I don't like the Tenor of your message! If this infection should Lead to your death, then we’ll just have to Bari you. The whole thing sounds fishy to me!

From #39

Zaven Melkonian and I drove down to Louisville for the last two days of the 66th Annual International Convention and Contests, a.k.a. X-TREME LOUISVILLE!

On Friday, we had watched several choruses rehearse. Sitting ten feet in front of the rehearsing choruses is different than watching the TV monitors in the second balcony of the 14,000 seat Freedom Hall, and we felt Toronto’s in-your-face intensity, as they sang two message songs, “Brother can you spare a dime?” and another about a returning soldier. None of us could sing in the same old lackadaisical way if we were surrounded by those folk. Sweeping, crisp but sonorous singing, accompanied by relevant choreography and excited faces … is all it takes! This year was the 50-year anniversary of chorus competition. Before 1954 there was only quartet competition. A total of 1538 chorus members crossed the stage in Louisville.

The quartet competition was exciting. Zav and I, sitting in nosebleed level row T, scored the quartets…. The judges can articulate the reasons … much better than we can, but their scores were similar to ours. It’s good to know that just plain subjective enjoyment is pretty accurate, once you’ve worked at the elements of good barbershop singing in your own chapter. It’s like [a thoughtful diner] rising from an Italian dinner, and feeling, “Hey, that was good!”

From #41

**LADIES OF BCC**

Hi Gals,

Didn’t we have fun at the BCC picnic Aug 20th?! We thoroughly enjoyed each other’s company and decided we wanted to promote and continue that spirit of friendship for the ladies of the Big Chief Chorus….Does the ladies’ group need a name? One suggestion for the ladies ‘auxiliary’ of the Big Chief Chorus (BCC) is Big Chief Chicks (BCC) or Big Chief Chix (BCX) where the ‘x’ refers to ‘Auxiliary’ or, of course, ‘Chix’! (Joan Cheyne, Secretary pro tem.)

From #44

**The 60th annual Barbershop Harmony Show of the Big Chief Chorus**

has come and gone. Under the direction of Jim Troeger, and in tribute to John Smith, the chorus presented “Family,” a musical exploration of the theme that barbershop singing can bring happiness and a sense of Family, even to down-in-the-dumps salesmen, marooned in a small town suspiciously similar to “River City.”

From #45

The Off-The Reservation Ensemble began rehearsing right after the fall Show with an initial presentation to the BCC on Nov 23rd of “I’ll Be home For Christmas.” On December 11, Off the Reservation did its own van tour, visiting our Show Ad Sponsors as a way of saying thank you. “We visited Copperstones,
Everybody's Cafe, Ripples, Pete's Coney, Village Place, Coopers, Tenuta's Foodlane and the Big Apple.

Well, okay, so the **Jane Pauley show** was underwhelming. Power Play was on for five minutes according to my timing, maybe six with Jane's introduction. Just enough time for (a) the traditional explanation of barbershop, how it is built up part-by-part from lead ("melody"), tenor and bass ("who sing above and below"), and baritone ("who sings the junk notes"), all done to the first eight measures (not even time to sing thru to the tag) of "My Wild Irish Rose," (b) "Angels we have heard on high," and (c) one conversational sound-byte with Jane, which she used to express her surprise that there aren't more "family quartets," implying a kind of folksy understanding of barbershop.

**From #47**
Ross Ensign and Wayne Cheyne helped make this year's **Singing Valentines** very successful. Ross was able to pull off a small public relations miracle in establishing Great Lakes Crossing Mall as "Valentine Central". (Chuck Murray)

**From #48**
**Spring Mini-retreat at the Lafayette Grande.**
Thanks to Ron Clarke's arrangements, we held our spring singing retreat as a one-day in the old Pontiac Masonic Temple Ballroom. What a fine venue. Gene Hanover, from Niles MI, was our coach. He began by introducing Speech Level Singing to us, a program developed by Seth Riggs (See Singing for the Stars.)

**BCC in Oakland Press**
Congratulations to Jack Teuber for arranging for Diana Dillaber Murray's March 31st story in the Oakland Press – "Barbershop chorus to celebrate 62 years.” It was in a prominent place, page three of the main section, and it included a bit about our history, our sing-outs, and our mini-retreat with Gene Hanover at the Lafayette Grande ballroom. And even with accuracy!

**From #49**
**PIONEER DISTRICT CONVENTION**
"We came, we saw, we conquered.” (as Julius, Lead in the Caesar Quartet, said.) Well, we didn’t conquer Macomb, or even Grosse Pointe. But we DID conquer [the flatness of] that final “falling in love with you.” We DID conquer homophonia (the tendency to sing everything in the same monotonous way). We DID sing from the heart. We DID sing with better unit sound. We DID follow Jim’s directions. So what if we ended up with 697 pts (58.1%). So what if we placed 11th of 13 choruses. [W]e LIKED the way we sounded, the way we sang, the experience we were having.

**Jim Troeger** completes his first year as Director of the Big Chief Chorus.

**From #50**
Thanks to **Bob E’s Super Chief Coney** (340 West Walton Blvd, Pontiac) for their reception of us after Silver Lake. The Big Chief Chorus namesake, the "Big Chief,” is the Super Chief's foot-long Coney Island hot dog, the only Coney, according to Chuckles Murray’s years of extensive mouth-on research, with a grilled or toasted bun. It sells for $2.99.

**Southern Gospel Quartetting**
Zaven Melkonian and John Cowlishaw visited the Union Lake Baptist Church…to hear The Master’s Touch, apparently one of the better-known Southern Gospel quartets in Michigan. Although Zaven was familiar with this oeuvre (having even sung in it), John was not and it gave him the chance for comparing traditions.

First of all, it is not a cappella. They brought their sound equipment for instrumental backup, but the overtones added by the instruments make all hope of “expanded sound” a lost cause.

Also they miked everything they sang. The bass’s voice, in particular, was muffled, and it was strange that they each had an earphone to listen to the instruments that we could hear all too well; at one point the bass just stopped, saying he couldn’t hear the beat.

Another difference seems to arise from the wider pitch range of Southern Gospel singers. There is such delight in those deep-voiced basses (e.g., to sing a song like “How Great Thou Art,” which they performed). And the tenor had a very strong, high-pitched rather nasal tone that could have nailed a fly to the wall from twenty paces. Zaven suggested that that might be more southern than gospel. At any rate, we barbershopers tend to sing with closer pitch because it is easier to blend voices and create overtones that way.

Of course, another difference is that their purpose is openly religious, with little sermonettes interspersed.

A similarity between the two forms are the large national organizations. The Master’s Touch will be attending the National Quartet Convention in Louisville, KY September 15-18.

**From #52**
Mike Frye was one of twenty-nine new AHSOW members. He qualified on all three harmony parts + "woodshed" melody.

**From #53**
How does one confront the horror of Katrina? On the other hand, how does one avoid it? I tried to link it to this bulletin by looking at the barbershop chapters directly affected.

The fifty-one members of the Mardi Gras Chorus of Greater New Orleans have met Tuesday evenings at Delgado Community College. That site is 1/4th
mile from the Superdome and ½ mile from the levees of the Mississippi River. This past week, it was a refuge for the elderly Hilda Marchand, who saw a reporter taking notes and asked for help. “Can you help me get word to my son? He hasn’t heard from me in days.”

The Pride of Mobile has been meeting on Tuesday nights at the local Adventist church in downtown Mobile – where flooding reached eleven feet.

From #55
DOO WOP IS BACK! The Big Chief Chorus presents its 61st annual harmony show – JUKE BOX CLASSICS. Featured guest will be THREE MEN AND A TENOR, voted Michigan’s highest-rated touring group. November 5, 2005. 7:30 PM, at the Clarkson High School Performing Arts Auditorium.

(From Kenosha) For far too long, the Society has not enforced the requirement that choruses and quartets sing only legal music in our contests. Because of the potential liability for songs that we want to /have put on CDs and now DVDs, we can no longer put ourselves in an exposed position. Therefore, effective immediately, we expect that all quartets and choruses will sing only cleared, legal music in all contests.

(The first of 31 Big Chief Jeopardy quizzes)
Answer: He bought and managed a motel in Duluth after his career flying helicopters ended.
Answer: He became Director of the Enforcement Bureau of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.
Answer: His record for consecutive shutouts led to his being drafted by the Blackhawks and Rangers.

From #59
BCC Valentines Singouts:
Five quartets sang 50 gigs to 1411 people. They were:
- Celebration (Brede, Teuber, Dabbs, Moss, Dar Johnson),
- GemTones (Mazzara, Keith, DeNio, Carinci, Myre),
- Harmony Knights (Twomey, Blackstone, Spires, Ensign, Dick Johnson)
- Four Wheel Drive (Doig, Monroe, Cowlishaw, Melkonian, Prueter), and
- C Natural (Brede, Teuber, Johnson, Holm)

(Sound and Music
“Sound is created as a vibratory motion of particles and objects. The vibrations that produce sound represent an energy that is found throughout nature, not only within ourselves and our world but far beyond into the realms of moons, stars and the Universe. Music is a special type of sound. It not only pleases our ears but the patterns of its vibratory motions encapsulate a system of rhythms, relationships, proportions and harmonies that exist throughout the natural and man-made world”

From #62
The demo tape cut by the chorus has paid off. We’ve been selected to sing the National Anthem at the Detroit Tigers game August 8.

Last week, Greg Moss summarized his vocal training exercises in a matrix – using Hum, Bubble, Nyah, and Mum on: (a) 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1, (b) octave – 1-3-5-8-8-8-8-5-3-1, and (c) 1-3-5-8-10-12-11-9-7-5-4-2-1.

The Fun Addicts band is going strong. Having started with five chorus guys three years ago, they now number nine. Len Barnes and Jenn Winstad play trumpet, Dan Hines and Permilla Chrisman are the clarinetists, Bob Marshall is on trombone, Bob Legato on saxophone, Lew Mahacek plays string bass, Jerry Ellis is the drummer, and Mike Keith is on keyboard. Their most recent gig was the Memorial Day parade through Sylvan Lake and Keego Harbor. Playing from a slow-moving float in the heat and sun was a test of fortitude.

MEET D. J. HINER
D.J. Hiner was the baritone of The Ritz, which won International Gold in 1991 and which sang and recorded over a twenty-year period. He also began making training tapes as a one-man quartet called The D.J. Four. Listening to the recordings, it is hard to imagine that they were made by a single singer in his recording studio. I interviewed D. J. by email.

From #64
2006 Slamlkafest, July 22
About 300 people attended Jack & Kitty’s 7th Annual Harmony Hideaway Happening. The locale is their eight-acre farm in Riley Township, north of Armada, Richmond, and Memphis. The evening show featured performances by the Guardians of Harmony and many quartets, including Power Play, Fermata Nowhere (with substitute Mark Slamka), Border Crossing, Moxxi, Party of Four, and several Sweet Adelines’ quartets. The highlight was the first performance by our new International champions, Vocal Spectrum. The food included Hotdogs, Brats, Sloppy Joes, platters of veggies and pastas, tablefuls of pies and cakes, an ice cream truck, Beer, and Pop. The requested donation for supper and show was $20.

Meet Pontiac’s Members in the Pioneer District Hall of Fame.
In 1974, the Pioneer District initiated its Hall of Fame. Of the sixty-three inductees, six have been from the Pontiac chapter, all of them initiated in the first six years. This article about the six is based on material in Bob McDermott’s History of the Pioneer District, and the memories of Bill Pascher, with helpful
supplements from Lyle Howard, Len Barnes, Ed Lilly, Dick Johnson, and Neil Braun – thanks, guys.

From #65
Four Wheel Drive - Foxtown Tigers Train
Four Wheel Drive sang to about 200 Tiger fans as the Ilitch family inaugurated the Foxtown Tigers Train Saturday, August 5. The Foxtown Tigers Train boarded passengers at Pontiac, Birmingham, and Royal Oak, where Four Wheel Drive and Last Stop Junction Dixieland Band entertained ticketholders who arrived early for entertainment and hot dogs. The $29 ticket package included roundtrip transportation, outfield box seating, entertainment and refreshments. The event was organized by Star Trax who said it sold out in seventeen minutes.

From #66
Our dear friend, Art Ripley, died of liver disease Tuesday night, September 12, shortly after Roger Holm startled the chorus by announcing he was in his final hours.

What a fine job Wayne Cheyne did in planning and carrying out Guest Night, September 19. He was able to articulate and illustrate the components of chorus life – polecats, Valentines program, warm-ups, Doo Wop, Quartets (Celebration and 4WD sang), competition, and the Christmas chorus, all in the space of an hour. We hope to see our four guests return.

New Member Primer
What is Barbershop Harmony?
What is the Barbershop Harmony Society?
What is it like to sing barbershop?
What is the Pontiac-Waterford Big Chief Chorus?
How do I choose a voice part?
How do I join?
What uniforms will I need?
Useful websites

From #69
(The first of two cross-word puzzles:)

From #70
Welcome to our new Director, Thomas Blue!
As Roger Holm said in his recent e-mail, “GENTLEMEN: Mr. Tom Blue has accepted our offer to be our chorus director, and will start getting his feet on the ground with us tomorrow night!”

Music is what feelings sound like.
~Author Unknown

From #72
“Here we go to Higgins Lake, to Higgins Lake, to Higgins Lake. Here we go to Higgins Lake, for vo-cal en-ter-tain-ment.”

From Ron Clarke:
Men,
After last nights survey, the new class C shirt will be the yellow button-down (please do not use the word maize in my Spartan presence).

From #73
PR and Bulletin awards
The Big Chief Chorus was honored to win two district-wide contests. Jack Teuber won the district award for Public Relations Officer of the year, and John Cowlishaw won Bulletin Editor of the Year. The awards were presented at the House of Delegates meeting, Friday afternoon, by Art Lane who said, “This is the first time in recent memory that members of the same chapter have won the district’s top two awards.”

From #75
“TOOT-TOOT! Arriving, July 8 at the Detroit Pier, direct from a recent celebrated engagement on the Cass River at Frankenmuth, the Pontiac/Waterford Big Chief chorus, aboard the Detroit Princess.

From de Prez:
Men,
The JULY 3rd rehearsal is a very important one. That’s the final rehearsal prior to our major public performance aboard the Detroit Princess. We need everyone there!! Please do your very best to attend so that we can make a great impression on the paying public, some of whom may have never seen us perform before. Remember, “You never get a second chance to make a first impression.”

Zaven

From #76
2007 Summer Tour!
From the Detroit River to Goodrich, from White Lake to Clarkston, the Big Chief Chorus went on summer tour.
From Director Tom:

Men,

Thank you again for your commitment to the BCC. I appreciate all of your hard work, dedication and effort to continue to strive for excellent performances. You are getting so much more consistent with each performance. It is certainly my pleasure to conduct you and to work with quality people.

WEBCAST

A dozen of us gathered at Cory Flatoff’s house for the Webcasted Quartet Finals, Saturday night, July 7. What a great time. Cory had set up two screens to maximize good viewing for us. Doc Mann brought six pizzas, all different types.

From Director Thomas the Blue (but oft wearing Yellow, when it’s not in the Laundry!)

Men,

Thank you all for your time, effort and continued good singing throughout all of our "summer tour" sing-outs. I appreciate all that have made efforts to be at as many as possible. Let's continue to have as our focus, good vowels (tall or round), singing on the breath, solid intonation (listening ears and correct pitches), watching the conductor, facial communication with audience of song texts, and overall enjoyment of singing.

AVIATION AND BARBERSHOP

As of the end of 2006, there were 597,109 active pilots, or 0.2% of the US population (one out of 500). However, in our chorus are eleven members that are pilots or have at least some flight training or have had other close association with aviation.

As soon as I joined the chorus, I learned that director Chris Miller owned a share of a Cessna 182 Skylane and sold aviation insurance for a living, and then I learned of others. Are pilots attracted to Barbershop? Are Barbershoppers attracted to aviation? Meet our aeronautical aficionados:

(With photo insert of all the specific types of aircraft)

A Journey through Time, By Lyle Howard

Let’s all take an imaginary journey back in time --- how about the third Friday of any month in the year 1959….

“On the western plains of Lake Orion”

On October 14, the chorus and its quartets sang at the Orion Township Library. It was well advertised as a reprise of last fall’s show, How the West was Sung. We hauled out western shirts and vests and hats, members brought spurs and chaps and guns, Cookie had his chef’s outfit and triangle, Bob Legato brought bales of hay, and the library even supplied horses – so light in weight they seemed to float upward from one’s hands. Tom Blue led the gathering with a light touch, a western accent, gracious speech, and, one is sure, a sense of weirdness that just one year ago he was in the audience and now he was directing the whole she-bang – well, as much as the Big Chief Chorus is directable.


The good news is that our Four Wheel Drive was within 15 percentage points of first place. The bad news is that so were eleven other quartets. Nevertheless, the quartet felt good about its performance, that they sang up to their potential.

MEET MEREDITH WILLSON

The man behind The Music Man, Meredith Willson…. We caught up with Mr. Willson on Halloween in a graveyard in Mason City, Iowa.

The plot of the show, created by Jeff Doig and Pete Mazzara over the preceding months and tweaked by the various performers, concerned the chorus’s attempts to get to West Virginia to sing “Country Roads, Take Me Home” at the Wheeling Festival.

From Prez Zav:

As I prepare to vacate the office of President of this great organization, I’d like you to know what a pleasure it has been for me to serve the men of The Big Chief Chorus these past two years. Together, as a team, we have made some great strides in moving the chapter forward. It has been an exciting two years, with two successful annual shows, and many additional local performances throughout each year.

Mike Keith was one of the honorees in the Honor Flight program this past month. There were fifty veterans in Mike’s flight.

ASK THE DIRECTOR (one of several)

Z.M. from White Lake Township writes: “Tom, would you ever consider the possibility of the BCC to once again participate in a combined performance with your High School Choir(s), in much the same format as we did last year?”
From #89
Northbound Sound at Bush League, 2008 (Submitted by Terry Jamison)

There was a three way tie for third place. All five quartets sang on the evening show Northbound Sound did their stick routine and sang “Trickle, Trickle.” The audience loved it, and we performed the best we ever have.

From #90

The Big Chief Chorus sang four songs for a candlelight vigil September 11 at the Michigan Fallen Heroes Memorial site on N. Telegraph. The names of Michigan’s heroes from police and fire lost over the past year were unveiled to memorialize their service, as well as several newly discovered long-departed police and fire officers.

From #91

64th ANNUAL SHOW

It has been a long time coming (gee, half as long as Barack Obama and John McCain have been on the campaign trail) but Saturday night, November 1, it all came together in a fine performance of American History.

From #92

From the Prez

Out with the old, in with the new! Yes, you have elected your new Board members for the 2009 Pontiac-Waterford Chapter.

But wait!!!! As I look around, only a couple new faces do appear. Well then, let’s take a look at this past year. Because I was surrounded with a great group of hardworking, dedicated, and ambitious board members, we were able to institute a couple new programs.

From #93

Welcome, 2009!

And not a day too soon! An exciting year lies ahead of us. Our chorus is growing under Tom Blue’s directorship. The Executive Board goes to COTS this weekend for training and re-training. Jack Teuber continues to find singouts for us. We look forward to Valentines gigs, our 53rd Woodshed contest, Higgins Lake retreat, Pioneer District Convention, and our 65th Annual Show – “Disney on Broadway.” Be a part of it - the music, the companionship, and the fun!

Arthur is 90 years old. He’s played golf every day since his retirement 25 years ago. One day he arrives home looking downcast. “That’s it,” he tells his wife. “I’m giving up golf. My eyesight has gotten so bad that once I’ve hit the ball, I can’t see where it went.” His wife sympathizes and makes him a cup of tea. As they sit down, she says, “Why don’t you take my brother with you and give it one more try.” “That’s no good,” sighs Arthur. “Your brother’s a hundred and three. He can’t help.” “He may be a hundred and three,” says the wife, “but his eyesight is perfect.” So the next day, Arthur heads off to the golf course with his brother-in-law. He tees up, takes an almighty swing, and squints down the fairway. He turns to the brother-in-law. “Did you see the ball?” “Of course I did!” replies the brother-in-law. “I have perfect eyesight.” “Where did it go?” asks Arthur. “I don’t remember.”

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)
Assistant Directors: Fred McFadyen, Dick Johnson, & Bill Holmes
President: Doc Mann (248-628-0189)
Past President: Zaven Melkonian
VP: Chapter Dev: Bill Holmes
VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber
Secretary: Bill Auquier
Treasurer: Dick Johnson
Members at Large – Bob Butcher, Wayne Cheyne, Ron Clarke, Erik Domke
Chorus Manager: Bob Greenwood
Music Team: Holm, Blue, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Murray, Prueter, Moss, Cowlishaw, and Brede

CALENDAR

Aug 4, T, 6pm  Aub. Hills Com. Center, Yellow shirts (no rehearsal)
Aug 11, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, at the Fridge
Aug 18, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Aug 21-22  Bush League Quartet Contest, Gaylord
Aug 25  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Aug 27-29  Rockin’ Barbershop Camp, Interlochen
Aug 28, F  BCC Picnic, Bob & Eileen Marshall’s
Sep 1, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Sep 8, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Sep 11, F, 7pm  Fallen Heroes (Blue blazers, white shirts, gray pants)
Sep 15, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Sep 22, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Sep 29, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Oct 16-18  District Convention - Kalamazoo
Nov 7, Sa  Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show
Apr 23-25  Spring District Convention, Kalamazoo

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlishaw

Arthur is 90 years old. He’s played golf every day since his retirement 25 years ago. One day he arrives home looking downcast. “That’s it,” he tells his wife. “I’m giving up golf. My eyesight has gotten so bad that once I’ve hit the ball, I can’t see where it went.” His wife sympathizes and makes him a cup of tea. As they sit down, she says, “Why don’t you take my brother with you and give it one more try.” “That’s no good,” sighs Arthur. “Your brother’s a hundred and three. He can’t help.” “He may be a hundred and three,” says the wife, “but his eyesight is perfect.” So the next day, Arthur heads off to the golf course with his brother-in-law. He tees up, takes an almighty swing, and squints down the fairway. He turns to the brother-in-law. “Did you see the ball?” “Of course I did!” replies the brother-in-law. “I have perfect eyesight.” “Where did it go?” asks Arthur. “I don’t remember.”