



BIG CHIEF CHORUS
SMOKE SIGNALS



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

Vol. 9, No. 9

January 1, 2010

2010: A new Year and a new Decade: BE THERE!

We'll be starting the New Year off in great fashion on Tuesday, January 5th! And it looks to be a fun year with some new music, some of which is aimed at our "Get Your Kicks On Route 66" fall show theme (in recognition of what will be our 66th annual show!)

(For the music committee and our directors,
Roger Holm)

Christmas Season

The 2009 Big Chief Chorus Christmas season included 28 gigs to 2441 people. Two were county groups, the Oakland County Retirees' Luncheon at White Lake Oaks, and the Oakland County Parks Employees at Waterford Oaks. Eleven were at Retirement Centers and Assisted Living venues, including Lockwood of Waterford, Lourdes campus, Inn at Cass Lake, Elmhaven, Pine Tree Manor, Sunrise of Clarkston, Lakeland Place, Canterbury on the Lake, and Independence Village. Three were at church gatherings, at Bethany Baptist, at St. Paul's Methodist Church, and at Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church with the North Oakland Concert Band. The latter program included three polecats, and several Christmas carols, as well as a three-song reprise of our Fall Disney show. Seven gigs were at restaurants and grocery stores, including Big Apple, Pete's Coney Island, Tenuta's, two V.G.'s, Railside Grill, and Super Chief Coney Island. We also sang at the tree-lighting ceremonies at Waterford Township

Civic Center, and at Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital. Finally, the December 12 bus trip ended, as convention has established, with a performance at the Dickens' Festival in Holly. Throughout the season, the chorus was augmented by contributions from quartets and an ensemble – CELEBRATION, VINTAGE, SPARE PARTS and SNOWFLAKES.

With Neil Braun, Eric Domke, Walt DeNio, John Cowlshaw, and Bob Butcher gone for all or part of the Christmas season, the baritone section sure appreciated the added presence of Ray Sturdy, Jeff Kafer, and Aaron Oberstadt. Other guest Christmas singers included Tom Burder, George Luenberger, Greg Stieber, Andy Lesnew, Michael Oberstadt, Wayne Nafsu, Larry Gatzmyer, Paul Preseau, Dick Chapman, Roy Scott, Duane Roy, and Jerry Twomey

12th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BUS TOUR

On Saturday, December 12 the Big Chief Chorus with 35 men set out on its 12th Annual Christmas Bus Tour. Thanks to Bruce Brede with assistance from Ross Ensign, Roger Holm and Jack Teuber for making the Tour possible. Audiences included the Elmhaven and Sunrise communities, and two V.G.'s, at both of which a certain red-vested groupie was quite vocal with her support. The residents at Pine Tree Manor are always very appreciative, and cookies and coffee were again provided by the staff. The Holly Dickens Festival provided the warmest and driest stage in the BCC's twelve year memory. Spotted in the audience were the Blue, Mazzara and Holmes families.

Following the Dickens' appearance the a spur group of twenty five gave a command performance to the patrons of the Rail Side Grille and Bar, adding, to the usual Christmas repertoire, "White Christmas," "Can You feel the Love Tonight," and "Under the Boardwalk." The patrons and management were overwhelmed and are anxiously awaiting next year's return.

(by Jack Teuber)

Thanks to the Magnificent 7..... or 8..... that stopped off at Super Chief on Sat. We got a great shot of Barb (current owner and perennial supporter of BCC) that we'll be able to blow up and give her. We also presented her with a current chorus photo that she'll display on the restaurant wall. She (and her departed husband) have run the Super Chief business for over 30 years in this area. It means a lot to her for us to stop by and sing at Christmas and Valentines Day. She seems to be more generous every year, this year treating everyone to foot-longs. Be sure to let her know that you're from the BCC when you stop by for a couple of your own foot-longs.

(by Ross Ensign)

From the Prez:

Best Wishes for the New Year. After an outstanding month of Christmas performances, may the Big Chief Chorus have continued success and growth in 2010.

President Jack

From our Director:

Men of the BCC,

Thank you for all of your work this past year and with the sing-outs this December providing a fitting way to close another season of music-making. I have been very blessed to work with all of you and you have been very encouraging to me and very kind to my family. My family thanks you for all of the gifts presented at the banquet and for the Mickey shirts. Thanks Ron!

We as a chorus have grown musically and have increased our membership as well as our group participation at sing-outs, and our attendance at rehearsals has been averaging 45+! Way to go men! Let's continue our move forward and make the coming year the best ever for the Pontiac-Waterford Big Chief Chorus.

My family and I would like to wish a Happy New Year to each and every one of you and yours.

Tom

AROUND THE PATCH

The chorus afterglowed one night at Heroes' Bar B-Q and Brew on W. Huron. The owner of Heroes', Tim Nick, is also part owner of the Oakland Cruisers Baseball Team, which may be needing National Anthem Singers, at their new stadium, due to open at the Summit Place Mall site on July 16, 2010. See www.cruisersbaseball.com

On December 11, the chorus held its **Installation and Awards Dinner** at Waterford Oaks. Doc Mann gave his going-away speech. The chorus welcomed Jack Teuber as its new president. NIGHT SHIFT performed for entertainment, and installed the 2010 officers.

The Big Chief Chorus made the **front page** of the Tuesday, Dec 8 edition of the **Oakland Press** (circulation 65,000). The chorus's photo appeared as part of the Waterford Township Tree-Lighting ceremony of the night before. Prominent in the picture is Bob Stephenson.



Photo by Oakland Press

On January 17, Sunday, the BCC will close out the **M.L. King Jr. Observance** at Waterford Kettering High School.

Final numbers for 2009: 109 gigs to combined audiences of 7952.

QUARTETS

VINTAGE sang a five song set Tuesday evening, December 1, at Estabrooks Havencrest Assisted Living for the 88th birthday of Ellie, Joan Cheyne's mother, and a dozen of her friends.

Celebration Quartet's Annual Tour

On Saturday, December 5, the CELEBRATION made its annual Christmas Tour. This year's tour included Show-Book Sponsors and a Charity Luncheon at Bethany Baptist Church. The quartet ate well as the Tour progressed, with each quartet member being presented with a pie from the Big Apple Restaurant, a Coney dog or sandwich of choice at Pete's Coney Island and a check to be used for groceries at Tenuta's Grocery. Every table was filled at the Big Apple, the Cones were delicious at Pete's, and the shoppers gave us the thumbs up at Tenuta's. The nine-song gig at the Bethany Baptist Christmas Tea was arranged by Bill Maxfield along with Nona Bos, a Red Hat friend of barbershopping.

MEMBERSHIP (at 62)

Pending: Carinci, Clarke, DeNio, Keith, Nevaux, and Prueter.

January Birthdays: Len Barnes (Jan 3), Tom Blue (Jan 7), Bob Marshall (Jan 10)

Medical: Eric Domke's surgery went well.

In Memoriam: Jan 30, 2004, John "Smitty" Smith (Smoke Signals #34)

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Paul Ellinger reports on the growth of the **Monroe Chapter**. "I was asked this year to install their officers and I'm tellin' you what, watch these guys. They have more than doubled in size over the last 2 years and have a goal to add another 10-15 just this year. They are going to be coaching, singing in the public eye, trying new things and continuing to do the things that really worked for them."

The Guardians of Harmony has announced the appointment of Mark Slamka as an assistant director of the chorus. "We feel that with our director, Matt Tipton, and adding Mark to work with him, that we have the perfect combination of musical and presentation expertise. We are determined to rebuild and re-energize in 2010 and become a championship chorus again."

(by Dave Anderson)

Within a couple months of the death of his older brother, Matt Tipton, Director of Guardians of Harmony and Tenor of RIGHT ON Q, announced the death of his father, **Roy Tipton**, a 35-year barbershop member. "He was a member of the Hudson, Coldwater and Jackson chapters before helping to found the Hillsdale chapter. I am proud to be one of his 10 "Man of note" awards. What I have been able to achieve in barbershopping I owe to him. He will remain my inspiration for all my endeavors in the years to come."

There is a new quartet in the Lansing chapter, which includes two-time-Woodshed-winning twenty-something **Jacob Welty** at Tenor. The other members of the OLDE THYME HARMONY QUARTET are: Don Horton, Bari; Jim McKay, Bass; and 'Doc' Oliver, Lead

Nice story on **D.O.C.** in Home Town Life.

<http://www.hometownlife.com/article/20091227/NEWS02/912270318/Barbershop+singers+keep+busy+during+holidays>

"I will be attending Leadership Academy and will have a simple display of our **Pioneer History**. If you are attending and have items you would like to see in future displays - please bring them with you. I'm working on a larger display to have ready by our Spring Convention."

Basically: John.H.Baker IV – Pioneer District Historian

On Friday January 15th the Windsor Chapter will host its annual Uncle Sam night. This event has taken place for many years and is always a great fun night. Lots of quarteting and choruses. What could be better? Details, as to time and directions, can be found on the District web site <http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/> and clicking on "Upcoming District Events". All the information you will need can be found there.

(from Bill Strong)

AROUND THE WORLD

Here's the a cappella group that Tom Blue mentioned appreciatively last month.

<http://www.tonicsolfa.com/media/>

Harmony Foundation Presents...2009 DVD includes OC TIMES, MASTERS OF HARMONY, VOCAL SPECTRUM, AMBASSADORS OF HARMONY, MAX Q and THE VOCAL MAJORITY.

"Harmony Foundation Presents... 2009 will be sold for \$29.99 plus shipping and handling. However, if you pre-order your copy before February 1, we'll take off \$5 and waive the shipping and handling charges! That's right; you'll get an instant \$11 savings! Simply visit www.harmonyfoundation.org/presents This DVD is a must have for all barbershop enthusiasts, don't wait - secure your copy TODAY!" (From our BHS headquarters)

Philly Earlybird Deadline

The Earlybird deadline for Philadelphia is right around the corner. Register for the convention by January 15 to save up to \$26 per person!

Big Chief Jeopardy, #35. (Did you get these?)

1. **Answer:** He attended Michigan State in the Business Administration program. Though his summer jobs were in restaurantering, his heart returned to clothing. **Question:** Who is Ron Clarke?
2. **Answer:** J-3 Cub, V-tailed Bonanza, Piper Tomahawk, Cessna 172, Beech 400A, Eipper Quicksilver MX, H-21 Shawnee, Piper Vagabond, B-17, and Ercoupe. **Question:** Name nine planes that our members have flown.

Big Chief Jeopardy, #36. (Try these.)

1. **Answer:** Our last surviving charter member has died.
2. **Answer:** He started playing tenor sax and clarinet at the age of 13 and was a professional union musician by the time he was 17. He is the father of ten children, four sons and six daughters.

(Clues to the Questions in Issues # 68 and 78.)

Jack Teuber's 70th birthday party, December 19

Close to a hundred people gathered at the Fridge (unused by the defunct toboggan run) to celebrate Jack's 70th birthday. The group appeared to be about 1/3 barbershoppers, 1/3 family, and 1/3 friends, including church choir members. The buffet meal was served by the familiar Oak Management. The entertainment was built into a simple autobiographical journey by Jack, beginning with "The Old Songs" in memory of Graham School 1946; "Coney Island Baby" by Jack, his two brothers, and Freddie McFadyen, reprising the 1947 Flint Central High School quartet; a duet by Fred and pro-saxophonist George Sinnott on "Danny Boy," (George is also a member of Jack's church Music Team); Cowlshaw's parody – "Rudolph the Barbershopper"; a selection of carols led by Sinnott; a tribute to wife Mary and Daughter-in-law Lou, with, guess what, "Hello Mary Lou" by another Teuber quartet; "Shine on Me" by a third Teuber quartet; and "Keep Your Eye on the Girly You Love" by a Teuber-augmented VINTAGE quartet. Tom Blue wrapped it up by directing "Keep the Whole World Singing."

Even non-barbershoppers got into the act in response to Mary's table cards directing each table to present a singing gift to Jack in a prescribed style – Broadway, Rap, etc. The results were very creative.

ASK THE DIRECTOR

Q: "What are your goals for 2010?"



The Pontiac-Waterford Big Chief Chorus 2010 Goals

Individual Director Goals

- More quartet singing
- Attend a CDWI
- Work toward director certification
- Conduct more clearly and effectively (within the box)
- Individual director coaching
- More quartet and singer coaching
- Conduct more "off the paper"
- More visual eye contact with chorus
- Interact more with the chorus and individuals
- More consistent communication (weekly schedule addendums)

BCC Goals

- More quartet participation in and out of rehearsal (Can we form more quartets...6?)
- More rehearsal flow (Wow, where did the time go!)
- Consistent attendance (If absent, let someone know.)
- More attention to song presentation (How about appropriate song movements/ gestures?)
- Continued work on:
 - ✓ vowel formation
 - ✓ breath
 - ✓ intonation
 - ✓ chords ringing (tuning)
 - ✓ unit sound
 - ✓ more head tone
 - ✓ dynamics
 - ✓ words
- Increase chorus membership (Increase Society memberships by 10 %.)
- Encouragement of new membership (How about 5-10 new members?)
- Consistent sing-out participation (How many can you attend next year? More than this year?)

Barbershop history

From Terry Jamison

"Macomb twisted my arm to be the chapter historian. As I research for Macomb anything I find for Pontiac I'd like to forward it

"For Macomb I'm placing all the master data on a flash drive. The file structure I created includes files for: Chapter quartets, chorus pics, list of directors, videos, major events, contest scores, write ups of the chapter, etc. All the older documents and pics will be scanned so all data is kept electronically.

Terry

Architectural acoustics

Jeff Kafer and I were talking about the poor acoustics at Christ the Redeemer church, and I suggested it was due to its size. Not so, said Jeff. He has soloed at a larger, older Catholic Church in Baltimore, Sacred Heart, for his grandmother's memorial and his sister's wedding ... without a mic and could be heard easily. "What I learned at Sacred Heart is that building size and being heard are virtually independent. Sacred Heart was acoustically "live" whereas this church was clearly acoustically "dead." Whether that was by intent or not is a good matter for debate."

Further conversation with Jeff and with Tom Blue informed me that the preference in architectural acoustics nowadays is to make the venue dead, so that one can use microphones and electronic amplification to accomplish one's goals. Raw vocalism is on the outs.

A Cappella Music on TV

Did you watch the two a cappella TV shows in December?

On Saturday, Dec 12, it was a live contest between Michigan State University's "Capital Green" versus University of Michigan's "Dicks and Janes". MSU won, but who cared, (they were both pretty sloppy), but it raised funds for PBS and exposed a cappella to the unsung masses. Selections included pop, rock, and Motown tunes. The PBS magazine article noted that there are now more than 1,200 collegiate a cappella groups in the U.S.

NBC's Sing-Off the next week was more interesting and entertaining. Starting with eight ensembles, all male, all female, or mixed, the competition continued for four nights to winnow down to the winning group, NOTA, who earned \$100,000 and a recording contract. Although all eight were a cappella, the only one that was barbershop was a international-quality Sweet Ads quartet by the name of MAXX FACTOR.

The New York Times reported that the final installment of The Sing-Off earned its largest audience, an average of 7.3 million viewers, according to Nielsen's estimates, as NBC finished second in the night's ratings, behind CBS, but ahead of ABC and Fox.

You can STILL hear ALL four shows at: <http://www.nbc.com/sing-off/video/categories/season-1/1178842/>

Barbershoppers who viewed the contest were forced to consider the ways in which barbershop is only one subtype of a cappella. A cappella originated (thanks, Tom Blue) as singing in the “head section” of cross-shaped cathedrals. For centuries, instrumental accompaniment, even vocal harmony, was a theological no-no. Today, a cappella simply means “removing all instrumentation,” nothing but the human voice (or maybe better, nothing but the human body). Most of the groups restored that feeling of instrumentation by mimicking instruments. Thus, the heart of barbershop is missing.

What is that heart? I think there are three main ingredients:

- (1) Homophonic sound with melody in the second voice. For the most part, barbershop voices move together, in harmony, and in rhythmic dependence.
- (2) Ringing chords. In-tune homophonic sound generates the overtones that we call expanded sound. It's the unavoidable consequence of wave physics.
- (3) Lots of 7th chords. These are necessary in order to move the harmony thru the progression of keys used by sophisticated barbershop.

All of these criteria were violated in the Sing Off.

Doesn't mean it wasn't fun! Enjoyable! Showing America that instruments aren't necessary. And the judges clearly recognized and rewarded good, well-tuned singing.

There was much discussion on PioNet about the distinction between a cappella and barbershop. <http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/PioNet/pionet.htm>

Announcing the birth of THE GREAT LAKES HARMONY BRIGADE!

Are you a serious quartet singer or one who wishes to be? Are you up to learning 10 new songs and then singing them in a quartet in a Friday night contest? Does the prospect of singing in a 100+ man chorus on Saturday night for the community, and everyone KNOWS his part, excite you? Well then, read on!

Think about this before you do anything...this is for SERIOUS quartet singers. Not knowing all 10 songs will NOT be an option. Like the school board in THE MUSIC MAN chasing down Professor Harold Hill, we'll want your credentials! If you're not a quartet guy then make sure you tell us who will vouch for you if we ask (and we will ask). Who the heck do we think we are? Well, we're the GREAT LAKES HARMONY BRIGADE and we want to make sure your quarteting experience for the weekend is one you won't forget (and won't want to miss again)!

Go to this link, <http://glhb.org/>, and fill out an application. Submit and you will hear from the GLHB within a few days if you can register to sing for and with us. Remember, not knowing your music will not be an option. But, if you're accepted, you'll receive your ten songs in a handsomely bound folder along with a part predominant learning CD in plenty of time to enjoy the experience.

We are excited to be joining the proud tradition of the North Carolina, Atlantic and Indiana Harmony Brigades in presenting the best in eXtreme Quarteting. If you've never been to a Brigade weekend, come to this one and you won't miss another!

If you're not sure if this is for you please go to <http://harmonybrigade.org/ihb/> and click on testimonials.

Yours in XQ,

Mike O'Donnell, President

GREAT LAKES HARMONY BRIGADE

Complaints Choirs

The possibilities for music are apparently endless. The Dec 9th NYTimes had a story about “Complaints Choirs.”

http://www.nytimes.com/2009/12/09/arts/music/09complaint.html?_r=1&th&emc=th **TURNING COMPLAINTS INTO ART**

“Life in Tokyo, as everywhere else in the world, is annoying and unfair. The good men are all married. Co-workers clip their fingernails at their desks. Laundry comes back from the cleaners still dirty. Society is too competitive. It is impossible to get enough sleep.

“Recently a group of about 100 Tokyo residents put their complaints into a pile and a composer, Okuchi Shunsuke, turned them into a song. About 80 of the complainers (accompanied by an accordion, a bass cello and a tambourine) then performed the composition at various sites around the city, becoming the latest example of what has become known as a complaints choir.

“The idea started in Finland, where there is a word for people who complain simultaneously, valituskuoro, which translates as complaints choir. About six years ago Oliver Kochta-Kalleinen and his wife, Tellervo Kalleinen, both visual artists living in Helsinki, began discussing the possibility of turning this metaphorical concept into something quite literal. People spend so much energy complaining, they reasoned, so why not harness all that energy into something positive?....”

Here is the web site. <http://www.complaintschoir.org/>

But to get a sense of it, in English, here is a 9-minute concert by the Chicago Complaints Choir.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GvWVxHEaWDU&feature=related>

Letters:

Jack Teuber sent the following to the North Oakland Band:

“The Big Chief Chorus thanks you all, and the band for including us in today's Holiday Performance. You really have a fine organization to put together everything. The Band with 80 plus members really has a good full sound. The piano added a nice touch also. The reader was great. Thank you Steve for your superb narration. Thank you Annette for bringing the chorus in on the sing-a-

long. Not a small task. Thanks to each of you for the many tasks that are necessary for a great performance.”

To which the following compliments and appreciations were received:

(From Annette Kline) “Please inform the choir that we enjoyed having the Big Chiefs once again share our concert with us. Your group sounded great with such rich harmony and very enjoyable to listen to. It is great to share music with such a fine community group and show our listeners what our community has to offer. Have a great Holiday!”

(From Dave) “Thanks to the Big Chief Chorus for sharing your time and talent with us. You guys were great!”

(From Laura Mazich) “We enjoyed having you all!!! Happy Holidays!”
(From George) “Jack, thank you and the chorus for joining us, it was a great concert! Since "Rudolph" is my neighbor, I will try to keep him under control!”

(From Maryann) “As before, it was a pleasure performing with the Big Chiefs. Also, many thanks for your assistance after the concert putting the church sanctuary (seats) back together. We had a great team working last night, and I thought it went smooth and fairly fast.”

Hello all,

From all the emails it looks as though you are all spreading the Joy and Love to our community in a splendid way.

For me singing for the seniors at Christmas, is a feeling of being in the right place and doing the right thing in life.

I'm recuperating well from surgery. No Pain, just gimping around with a walker for a couple months.

Eric (Domke)

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlshaw

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)

Assistant Directors: Fred McFadyen, Dick Johnson, & Bill Holmes

President: Jack Teuber (248-334-3686)

Past President: Doc Mann (248-628-0189)

VP: Chapter Dev: Bill Holmes

VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm

VP: Marketing & PR: by committee

Secretary: Bill Auquier

Treasurer: Dick Johnson

Members at Large – Wayne Cheyne, Ron Clarke, Erik Domke, Fred Pioch

Chorus Manager: Bob Greenwood

Music Team: Holm, Blue, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Murray, Prueter, Moss, Cowlshaw, and Brede

CALENDAR (Times are Performance Times, Warmups 45' earlier, 2010

Jan 5, T, 7 pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks.
Jan 9, Sa	Leadership Academy (formerly COTS), Okemos.
Jan 12, T, 7 pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks.
Jan 17, Su, 6 pm	MLK observance, Waterford Kettering High School
Jan 19, T, 7 pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks.
Jan 26, T, 7 pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks.
Jan 26-31	2010 Midwinter Convention (Tampa)
Feb 12-14	Singing Valentines
Mar 17, W	St. Patrick's Day @ Canterbury on the Lake
Apr 17, Sa	1-day Chorus retreat, Lafayette Grande, 1 Lafayette St., Pontiac
Apr 24, Sa	Spring District Convention, Kalamazoo
Jun 26, Sa	Waterford Log Cabin Days @ Fish Hatchery Park
Sep 24-26	Singing Retreat, MacMullan Center, Higgins Lake
Nov 6, Sa	BCC 66 th annual show, <i>Get Your Kicks on Rte 66</i>
Nov 10, Tu	2010 Christmas chorus forms

