




BIG CHIEF CHORUS
SMOKE
SIGNALS



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

Vol. 10, No. 6 (#114)

October 1, 2010

RETREAT

The Big Chief Chorus held its 8th annual singing retreat (and 7th at Higgins Lake) the weekend of September 24-26. Thirty-two men joined together in fellowship and song, under the leadership of Tom Blue and Dave "Doc" Gillingham. Dave introduced the chorus to Ron Black's WarmUp Exercise, which the MountainTown Singers use. Then, Tom led us thru each of the show songs, one at a time, after which Dave worked on forward motion, target vowels, and proper breathing.

Newbies Pioch, Stephenson, and Sturdy were admitted into the fellowship after they sang a song (and very well indeed).

Pete Mazzara thanked all the people who contributed to the weekend, omitting only his self, who continues to organize these wonderful getaways.

Paste the link below in your browser for a slide show of the weekend.
http://animoto.com/play/0TyShz98MrejTJA8CQs8Kw?utm_content=challenge
(From Tom Blackstone)

From Prez Jack

Chieftans,

Thanks to Pete Mazzara for organizing the 8th Annual Retreat at the MacMullan Center. Thanks to the Men that were able to attend. (I regret that I was unable to attend, due to assisting Mary at home.)

Contact Greg Moss to be sure your nomination is secure. The Chapter election will be held October 5.

Jim Owens is accepting ticket money at Tuesday rehearsals. Pick up flyers and cards to promote our 66th show. Ross Ensign is putting together another fine Show Program. October 19 is the deadline for show ads. Bring the copy or a business card to Ross. Mike Frye put together a letter explaining the Big Chief Chorus' Mission, which would be helpful in securing support from an advertiser.

Thanks, Chieftans, for making the BCC the fine organization that it is.
In Harmony,
Jack

From Director Tom

Focus on...

- breath and filling the inner-tube (use all of the air that we take in)
- the words (communicate through your body and face)
- listen intently as we line up notes/ rhythms and ring chords (tall/ round vowels create a unified sound)
- body alignment (make it easier to breathe and thus sing)
- engage the head tone (easier to sing high notes and less strenuous on the upper notes)
- free and easy tone created by a full breath leading to a healthy sound

AROUND THE PATCH

Jim Claffin continues to deal with his congestive heart failure. It has led to several bouts of pneumonia that have put him in the hospital for a few days. He is still hopeful to join us in the show, and he's working on the learning tracks.

Our bass **Jim Macdonald** has moved to Florida. His address is 2650 Arugula Drive, North Port Florida 34289

Jim Troeger has returned to Michigan after three years in Florida and hopes to visit the chapter soon.

The Sierra Heights Subdivision has a newly-planted maple tree, in memory of **Wayne Cheyne**. Wayne had served as Vice President and Board member of the subdivision, and he had helped to select trees for the community's common areas. Bill Holmes is leading the dedication service at 6:30 pm October 1.

One of our members, **Marv Wilson** (dualing with D.O.C.) has a son, Doug who is a Master Organist. **Doug** will be presenting a concert at the Central United Methodist Church (3882 Highland Rd, Waterford, October 10, 3 pm. Admission is free.

BCC 2010 Total to Date **92 performances** **5721 auditors**

Quartets

LIMITED EDITION sang to forty women of the Gamma Master Chapter of Beta Sigma Phi at Bethel United Church of Christ on Wednesday evening, September 15. The women had set a theme of Barbershop for the evening, some bedecked with straw hats, and the quartet greeted them in traditional Barbershop outfits. The reception was enthusiastic, much better than the acoustics, which made intonation a bit difficult. The acoustics at nearby Bally Gym, which the quartet used as a staging area, were much better, and they were warmly received by the dozen or so folks who stopped to listen on their way into and out of the club.

The CELEBRATION QUARTET had an opportunity to entertain on September 16. The quartet sang to the receptive ears of the residents of the Columbiere Retirement Community. CELEBRATION was well received as they were the after-dinner entertainment for the day. B-NATURAL, NATURAL E and the entire Big Chief Chorus have entertained there over the past several years. (From Jack Teuber)

LIMITED EDITION sang for the Milford Historical Society Annual Home Tour on Sunday, September 19. Parked on the porch at 825 E. Commerce Rd, the quartet ran thru its repertoire several times in the space of three hours as it sang to the constant stream of visitors to the home, built in the 1830's as a fruit barn and modified to a home in 1881. Historical rep Carol Watkins showed her enjoyment with a much appreciated tip and invited the quartet for next year also.

(Here is a link to a video of LIMITED EDITION singing "Kiss the Girl" to Charlie Perry's lovely daughter-in-law at his Pig Roast, last month.
<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100001234175227#!/video/video.php?v=127552200626273&subj=100001234175227>)

MEMBERSHIP (at 68)

Renewals: Lance Shew (4), Ray Sturdy (21), Bruce LaMarte (39)

Pending: Ross Ensign, Yong McDowell

October Birthdays: Art Carinci (18th), Walt DeNio (27th), Bill Nevaux (27th), Roger Holm (29th)

Medical: Doc Mann is out of action with an ulcerated colon; he will be operated on soon for its removal. Mary Teuber's hip replacement was Aug 23. Jan DeNio has been treated for a second case of MRSA, and is returning to home.

In Memoriam: Sep Oct 3, 2009, Bob Butcher, #103

Barbershopper of the Month: Dave Myre – for his excellent work on the grille at the picnic

AROUND THE DISTRICT

The Fall Pioneer **District Convention** is in Grand Rapids, Oct 15-17. Headquarters is the new Crowne Plaza Hotel, and the performances will be held at the Forest Hills Fine Arts Center. The Joe Barbershop chorus will sing the two Ology-Cat songs chosen by CHORDIOLOGY, "Takin' a chance on Love," and "Didn't Wanna Fall."

The **Rochester Chapter's** 35th annual show is Friday, Oct 22, at 7:30 at the Rochester High School Auditorium. They'll be joined by the Motor City Singers, CHORDIOLOGY, and Doran McTaggart.

The first concert of the fall system by the **North Oakland Concert Band** is: Sunday, Oct 24, 3 pm, at the Lake Orion High School Auditorium. Details at http://www.nocb.org/2010-2011_Concert_Season.html

Guardians of Harmony Christmas show

The annual Christmas show will be Sunday, Dec 12 at 3:00 pm at Troy Athens High School. This year's show will be extra special because we have teamed up with the Sweet Adeline's Great Lakes Chorus. The Sweet Adeline's are the international women's organization that dedicates themselves to the preservation of Barbershop Harmony. The Greats Lake Chorus is made up of approximately 60 women while the Guardians of Harmony are made of approximately 30 men. (from Terry Jamison)

Marv Burke, bass of the 4FITS and the Grosse Pointe chapter died this past month.

Michael Baribeau has updated his **Links** page at: <http://greatlakeschorus.org/links/> It's loaded – almost any barbershop-related site is listed.

AROUND THE WORLD

Legendary Barbershop Arranger, Coach, and Mentor Walter Latzko Passes Away (Excerpted from BHS)

Walter Latzko died September 10, 2010. He was born in Czechoslovakia in 1924. He had an interesting career, including serving as librarian for the Harness Racing Museum. He was a joke-writer and musician, having written for Arthur Godfrey's radio and TV shows, Jack Sterling's CBS morning radio show, Garry Moore, and Durward Kirby. He was the arranger and coach for the CHORDETTES who were regular performers on the Godfrey shows. He married one of the CHORDETTES, Marjorie, in 1953 who sang on the famous recording "Mr. Sandman."

He arranged eight albums for the BUFFALO BILLS of "Music Man" fame. Even after he had a stroke in 1991, he continued to arrange music on the computer which was purchased for him by more than twenty barbershop groups. Altogether he left a legacy of 1,226 arrangements of which 94 were medleys, many of which were performed and recorded by champion quartets and choruses.

Your Input is Requested in a Poll Regarding Proposed 2-Year Chorus Rotation Plan

At the Society's request, members of the Society Contest & Judging Committee (SCJC) have been investigating an idea that would nearly double the number of choruses able to compete on the international stage. The most talented Society choruses would be divided into two equal pools that would compete on alternating years, with additional slots being filled by many choruses that are currently "on the cusp" of qualifying for international competition. This idea has been proposed by multiple sources, and after in-depth research, it is now ready to present to the membership. Please click [DETAILS](#) for a complete explanation of the proposal. To read what others are saying and join the discussion click [BLOG](#).

Your input is valuable, and you are invited and encouraged to participate in a 10-minute [SURVEY](#) (open to members and affiliates only). Please complete the survey by October 15.

Thank you!



Make Plans
Now for
Midwinter!
January 25-30, 2011



2011 Kansas City
International
Convention

7 Days Left to
Pre-Register!



The 3rd issue of Grady Kerr's *Preservation*, the historical journal of the BHS, is out. The lead story is, "The World's Most Famous Barbershop Quartet Celebrates its 74th Birthday." (Can you guess?) Also described is Michigan's role in the International Chorus Trophy. You owe it to yourself to check it out, at <http://www.gradywilliamkerr.com/>

Show Song List

Test yourself. How are you coming in mastering our Fall Show repertoire?

- (a) I can read the notes and sing the music accurately, with the paper.
- (b) I know the notes and words and am off the paper.
- (c) I have mastered the song.

	(a)	(b)	(c)
America The Beautiful	___	___	___
Get Your Kicks on Route 66	___	___	___
Oklahoma!	___	___	___
Let the Rest of The World Go By	___	___	___
Ridin' Down the Canyon	___	___	___
Under The Boardwalk	___	___	___
Midnight Rose	___	___	___
This Is My Country	___	___	___
It is Well With My Soul	___	___	___
Keep The Whole World Singing	___	___	___

OUR HISTORICAL LEGACY – Higgins Lake Retreats (Provided by Pete Mazzara)

(The 3rd in an ongoing series on the history of barbershop and of our chapter)
(This year marked our 7th visit to the Ralph A. MacMullan Center on Higgins Lake. How did these retreats begin? I asked Pete Mazzara to present the history.)

Back in 2002, our BCC Director was Chris Miller. Chris had two major goals: increase the membership of our chapter, and help us sing better as a chorus. As our chapter membership grew, he asked me for suggestions on how we could more quickly blend the old members with all the new members, and develop some added camaraderie. Based my on experiences as an educator, I suggested a weekend retreat at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, on the north shore of Higgins Lake, in Roscommon, MI. Chris loved the idea. We put together a plan and proposed expense report for the Executive Board, and they approved it. We would have a coach, the weekend would include two nights lodging with five meals, and our members would be charged only half the cost (coach plus expenses), with the Board paying the other half.

With 41 men, we held our first Singing Retreat a few weeks before the 2003 District Spring Contest. Our coach was Dr. Jeff Taylor from Toronto, Canada. Chris had written two parody songs for us to sing in contest. Jeff added some seventh chords, and we scored the most points ever in contest. Those BCC members who did not attend that retreat, noticed a huge improvement in our singing when we returned. Some even offered to pay for members who could not afford to go in the future. The 2003-2009 trips were in

the spring. 2010 was our first fall trip. This year we focused on songs for our Fall Show.

Year	Director	Coach	From	Men
2003	Chris Miller	Dr. Jeff Taylor	Toronto, CN	41
2004	Jim Troeger	Don Bazely	S. St. Marie, CN	37
2005	No R.A.M. Center*			
2006	Dick Johnson	Gene Hanover	Bridgman, MI	35
2007	Tom Blue			32
2008	Tom Blue			39
2009	Tom Blue			33
2010	Tom Blue	Dr. David Gillingham	C.M.U., MI	32

*(In 2005, the chapter held a 1-day retreat at the Pontiac Grande.)

We are very fortunate to have had great Directors and wonderful coaches for all seven of our Retreats to the R.A.M. Center. Thanks to Tom Blue and Dr. David Gillingham, our 2010 retreat may have been our best retreat yet.

“Breath support is the active resistance of exhalation.” (Alan Gordon, Bari of GOTCHA!)

If you want to experience active resistance to exhalation, try this. Inhale fairly deeply and then pant like a dog. You can't pant unless your mouth is open, and your throat is open, so the whole breath control has to be in your abdominal breathing muscles. From that configuration, go ahead and sing. Try it, you'll like it! And you'll sing with better management of your breath.

Editorial

We have ambitions to be a good chorus. A good chorus uses the limited practice time each week to work on interp and vocal quality – not for learning the notes. That's what the learning tracks are for.

It's true that Tom is an excellent teacher of notes – because he plays the piano so well, and because he organizes the song into learnable bytes. He can jump-start our learning of a song very effectively in half an hour. But after that, it should be up to us ... in our home practice.

Movies containing barbershop quartet singing.

The first two to come to mind are:

Music Man

American Harmony

Others:

Hoosiers A quartet sang the National Anthem at the State finals in Butler Fieldhouse (Fred McF. and Mike F.)

In The Good Old Summer Time The second remake of *The Little Shop Around The Corner* Judy Garland sang "Play That Barbershop Chord" backed by a quartet. (Fred McF.)

Dick VanDyke did barbershop in a number of his movies. (Ross E.)

The Haunted Mansion, with Eddie Murphy. Four busts in the graveyard sing as a Barbershop Quartet, courtesy of the METROPOLIS Quartet! (Wayne O.)

Two barbershop cartoons:

Sincere slugs: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uLXOwvNXq80>

Barbershop quartet hits on girl from taxi: (PG)

<http://www.newgrounds.com/portal/view/528052>

The Choir - TV

The Choir is a really interesting program – on BBC America, Wednesdays at 10 pm.

It's a reality-based series about a British Choral Instructor who works with a variety of school age boys and girls, and adult groups as well. He takes entire school systems who have never had a vocal music program, and convinces the students (albeit reluctantly) to join his class, and then takes them into major venues and performances, such as London's Royal Albert Hall, and to Vocal Music Competitions in China!

If nothing else, it could give us a perspective on how to approach younger singers effectively.

(From Wayne Oberstadt)

6th Chords and 7th Chords

Many stories were told of Walter Latzko (who was a BHS Arrangement judge) after his death this month. This story is amusing, given all the 6th chords in “Route 66.”

Apparently a young fellow new to barbershopping had arranged one of the contest songs his equally novice quartet had done in a Division contest. Not being all that familiar with the style, he let a few too many sixth chords slip in. Walter politely chose the path of most encouragement, and informed them in the A&R that, although he recognized the chords for what they were, he would “choose to grade them as if he'd heard the seventh sung a bit too flat” (which, of course, would eliminate any penalty from Arrangement and leave the punitive scoring to Sound). (Posted by Bob Sutton)

Jeffrey Kafer's “Excellent Adventure”

After our first full day in Yellowstone, our family vacation took an unexpected turn when we ran into a bison. We were blessed that no one was seriously injured and to have so many good people



render assistance to keep us warm, safe from traffic, and transport us and our belongings to a secure location. The bison was estimated at 1700 pounds - so, kinda like hitting ten deer at the same time! You can see where he gored the hood with his horn. Fortunately, we were only going about 35-40 mph. Air bags deployed and car was deemed a total loss.

Letters:

Hi members of the Big Chief Chorus!

I just wanted to personally thank you all for hosting a great weekend! It was a joy to work with all of you and observe the progress that you made!

What wonderful people you all are!! Please treat Tom Blue well.....he is a luxury and a true find for your chapter. Do everything you can to retain him!

In harmony, David (Gillingham)

Gentlemen,

It would be my suggestion that we revert back to having the retreat in early April. If we are going to continue to enter the annual district contest then I believe we should be singing at our best. The time after our annual show and between the district competition is very short due to the Christmas holidays. I feel we do not spend enough time on a contest set to perform our very best. I also feel that whatever songs we elect to sing in a given contest, that they be selected immediately after a district performance giving us time to work on them throughout the year. The show program is equally important but so is the competitive edge in each of us during the district contest. Again, this is only my opinion and the final decision will of course be made by the board.

Respectfully, Mike Frye

Hi John

Just a reminder, Michael is a Lead. (not a Bari, as he is listed in the email list). He and Aaron are tied up with Marching Band, and Michael probably won't be back with the Chorus until Christmas... singing Lead! LOL!

Wayne.

Hi John,

This is the first time I've seen the on-line version of Smoke Signals. It's beautiful -- the color photos add such a lot. This month's issue is packed with lots of interesting news which you report in a great way. I am humbled at so many references to "Cheynes". You've given Wayne another wonderful tribute! Many thanks again, John, for helping me stay connected to this amazing group.

Joan (Cheyne)

On behalf of Carl, Eric, Pete and myself ("SNAPSHOT" Quartet), thank you for your invitation to be a part of the Pontiac Chapter's 66th annual show. I promise you will not be disappointed. As a member of the BCC, I'd like to thank the membership for their warm greeting of my fellow DOC members. The quartet met last night and remarked more than once about the friendly reception which we were accorded on Tuesday evening. "Snapshot" is looking forward to November 6 and another successful BCC show.

In harmony, Zaven

John,

The Murrays visited the Historic Route 66 near St. Louis, MO, on a trip to the Ozarks last week. We "walked across the Mississippi" on the historic Route 66 "Chain of Rocks Bridge", which is now open only to bikes and pedestrian traffic. It parallels the new bridge at the intersection of I-270 and Riverview Drive, St. Louis, MO, 63137, www.trailnet.org, if you'd like to check it out!

We captured some glimpses of the Historic Route 66 past in a few photos, too, as the new highway wound it's way back and forth across the old Route 66 path.

We followed Historic Route 66 further west towards Joplin, but turned south at Springfield, after visiting Bass Pro Headquarters there. Route 66 lives!

Chordially, Chuck Murray

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)

Assistant Directors: F. McFadyen, D. Johnson, B. Holmes, & M. Frye

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 of Melkonian et al

Secretary: Bill Auquier

Treasurer: Dick Johnson

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

Chorus Manager: Bob Greenwood

Music Team: Holm, Blue, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Murray,

Prueter, Moss, Cowlshaw, and Brede

Bulletin Editor: John Cowlshaw, (248-891-4498)

CALENDAR (Times are Performance Times, Warmups 30-45' earlier,

Oct 5, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Exec Bd. Elections

FOUR WEEKS TO SHOWTIME

Oct 12, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal

Oct 15-17 Pioneer Fall convention, Grand Rapids, Forest Hills Fine Arts Auditorium
 Oct 19, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal
 Oct 22, F Rochester Chapter show
 Oct 26, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal
 Nov 2, T, noon Gig, Pontiac First Presbyterian Church, The Silver Seniors
 Nov 4, Th Chorus dress rehearsal?
Nov 6, Sa, 7pm BCC 66th annual show, Get Your Kicks on Rte 66
 Nov 6 Rockin' Barbershop Youth Workshop
 Nov 9, T Christmas chorus forms
 Nov 29, M Waterford Twp Christmas Tree Lighting
 Dec 2, Th Oakland County Retirees Luncheon, White Lake Oaks
 Dec 11, Sa Christmas Bus Tour
 Dec 17, F Installation dinner, 6:30, Waterford Oaks Activity Ctr
 Jan 8, Sa Leadership Academy, Okemos
 Jan 9, Su Orion Twp Library
 Jan 16, Su MLK Kettering HS, with the New Horizons Band
 Jun 3,4, 2011 2nd Annual Great Lakes Harmony Brigade



Photo by Jeff Doig's camera



Photo by Bob Stephenson



Photo by Jeff Doig

