From the Prez:
Here’s wishing all Big Chief Chieftains a Happy and Harmonious New Year in 2011. It was great to be a Pontiac-Waterford Barbershopper in 2010. Our chorus continues to be the most active in the district and possibly the Society. The year 2010 saw the chorus entertaining in nine of the twelve months. December saw the chorus breaking its own records for most sing-outs and number of attendees listening to our Christmas wish. Thanks to all of you for making this happen.

Let’s continue to build on our performance level by polishing and refining our vocal production. Let’s dedicate ourselves to rule six as we strive for improved singing. 2010 saw the emergence of several new quartet combinations. Visitors have complimented us on being willing and open to include guests in a quartet before the evening is out. Let’s continue to build upon quarteting to make our chapter a true harmony society.

KEEP THE BCC SINGING IN 2011.
JACK

From Director Tom:
Men and Friends of the BCC,
Thank you for providing the “frosting” at our church service. I know that many were very appreciative of your music. We don’t often have special events or groups coming in to perform for us so it was a very special treat.

I have appreciated the many who have brought our Christmas sing-outs to fruition. Many have worked behind the scenes and many of you have been very consistent with your participation and willingness to go that extra “mile” down the road to sing at the many events that we have been a part of.

Thanks to Freddie and Dick who have stepped up in my absence and others who have filled in for me. I appreciate all of the work that everyone has done and our ability to add new selections this year as well.

See you all January 4.

Christmas Chorus gigs
On December 2, the BCC sang for the Oakland County retirees at Waterford Oaks. There must be more people retiring, or else the word got out that the BCC was coming (!), for the room was full with 232 people. Freddie led us thru a nice mix of songs, and the audience, which included music-savvy folk like Dodie LaMarte and Donna Bevington, seemed to enjoy what they heard.

Fifteen men enjoyed caroling at Hillers’ Market in Commerce Township on December 4 as part of Hiller’s Sing For Your Supper program. Any donations were matched by Hillers and distributed to the singing groups. The men were members of NATURAL “E,” LIMITED EDITION, CELEBRATION, and TONIGHT’S LINE-UP, each of which also sang one song as a quartet. Staging area for warm-ups was arranged by Mike Frye at Fitness 19, in the same mall.

On December 7, the BCC sang at Independence Village of Union Lake to 68 residents. The venue was sweet, Tom’s direction crisp, and the audience appreciative. Then for a change of pace the chorus motored down to Uptowne Grille, a rather noisy sports bar, to sing a set. Uptowne Grille had been supportive with an ad in our show program, and the chorus reciprocated by climbing onto the stage, adjusting the microphone and singing a set while the CW-rock-folk singer/guitarist took a break. At a request for patriotic music for Pearl Harbor day, LIMITED EDITION sang “God Bless the USA.”

On December 9, the BCC did its annual Christmas sing at Canterbury on the Lake. The audience was a little smaller than usual, perhaps 50, but Dick Johnson’s enthusiasm was infectious as he led the chorus through a collection of Christmas and other songs. A special offering was “O Holy Night,” with Bob Greenwood soloing with a chorus backup. LIMITED EDITION sang “The Christmas Song” and “Here Comes Santa Claus.” Jim Owens told the story of the origin of “Silent Night,” and introduced Walt Bachmann to sing it in German.
On December 11, the chorus took its annual bus tour. (Lucky it wasn’t a day later, during which 4” of snow got blown around by the Furies.) Bruce Brede had arranged seven stops, and a subgroup also sang at the Super Chief Coney Restaurant. Two stops were at VG’s – Pontiac and Waterford. At Pontiac, the young woman clerk who enjoyed singing with us last year joined us again this year; Bill Maxfield guided her through the songs. At Waterford, we were met by Gene and Deanna Downie, Mary Teuber, Donna Bevington, Lynne Metzer, and Bill Dabbs’ lady friend, Betty. We sang at four Senior Housings – Elmhaven, Lockwood, Pinetree, and Autumn Ridge. The latter was called Sunrise when it was “Pascher’s Place.” Our last stop was the annual visit to the Holly’s Dickens’ Festival. This year the temperature was moderate and the audience pleasantly large. Following us on the program was the Shoreline Sound Sweet Adelines’ Chorus, two barbershop groups in a row! Their Director Diane Catellane joked, “Barbershop! The music originated by men and perfected by women.” Ouch! Throughout the tour Tom led us through our traditional Christmas songs, plus several new ones – “Children’s Medley,” “God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen,” “Hark the Herald Angels Sing,” and “O Holy Night.” On board to perform were four quartets – count ‘em, four – LIMITED EDITION, NATURAL E, CELEBRATION, and our new 4GVN. As the lyrics of “Christmas Song” report, Jack Frost was nipping and Yuletide Carols were being sung by Shoreline Sound, and folks dressed up, either as Eskimos or as Dickens Brits. Don’t know if the youngsters saw any flying reindeer. But your editor purchased five chestnuts roasted on an open fire (for $5) at a booth in Battle Alley.

On December 14, the chorus sang at the four buildings of the Lourdes campus – Nursing, Mendelsohn, Clausen, and Fox Manor. The 32-man turnout was substantial, given the driving conditions, which, by the way, forced Dick Johnson into the ditch to avoid an on-sliding SUV on his way home. Whew!

On December 15, the chorus also sang at four places, but not within walking distance, each about 25 minutes apart. About twenty men gathered at the Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital to sing to the lunching staff in the beautiful fourth floor cafeteria. The blue skies and bright sun shone thru the windows, and some of the eighty lunchers moved up to get a better listen. They also knew of our coming because of a very nice flyer distributed by the hospital staff. We then drove, individually or in cara-vans, to Lake Orion POH where we sang to about 25 patients. The highlight was singing for Mel Parrish; his eyesight is not so good, but he spoke with firmness that he wanted to shake each singer’s hand and hear their names. Freddie had trouble choosing songs after his songbook was swiped by a woman in the first row. As the afternoon continued, new singers trickled in, and old singers rejoined us after taking a snack break. Our third gig was at American House in Rochester Hills.

Freddie’s woes continued as an over-eager woman in the first row rose to co-direct, and did her best to plant a sloppy kiss on Freddie’s face, which reminded Freddie of MARQUIS Lead Randy Chisholm who died of a staph infection caught at a hospital gig, two years after winning Gold. The final gig was at the Inn at Cass Lake, delayed by a food stop at Pete’s Coney Island. Highlights of the day included Doc Mann’s return to circulation – he joined us later, during which 4” of snow got blown around by the Furies.)

On December 19, the chorus sang at the Sunday morning worship service of Christ Community Church in Rochester. Tom led us thru a selection of sacred songs, a treat for the audience who usually only hear Tom’s piano.

Our final Christmas performance was at Lakeland Place where 35 singers entertained 48 residents. Following that, 26 of us assembled at Heroes, for our customary warm welcome, which we responded to with occasional outbursts of harmony.

The traditional end-of-the-year Installation dinner was cancelled.

From the Prez,
THANKS TO BRUCE BREDE for again organizing the BCC Annual Bus Tour. Thanks for working with V.G.’s to provide the financing of the Bus Tour. Thanks for working with TOM JACKSON to secure the transportation. Thanks for working with ROGER HOLM and JACK TEUBER to line up the other trip venues.

THANKS for your efficient scheduling and timing to make the day pass quickly and, mostly, thank you for making the right connections for the best weather yet.

THANKS TO THE THIRTY-EIGHT MEN who continue to represent the Big Chief Chorus. More than one listener commented on how we looked like we were really enjoying ourselves.

We are extremely fortunate to have a corps of fine directors to call upon. We are all very grateful.

Jack

Quartets
On November 29, NORTHBOUND SOUND sang in Downtown Rochester for the Annual Lagniappe Lighting Ceremony. The quartet strolled through the crowds in the streets and sang several traditional Christmas and seasonal songs. Some of their less
common songs included “Mary Had a Baby”, “I’ll Be Home for Christmas/White Christmas Medley”, and “Jamaican Noel” with portions in the native African language. The quartet joined the Rochester Chapter for an Afterglow at the Rochester Brewery, and, after pouring libations to the Gods of Harmony, proceeded to spread more of their vocal holiday cheer to several tables of customers, where they also were videotaped by the local public TV channel.

LIMITED EDITION used some of its growing funds to thank its Ladies by treating them to dinner December 4 at Modern Food & Spirits. BTW, if you don’t know of it, it is a very fine restaurant in Keego Harbor at a very fine price. http://www.modernfoodspirits.com/

On December 7, LIMITED EDITION sang to 130 residents and their families at Lourdes-Mendelsohn’s Christmas party. The four rooms of the first floor were filled with tables decked out with holiday arrangements. LIMITED EDITION offered its own arrangements for 45 minutes, wandering from room to room, and performing its first public offering of “Here Comes Santa Claus,” a Jon Nicholas arrangement.

On December 8, Celebration sang to 22 women of the Clawson United Methodist Church.

On December 9, LIMITED EDITION, with Zaven Melkonian subbing for a work-busy Charlie Perry, sang at Rivercrest Banquet Facility. It was the Christmas gathering of three Catholic Churches, St. Andrew’s, St. Irenaeus’s, and St Mary’s. Some 130 folk had gathered for lunch, gifts from a very well costumed Santa Claus, and the harmonies of our boys. Being already in the neighborhood, so to speak, the group then repaired to John’s Bio Dept Christmas party on the Oakland University campus, where the 40 or so faculty, staff and grad students were wowed to see another side of John than his professorial one.

On December 18, the Celebration Quartet carried out its 8th annual Christmas tour. The tour included stops at Tenuta’s Market, Big Apple Restaurant, Art Van Furniture and Pete’s Coney Island. Each stop included several Christmas songs and was well received. At Pete’s Coney Island the quartet was joined by Santa Claus (aka Bill Auquier) and Lance Shew (a diner). Bill Auquier was spending the extended lunch hour as the acting Santa Claus host for Pete’s Coney. (Submitted by Jack Teuber)

On Christmas Eve, 4GVN sang to 132 worshippers at Community Bible Church of Waterford. The candle light service featured musical performances by a choir, by soloists (including a nice Bass solo) with piano accompaniment, by a cello-piano duet, by 4GVN performing “O Holy Night” and Have You Heard,” by several guitar/voice performances including a stirring piece with the ink still wet on the manuscript, and it culminated with “Silent Night.” Fellowship followed with desserts and refreshments. Wayne commented, "Wow there is a lot of talent in this church". As they talked with the pastor about Gospel music, Wayne even learned something new about his wife Valerie, that she had grown up with many of the singers who sing with Bill and Gloria Gaither on their Gaither Homecoming shows.

AROUND THE PATCH
BCC 2010 Christmas Performances: 34 gigs to 2364 auditors
BCC 2010 Performance Total: 133 gigs to 9124 auditors

Christmas Crossword Puzzle
First of all, it’s a puzzle how Cowlishaw could have had so much trouble sending out the solution to this year’s Christmas Crossword puzzle. But on a happier note, who finished it? I know that Bob Butcher would have, if he were still around. He loved crossword puzzles, and carried around a pack of them that he pulled out during long waits as an Emergency medic with Star EMS.

Attending the Winter convention in Las Vegas will be: Bill Dabbs and friend Betty, Bill and Bonnie Auquier and Bonnie’s sister, John Cowlishaw and his son Philip, and Jack and Mary Teuber.

Bill Auquier’s new email address is billorbonnie1@att.net Michael Oberstadt’s email address is mwober94@comcast.net

MEMBERSHIP (at 67)
New: Bob Wallace. Welcome, Bob!
Renewals: Ted Prueter (10), Bill Auquier (12), Art Carinci (12), Walt DeNio (14), Mike Keith (30), Bill Nevaux (47)
Pending: Ron Clarke, Robert Kleeman, Lew Mahacek
January Birthdays: Len Barnes (Jan 3), Tom Blue (Jan 7), Bob Marshall (Jan 10), Ray Sturdy (Jan 18)
Medical: Austin Quinn had successful exploratory surgery for cancer. Jan DeNio had back surgery at Troy Beaumont Hospital for a diagnosed MRSA infection causing her terrible back/side pain. Dave Shantz gave his arthritic toe a rest during the Christmas season.
In Memoriam: Jan 30, 2004, John Smith #34
AROUND THE DISTRICT

Rob Halsey has resigned as Lead singer of MOXXY. Their new Lead is Glen Hipple, who has been their singing coach for the last two years.

Russ Seely’s wife Shirley died Dec 14. A memorial service is being planned for mid-January in Grosse Pointe.

Uncle Sam Night
The Windsor Sun Parlour Chorus will be hosting their annual Uncle Sam Night January 21. As always it’s being held at the Knights of Columbus hall located at 2401 Columbus Drive Windsor Ontario N9E 1R8. For directions please call Bill Strong at 519-733-3934 or Doran McTaggart at 519-948-0637. Cost is $10 which includes a meal of turkey pot pie, fries and salad. A small price for a great evening of Barbershop singing. Guests are invited (stag).

Bill Strong
(Remember: passport or two IDs (driver’s license + birth cert.)

Financial support for Northern Rhapsody
NORTHERN RHAPSODY is going to be representing the Pioneer District (as well as many other universities and K-12 schools across the state) at the Midwinter Convention in Las Vegas this January. “Unfortunately, despite fundraising efforts and financial support from our chorus members, we still are experiencing some financial burdens in our attempts to get there. If you are feeling fortunate enough to send a monetary donation towards Northern Rhapsody’s expenses for January’s Youth Chorus Festival, it would be appreciated beyond belief from the members and fans of our chorus. All donations can be referred to:

Mr. Dave Rayburn
(989) 560 1846
dave.rayburn@rpccpas.com

Again, we cannot thank you enough for your support of our endeavors, and for your constant passion and dedication that we see in our hobby.”

Craig Johnson & the members of NORTHERN RHAPSODY

AROUND THE WORLD

The BHS Christmas greeting is online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbvGEp1K-UE

The Singoff
NBC’s a cappella show, The Singoff, is over. COMMITTED won. STREET CORNER SYMPHONY was 2nd. http://www.nbc.com/sing-off


Father/Son/Grandson Chorus
If you’ve always wanted to sing on the Main Stage at the Kansas City convention, consider this. A Father/Son/Grandson chorus will perform Saturday before the Quartet Finals. Jack and Mike Slamka, bass and lead of POWER PLAY, “one of the most beloved quartet champions in our history, will co-direct “Love at Home” and “I Love to Hear That Old Barbershop Style.” A $20 fee for each singer will cover shipping of sheet music, part-predominant learning media, and a performance shirt to be distributed in Kansas City. The deadline for sign-up is May 15. Space will be limited to the first 200 people, so don’t delay! To register or get more information, please email Mike O’Neill.”

On Line Bulletins
If you would like to view other chapters’ bulletins, go to http://www.harmonize.com/probe/BulletinEditors/dist_bulletins.htm

Link to all things barbershop: http://hub.webring.org/hub/bbshop

OUR HISTORICAL LEGACY – The origin of the Barbershop name
(Excerpted from Preservation, Vol. 1, No. 6, November, 2010)
If anyone asks where the name “barbershop music” came from, you can tell them it all started a century ago with the appearance of a song released in November of 1910 by the popular singer Arthur Collins. Collins was one of the country’s most popular singers and spent 10 years of his long career as baritone for the famous Peerless Quartet. He also recorded for Edison, Berliner, Columbia and Victor records. The song was entitled “Mr. Jefferson, Lord, Play That Barbershop Chord.” Prior to that, four-part quartet singing was best known simply as “close harmony.” The term “barbershop” was popularized and caught on thanks to this ONE song.

Written by Ballard MacDonald & William Tracey (lyrics) and Lewis F. Muir (music), “Play that Barber Shop Chord” was most closely associated with performer Bert Williams, one of Vaudeville’s top solo artists (1874-1922). It was also recorded by a number of popular artists, including Billy Murray and the American Quartet and Eddie Morton. Collins frequently recorded Williams’ material. His versions of “Nobody,” “The Moon Shines on the Moonshine,” “I’m a Jonah Man” and “It’s Nobody’s Business But My Own” highlight his 20-plus-year career.

A considerable hit for publisher J. Fred Helf, “Barber Shop Chord” was also his firm’s downfall. Songwriter Ballard Macdonald had begun work on the song and had written dummy lyrics before leaving the song behind. The piece was finished by Lewis Muir and William Tracey. Macdonald was incensed that Helf left his name off the sheet music. He sued Helf successfully, and the award of $37,500 forced Helf into bankruptcy.

Gotcha! performed this song and David Wright’s outstanding and entertaining arrangement in their successful quest for the 2004 International quartet championship.

Random Act of Culture, otherwise known as Flash Mobs. Here’s one from Maryland:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H9KwmZTBoog

Here’s one from Midwest Vocal Express:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUuZNJe_P3s

One in Sacramento closed the Galleria Mall when 5000 singers showed up and shook the floor.
http://www.kcra.com/r-video/26202310/detail.html

Here’s one from Grand Rapids:
http://www.westmichiganstar.com/pages/tommyandbrook.html Michael Baribeau is at about 3:30 into the video.

AutoTuning

There has been a lot of chatter on bbshop@yahoogroups.com lately about autotuning.

Auto-Tune is a downloadable studio trick that can correct off-key singing. “It’s like Photoshop for the human voice.” Jeffrey Reifsnyder writes, “I tend to notice that voices sound too perfect or too computerized with autotuning. That's due to the inherent digital modification of the sound waves; in a graph of the sound waves, the autotuned voice will look smoother than the raw recording. Bad autotuned tracks will have a very stepped sound to them; swipes will be broken down by the program to individual notes instead. However, skilled recording engineers can get around that.

In 2009, Time magazine quoted an unnamed Grammy-winning recording engineer as saying, "Let's just say I've had Auto-Tune save vocals on everything from Britney Spears to Bollywood cast albums. And every singer now presumes that you'll just run their voice through the box."

Timothy Powell, a producer/engineer stated in 2003 that he is “even starting to see vocal tuning devices show up in concert settings." (Well, you won’t see THAT happening in BBS competitions!)

So here are two demos of raw and the autotuned singing.
The first clip, the Be Our Guest tag by daniscool99 is so good, that it’s hard to see the effect.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20-ydke094E&safety_mode=true&persist_safety_mode=1 (There’s a 22-second intro.)

The second clip, by David Choi, is performed much more off-key so you can see the effect more clearly; actually it’s his 2nd segment, starting at 60 seconds, that demonstrates the effect best.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xX6OwNk8sk&feature=fvw

Karen Maney adds this comment: “To those who think Auto-tune just has equal temperament, it actually has 29 different tuning systems. Here's an experiment:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eE8DvCx54v8 I autotuned the same intro on several different systems. They are not in the order listed in the video screen. I want to see if barbershoppers actually prefer one over the rest. I included Pythagorean, mean temperament, and just intonation since I’ve heard barbershoppers talk about all of these. Also included are two I’ve never heard
of, "partch" and "valotti," and the dreaded equal temperament. Can you tell the difference?"

If you’d like to learn more about autotuning, here is a Time magazine article:
http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1877372,00.html
Or see wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Auto-Tune)

Editorial
During the post-Christmas lull, I listened to our whole 2010 Show DVD. Overall, it is a great DVD and a fine-quality show. The chorus sounded strong, as if we really owned those songs, and one sees really good energy in our bodies and facial expressions. Granted, there were lighting issues (missing spot-lights), camera issues (late pickups of individual speakers), and audio issues (late turn-on of microphones). But we can be proud of the entertainment we offered that night!

Computer Upkeep
Many BCC’ers have molasses-slow computers. I urge folks to go to the website of Iobit’s AdvanceSystemCare, a FREE download that will speed up your computer, perhaps immensely. Then you can stay in e-contact.
http://www.iobit.com/ascdownload-promo.html

Letters:
From Jeffrey Kafer
You are the most unpretentious and welcoming group I have ever met. Not only that, but you sing out a lot, and it is clear that this is enjoyed by singers and audience alike. I have never come across the likes of anything like you guys. The fine gentlemen of the BCC (and their significant others) are free to visit me anytime in Lindstrom, MN. 11802 North Meadow Curve.

From Chuck Murray:
Jeffrey Kafer amazed me the first time I heard him sing Lead to “Heart of My Heart” in front of the BCC. I said to myself, that man has the singing qualities of another Mike Slamka! That is, he is able to put lots of emotion into his singing, and would make a great Lead for a new quartet! (Who told him to sing Baritone, anyhow?) Unfortunately, Jeffrey's personal situation with his work, etc, never allowed this to come about. I predict he'll be a really great Lead, someday, singing in a barbershop quartet in Minnesota! A little more experience, some coaching, and "WATCH OUT!" We'll miss Jeffrey!

From Mell Coleman:
Another outstanding issue!
Is there some way we could clone you for our chapter?

BTW, Livingston Lamplighters meet Mondays at 7:00 in Brighton at Summerville of Brighton, 1 mile W. of US-23 on Old Grand River Avenue. Perhaps after the Holidays we could work out a home-and-home visitation between chapters.

I found your chapter meeting once, I think I could do it again. Tuesdays, right?
Any thoughts?

From Brian Dunckel, President of the Pioneer District.
What an amazing bunch of guys you have in the P-W Chapter. You are truly "making a difference" in the lives of everyone you sing for!
I'm sure your members will be blessed by each and every one of the performances you sing as well! Enjoy your "gold medal moments"

From Doc Mann:
I WOULD LIKE TO SAY THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU WHO WERE SO KIND IN REMEMBERING ME IN YOUR PRAYERS, CALLED, SENT CARDS OR JUST THOUGHT ABOUT ME AS I WENT THROUGH MY SURGERY AND RECOVERY PERIOD. YOU CAN'T IMAGINE HOW GOOD IT MADE ME FEEL. I GUESS OLD PRESIDENTS NEVER DIE THEY JUST GET OPERATED ON.

From Paul Preseau:
Hi John, hope your Thanksgiving was good, mine was. My curiosity has been satisfied about the Big Chief singing group. You may take my name off the mailing list and save the postage. Thank you, Paul Preseau

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: Eric Domke
VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm
VP: Marketing & PR: to be filled
Secretary: Bill Auquier
Treasurer: Dick Johnson
Members at Large – Terry Jamison, Doug Metzger, Fred Pioch Ron Clarke,??
Chorus Manager: to be filled
Music Team: Holm, Blue, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Murray, Prueter, Moss, Cowlishaw, and Stephenson
Bulletin Editor: John Cowlishaw, (248-891-4498)
CALENDAR  (Times are Performance Times, Warmups 45’ earlier,  
LSYSBPS = Long-sleeved Yellow Shirts and Black Pants and sox
2011
Jan 1, Sa, noon on New Year’s Day party, Greg Moss’s, 2194 Ostrum Dr.,  
            Waterford 48328
Jan 4, T, 7 pm     Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jan 8, Sa          Leadership Academy, Okemos  
Jan 9, Su, 2pm     Orion Twp Library, LSYSBPS  
Jan 11, T, 7pm     Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jan 12, W, 2pm     Possible chorus gig at West Hickory Haven, 3310 W. Commerce Rd, Milford  
Jan 16, Su, 2pm    Music Committee Meeting  
Jan 16, Su, 6pm    MLK, Kettering HS  
Jan 18, T, 7pm     Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jan 21, F          Uncle Sam Night, Windsor, ON  
Jan 25             Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jan 25-30, 2011    Midwinter BHS Convention, Las Vegas  
Feb 1, T, 7pm      Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Feb 12-14          Singing Valentines delivery  
Apr 15-17          Spring Pioneer Distr. Convention  
Jun 3,4            2nd Annual Great Lakes Harmony Brigade  
Jun 25, Sa, 2pm    Log Cabin Days, Waterford  
Jul 3-10           BHS International, Kansas City  
Nov 5              67th BCC Show