Jim Claflin died Feb 25, and the memorial service was held at Cornerstone Evangelical Presbyterian Church March 3 in its large and acoustically fine sanctuary. Two of Jim’s sons (and Georgette’s sister) presented emotional eulogies, praising Jim’s tough-love parenting. Daughter Shannon added two strong Gospel songs with the church choir’s backup. The remaining members of VINTAGE sang “It Is Well with My Soul,” and the Big Chief Chorus was joined by the Livingston Lamplighters to sing “The Irish Parting Prayer.” It was interesting to see historic photos of Jim and Georgette and the family projected onto the Sanctuary screens. Clearly, Jim was the paterfamilias – of seven children and twenty-seven grandchildren. A fine lunch followed the service. About 75 friends and family were present as well as the forty members of the church choir.

In Memoriam – Jim Claflin
I always thought of Jim as having the biggest mouth, but also the biggest heart, of anyone I knew.
I met Jim when he arrived with Stan Lawrence, from the Livingston Lamplighters, at the Big Chief Chorus two years ago, early in 2009.
After a delay caused by his being rear-ended in a serious car accident, (he loved to show where the top of his head was nearly shaved off), we formed a Valentines quartet called WATERFORD CRYSTAL (Frye, Claflin, Cowlishaw, and Melkonian).

That quartet morphed into VINTAGE, with Tom Blackstone replacing Mike Frye on Tenor. As VINTAGE we bought quartet shirts (long-sleeved by Jim’s request to cover his tattoos), and performed gigs for the next year. We became accustomed to Jim’s slow, dramatic vocal delivery. Three songs were our hallmark – “Give Me a Barbershop Song,” “When You Wish upon a Star,” and, especially, “Keep Your Eye on the Girly You Love,” performed with a little soft-shoe. He loved to tell how his old Tampa quartet, MEDIC ALERT, had played up their infirmities to sing that song, with which they had placed 2nd in Florida’s Sunshine district. He was an 18-year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society.
I quickly learned that Jim’s other two passions were motorcycling (he rode his Harley Fat Boy until a year and a half ago) and, especially, Georgette. How he had met her, calling her out during a 1970 Gospel quartet gig, and how he had introduced her to bikes, as she introduced him to Christ. Who could ever doubt that love they shared. He’d fuss about Georgette calling him with her medicine reminders, but he loved it.
He also loved an audience, from his days as a salesman and his avocation as a standup comedian in Detroit clubs, to the spontaneous comedy he’d break into at our gigs.
As his congestive heart failure worsened, he kept singing as long as he could. He volunteered for one of the “Ology” quartets in the fall 2009 District convention, and he learned the ten songs necessary to compete in the first Great Lakes Harmony Brigade in June, 2010.
His biography is in the 101st issue of Smoke Signals, September, 2009.
Goodbye, Jim.

AROUND THE PATCH

**St Patrick’s Day**
In an ongoing tradition, the Big Chief Chorus and its quartets celebrated St. Patrick’s Day with a performance of sixteen songs at Canterbury on the Lake.
Freddie McFadyen led the chorus thru its contest set, its “Irish package,” and its contemporary package.
Performing quartets included **TODAY’S LINE-UP, LIMITED EDITION** (with Zaven subbing at bass), and **NATURAL E**. Green beer was served afterward in the “Canterbury Pub.”
Dave Shantz’s surgery on his toe Mar 21 will keep him on crutches for a few months. “Unfortunately, it's the right foot so I can't drive until the cast comes off.”

It is a customary and solemn moment during the House of Delegates Meeting to read the names of the Pioneer District barbershoppers who have passed on during the past year. This April, the names of Marv Wilson and Jim Claflin will be read.

Otsu, Japan is about 400 miles SW of the zone of devastation. Dan, Eri, Kazuki and Tomoki Teuber are well in Otsu. Dan will finish the year at the High School and beginning teaching at Kyoto University in April.

BCC 2011 Performance Total: 45 gigs to 1899 auditors

MEMBERSHIP (at 66)

Renewals: Michael Oberstadt (2), Terry Jamison (6), Dave Myre (6), Greg Moss (9), Gene Downie (14), Chuck Murray (16), Jeff Doig (19), Jim Troeger (23), Roger Holm (24)

Overdue: Robert Kleeman, Lew Mahacek, Jeffrey Kafer, Fred Pioch

Required by convention weekend: Austin Quinn, Howard Lynn, Tom Blackstone, Paul Smith, Walt Bachmann, Joe Poole, Jeff Spires, Jim Owens, Bob Legato, Al Monroe, Dave Shantz, Dar Johnson, Tom Blue, Jim Macdonald.

April Birthdays: Duane Roy (2nd), Wayne Oberstadt (3rd), Jeff Spires (16th), (and I missed Bob Wallace’s birthday last month, Mar 23)

Medical: Bill Holmes had surgery for an aortic aneurysm Feb 28. Bill Holmes had the soft tissues of his dislocated arm tightened Mar 18. Dave Shantz is recovering from foot surgery.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

District shows

Frank Adams wrote that the Wayne Chapter’s HarmonyTown chorus annual show, March 27, at the Village Theater in Cherry Hill, sold out. Nice going, Wayne.

The Ypsilanti shows, March 13, Chords and Cuisine, also was about to sell out, according to Greg Humbel.

The Lansing Barbershop Chorus’ annual show “Let’s Get Away From It All” is Saturday, May 21 at the Wharton Center on the Michigan State University campus. “This year, the Capitol City Chordsmen and its quartets SINGULAR, PARTS UNLIMITED, and THE OLDE THYME HARMONY QUARTET will take the audience on a musical journey around the country as we try to escape from the old routine. Also, we are proud to feature RESISTING-A-REST, 2010 International Senior Quartet Champions, the antics of THE PATCH CHORDS, as well as the GREAT LAKES HARMONY BRIGADE CHORUS. Tickets are $25 each, all seats reserved.” (James Hall)

Barbershop on WJR (Excerpts from Joe Serwach and Bob Winters)

What a great tradition started years ago by the FOUR FITS on J.P. McCarthy's St Patrick's Day radio show on WJR. This show was heard by virtually everyone in the city of Detroit and the FITS always made us proud.

I'm so happy that THE PERFECT FIT has carried on the tradition. THE PERFECT FIT was formed as a tribute to the 1965 champion FOUR FITS quartet and includes Matt Seely (son of FOUR FITS lead Russ Seely), John Wearing (original tenor in both quartets), Scott Houghton and now Joe Serwach.

Their tribute to Marv Burke, who sang with both quartets and died September 11, 2010, was heartfelt and we're proud of you guys. Here's the video (just 2 minutes). http://ht.ly/4hRiu


Spring convention

Pioneer District convention is April 15-17 at the Soaring Eagle Resort in Mount Pleasant. http://www.soaringeaglecasino.com/

We are registered in the chorus competition. We will sing “Heart of a Clown” and “Midnight Rose” at a mid-Saturday time to be determined after the “random draw.” We will then receive the judges’ critiques, lick our wounds, have dinner together, and listen to the evening Quartet competition, (while being prepared to sing our Gold-Medal-Chorus song, just in case.)

Other competitions that weekend include: Senior Quartet Championship, College Quartet Contest, and the International Quartet Prelims. Everyone must register for the convention. Those will stay overnight (it is about 2:10 driving time from Waterford) need to reserve a room too. Reserved rooms at the Soaring Eagle are gone, but there are cheaper nearby accommodations. Be sure that your BHS membership is up to date (see Membership, above) and that you are registered for the convention, http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/nextconvention/Convention_Registration/register.asp

House Concert at St. Luke’s United Methodist Church

April 10, 2011 at 3:00 pm $10 suggested Donation
3980 Walton Blvd., Rochester Hills

Nationally acclaimed singer-songwriter Putnam Smith is currently touring the country with folk singer-songwriter/musician Nate Spencer. Steeped in Appalachian ‘old-time’ and other Americana roots music,
Putnam’s songs sound like they’ve come from a back porch in the Blue Ridge Mountains, or some cabin in his native Maine.

Both Putnam and Nate bring their masterful talents for banjo, mandolin and guitar, promising a foot-stompin’ strummin’ and hummin’ good time! Jeff Karoub has been gaining acclaim performing his original songs across his home state of Michigan. The singer, guitarist and fiddler likes to tell stories through music, taking his rhythm and roots acoustic sound to many stages state-wide.

Come hear what happens when you cross a Maine town with Motown!

Full Throttle

Jim Ryan, Bass of FULL THROTTLE, has written that they now have a repertoire of 50 songs that are Keepin’ A Cappella and the 50’s Alive!

“While we will not be at the Spring Convention, we wish all the competitors the Best of Luck!! You can watch two of our songs on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aTzNZoA1PeE. As many of you know, all the members of Full Throttle are Barbershoppers. Your support of our group has been very helpful and coaching from folks like Paul Ellinger and Roger Lewis contributed to our success!”

AROUND THE WORLD

2011 Kansas City International Convention

Pioneer district will be represented by the Mount Pleasant chorus, MountainTown Singers, and by a quartet to be determined at District Convention.

MEET BOB WALLACE

Bob was born 69 years ago in Lapeer. After his father returned from the war, the family (including two brothers and a sister) moved to mom’s hometown of Almont where Bob finished his schooling. Dad worked a variety of jobs and died in his 40s while working for the post office. Mom was a chemical lab tech at L & L Products.

Bob took up the trumpet in 4th grade, and later joined the school chorus. He played basketball, football, and tennis. Astigmatism limited his depth perception and kept him from baseball.

After high school, Bob attended Port Huron Junior College for one year, but found he wasn’t ready for college. A succession of jobs followed – McClellans’ dime store in Almont, H & L Green store in Grand Rapids, shop work at Hammill Manufacturing back in Almont, and Wicks Lumber Co.

In 1965, he married Rosalie by whom he had four children, Jeannie, Jodi, Jeff and Julie (who now account for a combined eleven grandchildren). He began working for the city of Richmond, in its DPW and as a substitute in their police department. This led to a position with the Imlay City Police Department. However, the pay was better at the Ford Motor Co at 17 Mile Rd. and Mound. After three years (1969), he moved to a tool and die shop in Memphis. When that folded he reapplied to Ford; the re-entry medical discovered a heart defect, a hole between the two atria. After surgery, he began work as a test driver at the Romeo Proving Ground. In 1983, following his divorce, he transferred to the Arizona test track, from which he retired in January, 1997. Looking for more stimulation, he volunteered as a data entry clerk at the Lake Havasu Police department. The jail was used to hold arrestees for up to 24 hours before their initial court appearance, and the department decided that Bob was just big enough and mean-looking enough to fill the job of jailer.

In 2004, Bob returned to the Almont area. His time soon became filled with bowling, up to five nights a week, and status on the Senior Professional circuit. (He averages over 200, and has bowled seven 300 games and nine 299 games.)

Then he met Louise and moved in with her in Royal Oak, a long drive from the bowling alleys of Almont. As he reduced his bowling involvement he looked for something else to fill his time. He had past experience with music and even with barbershop. As a Congregational church child he had advanced from acolyte to candle lighter to usher to church choir member. When he joined the Catholic Church in the 1960s, he became a cantor at masses, both in Port Huron and in Memphis. In 1974 he was enticed by a story in the Port Huron Times Herald to become a charter member of a new barbershop chorus. Three of the twenty chorus members were dueling with Grosse Pointe, so when he formed a new quartet called Forum with Jim
Gougeon (L), Gordie Dubrul (Br), Hank DeMars (T), he transferred his membership to the Grosse Pointe chapter. They sang together for four or five years. In Lake Havasu he lived hundreds of miles in all directions from any serious barbershopping. But now in 2010, he was living one block from D.O.C.’s rehearsal site. There he met John Northey, who invited him to join him in the drive to Pontiac-Waterford. He finds the two choruses quite comparable, in the quality of the singing and the camaraderie.

Bob would love to quartet. His membership in two choruses, and his registration in the upcoming Great Lakes Harmony Brigade, have an underpurpose of finding three guys in search of a bass.

**Tom Gentry**

In our Chieftain repertoire are five songs that have been arranged by Tom Gentry: “Amazing Grace,” “Aura Lee/Love Me Tender,” “Happy Trails,” “In My Room,” and “In the Still of the Night.” Such a significant number caused me to check out his website to discover what other songs he has arranged. At [http://www.harmonize.ws/tgentry/](http://www.harmonize.ws/tgentry/) you’ll discover that it is in the many hundreds.

**Faithfulness of arrangements**

On another arranging note, Joe Liles writes: “For a number of years there have been several versions of (Albert Hay) Malotte’s “The Lord’s Prayer” floating around. G. Schirmer controls the copyright of it and this publisher is very seriously demanding that the integrity of the original piece be maintained. They have rejected giving permission for any versions that are “modern” in approach. The only barbershop arrangement that we know of, that has their blessing, is the one that BHS published, #8525. (Editor’s note: the arranger is Joe Liles.) It was carefully prepared to express the flavor and intent that G. Schirmer requires. If you have a version in your repertoire, be sure to verify that it is a legal arrangement.” (One that apparently isn’t legal, therefore, is Jim Clancy’s arrangement for Dealer’s Choice.)

Have you heard of the barbershop quartet with the name “HHHHHHHHHHHHHH??” (Say it slowly - “four-teen aitches.”)

**God Bless America** (From Mike Frye)

Here’s the Kate Smith/Irving Berlin story about, and an early cinema recording of, “God Bless America.” There’s even a snippet of a young Ronald Reagan at the end. [http://www.israpundit.com/archives/31462?sms_ssp=facebook&at Xt=4d078e57bb39ba8d%2C0](http://www.israpundit.com/archives/31462?sms_ssp=facebook&at Xt=4d078e57bb39ba8d%2C0)

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**OnLine Barbershop**

Vinny Haynes, of the Big Apple Chorus, hosts an online show of barbershop music every Sunday night, 7pm-11pm ET. Check it out at [http://www.midnightcaferadio.net/](http://www.midnightcaferadio.net/)

**The Diamonds**

Al Monroe asks us to listen to “Little Darlin’” as done by the Diamonds 47 years apart, and to appreciate that old guys don’t sound too bad! [http://www.flixxy.com/the-diamonds-little-darlin-1957-2004..htm](http://www.flixxy.com/the-diamonds-little-darlin-1957-2004..htm)

**X Factor**

The wise-cracking Simon Cowell of American Idol fame is out with a new X Factor - and this time, there are no restrictions! Soloists, vocal groups or anyone over the age of 12 will have the chance to win a $5 million recording contract with Sony music. Auditions start on March 27 in Los Angeles and will travel to Miami, Seattle, Chicago, Newark and Dallas. Now is your chance to sign up - who knows, the next big star could be from our barbershop family!

**OUR HISTORICAL LEGACY – The Pontiac Chapter in 1971**

(The 8th in an ongoing series on the history of barbershop and of our chapter). What follows are excerpts from the February 10, 1971 Pontiac Pow Wow, the name of our chapter’s bulletin at that time.

A very enthusiastic editor, Dick Guerin, wrote:

To recap the month, the chapter started at the Pontiac Mall Flea Market on the 13th. The Chorus roamed throughout the Mall entertaining hundreds of shoppers.

The 22nd found 28 members loading the bus at the Miracle Mile for our annual bus trip to Maumee, Ohio. A great night was had by all, a late night, but a great one. The Drop Chords and the Four Townsmen, along with the chorus, really blew the Ohio bunch right off the stage.

Along with the Mall Sing-out, a chapter meeting, a bus trip to Maumee, the guys all working on the show, the Chorus still found time for six rehearsals. Is it any wonder why nine new fellas have become interested in joining the Pontiac Chapter?

Then the really big night came on the 30th of January, THE PONTIAC SHOW. The rewards finally came for all the effort and time all the guys put in on getting the show ready. The praise and comments, plus a few phone calls on the staging, scenery and all around performance of the talent were just great. The praise for the chorus was unbelievable. The Original Choice (Delta Squires), Harmony Hounds, Sundowners and our own Drop Chords, singing in
the aisles, warming the audience up before show time, really did outstanding jobs. Now I’m going to tell you who the Drop Chords are. Get ready. Rawley Hallman, John Smith, Al Maiers and a newcomer, Dick Johnson. What a boost these guys have been giving the Chapter. They were first heard at the Pontiac Mall Auditions for Admissions, with Good Ole Ed Lilly filling in for Dick Johnson. Then they were at the Chapter meeting, then at the Bloomfield Nursing Home, then back to the Pontiac Mall, another Chapter meeting, the Maumee, Ohio visitation, singing again at the Pontiac Show and the After-Glo. What a boost these guys have been giving the Chapter. I wonder when they find time to rehearse.

MY CHOICE FOR THE MAN DOING THE MOST FOR THE CHAPTER THIS MONTH IS: THE DEVIL HIMSELF, MIKE FRYE. Mike has supported every activity, attended Chapter meetings, paid the baby sitter while Sandy bowled, and his thing on the show, and most important, Mike could, by the end of the month, have Four (4) Man of Note Awards. With guys like Mike, we’ll soon double our membership. Thanks for a job well done, Mike. The Quad-Chapter meeting at Holly-Fenton Chapter was certainly one of the better meetings we’ve been to in a long time. The Drop Chords, Four Townsmen and fifteen members of the Pontiac Chorus were there.

Hey, here are some new names for you to remember… Frank Domke Jr…

CHAPTER MEETING FOR FEBRUARY. Ole Dex Wyse (The Dirty Old Man) has come up with a LULU for February. Are you ready for this? A good, old fashioned BOX SOCIAL.

March brings us to our ANNUAL WOODSHED CONTEST on the 26th. So all you Woodshedders, who will de-throne Ray Guerin of Pontiac, Curt Seely of OCC, Bud Keppler and John Lenahan of the Wayne Chapter. Then there’s the Milford Chapter. They have won the Bennington Trophy for the past two years in a row. Who will be the next ones to defeat them? It’s like playing against the Ole New York Yankees, trying to defeat Milford. The Brothers Three and Me will be our judges, plus our own Bill Pascher as M. C. So remember this date. PONTIAC WOODSHED CONTEST, the fourth Friday, MARCH THE 26TH.

The kits are in, so at the BOX SOCIAL, the Pontiac Chapter will be honored to install into the Chapter Ray Kirby, sponsored by Bill Pascher; Paul Page, sponsored by Mike Frye; Charley Picket, sponsored by Hank Geyer; Dick Johnson, sponsored by John Lickert; Chuck Wood, a renewal; and Our Own Music Man, Dan Rafferty, holding a dual membership.

IT WAS ONCE SAID, THE TROUBLE WITH DOING NOTHING, IS YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN YOU’RE DONE.

NUFF STUFF FOR NOW. See you at the meeting, February 19, 1971.

DICK GUERIN
BULLETIN EDITOR
PONTIAC CHAPTER

“Where are they now?”
Since the influx of members under Chris Miller’s leadership, there has also been an outflow. Here is a list of 47 singers who came, who sang with us, who made a contribution, who in some cases joined as members, and who, for one reason or another, have gone their separate way.


Articles of interest in the latest Harmonizer (Jan-Feb, 2011)
Pg. 4 Criticism of Bel Canto
Pg. 6 Two-yr rotation plan off the table
Pg. 8 Learning choreography
Pg.16-17 (Pull-out) 2011 International Convention Program
Pg. 18-20. District Quartet champs, including Pioneer’s RIGHT ON Q, last year’s show quartet SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED, and next fall’s show quartet FOREFRONT.
Pg. 22 Judging controversial envelope-pushing performances
Pg. 24 Bel Canto, part II
Pg. 27 Hoover Dam quartetting (for those of us who attended Las Vegas)
Pg. 29 Heere and Nau
Pg. 32 Tag: “Goodnight, Little Boy of Mine”

Google Chrome
An IT journal on increasing surf speed listed as its number one recommendation to switch from Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox to Google Chrome. I have done that and can vouch for the remarkable increase in internet speed. http://www.google.com/chrome You’ll download those barbershop audios a bunch faster with Google Chrome.

Music and Medicine
There is an International Association for Music and Medicine, that publishes a journal called Music and Medicine. Go to: http://www.iammonline.com/ Their interests include such topics as: medical music psychotherapy, music health and well being, stress response and music relaxation, cardiology and rhythm, cancer care, infant stimulation, and music and culture in medicine.
Letters:
(From Georgette Claflin)
Dear John and Chorus:

I would have written you all sooner, but as you can probably guess, there are so many loose ends to tie together in circumstances like this one. I apologize for the tardiness of this email.

I want you all to know how much Jim loved you all. For the last few years of his life one of his greatest joys was not just singing with you, but also being with you. He would say to me early in the morning of practice days how he was going to go that night to sing, but his old worn-out body wouldn't comply. Simple activities exhausted him. I know he has found the heavenly chorus by now and is singing his heart out with perfect pitch and head tones!

I want you also to know how I love you all and appreciate so much your presence at the memorial service. Thank you for giving time out of your day to be there for us; you lifted our spirits. I know that Jim would agree with me in saying that you guys are some of the very best people on earth to be with.

Please tell Neil that Jim had a special love for him. I think Neil knows this.

Carry on. Jim is watching.
God bless you each and every one.
Georgette

(From Larry G. Detter, Director of Music, Hartland Senior Center, lgdretired@comcast.net)

John – We haven’t met, but I wanted to ‘thank you’ for your email of Jim’s memorial service and your warm thoughts.

Everyone ‘who came to know’ Jim Claflin (as all of us barber shoppers did!) would agree wholeheartedly with your description and commentary that you so eloquently penned in your ‘memoriam!’ I have forwarded your email to all who would listen, especially the men’s chorus at the Hartland Senior Center where Jim sang with the Silver Squires Men’s Vocal Ensemble and the ladies vocal ensemble, the Silver Chords when combined as a full chorus.

Your words of remembrance are truly appreciated. I hope Georgette is able to acquire your kind words, also.

All articles and photos by the Editor unless stated otherwise.

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: Open
Secretary: Bill Auquier
Treasurer: Dick Johnson
Members at Large - Walt Bachmann, Terry Jamison, Doug Metzger, Fred Pioch
Chorus Manager: Open
Section Leaders: McFadyen, Stephenson, Cowlishaw, Moss
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)

Mar 29, T, 5pm   Extended BCC practice, 5-9:30
Apr 5, T, 7pm   Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Apr 12, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Apr 15-17       Spring Pioneer Distr. Convention, Mt Pleasant
Apr 19, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Apr 26, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
May 3, T, 7pm   Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
May 10, T, 7pm  Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Jun 3,4         2nd Annual Great Lakes Harmony Brigade
Jun 4, Sa,7pm   Brigade concert, Okemos
Jun 25, Sa, 2pm Log Cabin Days, Waterford
Jul 3-10        BHS International, Kansas City
Nov 5           67th BCC Show

HE GETS THAT WAY EVERY YEAR BEFORE DIVISION CONTEST.

Remember to smile... don’t forget key change.