

ONLINE AT www.bigchiefchorus.org

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March 1, 2013

Singing Valentines

The 2013 Singing Valentines program was run on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, though most of the 36 paid presentations were on Thursday.

There were numerous other freebies. Total number of love-greetings was 60, to 1201 people.

Busiest quartet was BIDIN' OUR TIME (McFadyen, Frye, Johnson, Holm). Over three days, they presented 27 SVs, drove 420 miles, and crossed the intersection of Union Lake and Commerce Rd an uncountable number of times. One was to the "dressed-to-the-nines 95-yr old girl friend" of an 85-yr old fellow Fitness 19 going acquaintance of Mike Frye's.

LIMITED EDITION (Blackstone, Doig, Cowlshaw, Perry) was on the road Thursday delivering ten Singing Valentines, and also presenting one whole Valentines show, to a total of 168 people. The SV's were to Ferndale Electric, Tom Blackstone's daughter's 8th grade science class at Cranbrook Schools, a luncheon party at Gino's, Goldner Walsh Nursery, a Milford residence, Clarkston Hot Yoga, and the Crowne Plaza Hotel. The show was a 45-minute production at Lockwood of Waterford, where the quartet sang fourteen songs, arranged in a progressive sequence thru the love-lifetime of Boy and Girl, from their shy meeting, to their final passing on.

4GVN (Teuber, Greenwood, Domke, Moss) had thirteen gigs.

THE ROMANTICS (Eric VanPoucker, Mike Kramb, Sturdy, Murray) sang nine gigs, including at Chuck Murray's old hangout, Macphee's Restaurant in Ortonville.

Thanks to Duane Roy for administering the Singing Valentine program.

AROUND THE PATCH

Elmhaven gig, Feb 22

Twenty-two members of the Big Chief Chorus drove thru slushy roads for an afternoon gig at Elmhaven Manor to help nine residents of the manor celebrate their February birthdays. Freddie led the members thru a 40 minute gig that was somewhat jarred by the concurrent passing out of cupcakes. (John Northey even got one.) BIDIN' OUR TIME, and a pickup quartet of Teuber, Doig, Cowlshaw, and Wallace (TODAY'S EDITION) added a couple songs.



Clarkston Community Band Concert, Feb 22

Tom Blue has known Shelley Schwaderer Roland, Music Director and Conductor of the Clarkston Community Band, thru their joint work at the summer camps at Blue Lake. Ms. Roland invited the Big Chief Chorus to join them in a concert at the Clarkston High School Performing Arts Center Feb 22 as they prepared for competition the next day.

The chorus led off with an eight-set, singing nicely in the limited acoustic feedback by standing in shotgun formation. BIDING' OUR TIME and LIMITED FREDITION each added a pair of quartet songs.

After removing the risers, the chorus joined the audience of 135 to enjoy three numbers by the band – the Hungarian Attack March by Franz Liszt, and two modern numbers, a suite written in memory of the 9/11 attack, and a lovely Danzon by Arturo Marquez.



Warming up in the choir room

St Patrick's Day

The Big Chief Chorus has two sing-outs for St Patrick's Day.

Friday, March 15, the chorus will sing at Lockwood of Waterford at 2:30.

Tuesday, March 19, at 6:30, we will sing at Canterbury on the Lake, followed by pretzels and beverages in their basement pub. White shirts and black pants (green bow ties and arm-bands provided).

Our Fall Show

April 11 is the 75th anniversary of the first meeting of the Barbershop Harmony Society (known then, of course, as SPEBSQSA). Our Fall show will recognize those 75 years, by emphasizing the history of the Big Chief Chorus. (Is there a song for each decade? 70 years of Pontiac singing.)

In addition to INSTANT CLASSIC (from the Cardinal District) our Fall show will include OAKORDZ, a male a cappella group from Oakland University. You can hear them sing "Cant Help Falling in Love" and "Sweet Dreams" at:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=60K64pe8f5g

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GW3Nu-iAoQg>

<http://www.oakland.edu/news/?sid=383&nid=9205>

A cappella is alive at OU, as shown by this news item for a second group, GOLD VIBRATIONS.

http://www.oakland.edu/view_news.aspx?sid=34&nid=9749

(Thanks, Wayne.)

Smoke Signals on the BCC web site

Jeff Doig has reworked the site so that it is more compatible with Safari and Apple computers. The text is also larger and more readable now. Have you checked it out lately? <http://www.bigchiefchorus.org/Issue-142February2013.pdf>

Taste of Waterford

Heather Halls has sent this link to a PDF of the 2013 Taste of Waterford. Pictures of the BCC contingent are on page 4.

<http://www.waterford.k12.mi.us/FoodService/pdf/TOW%20RAC%202013.pdf>

"Just a quick email to once again thank you SO MUCH for all you did to make the 15th Annual Taste of Waterford a smashing success!!! We simply COULD NOT have done it without you and your contributions of time, talent, energy and resources!!!"

Coincidence

Not only was Wally Plosky present at the Kennedy Space Center at the crash of shuttle Columbia but so was Bill Maxfield. What are the chances that a second member of our chapter would be there? About 1 in 30,000, I'd say.

Crna Kuca

John Cowlshaw's son Phil is performing in *Crna Kuca*, a rock opera musical in Zagreb, Croatia. He is visible several times in this 60-second video. The show will be performed throughout the country (the Croatian President attended opening night) and possibly throughout Europe.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TyeLQFSE9F4>

Quartets

BIDIN' OUR TIME performed to about 60 participants at the February 9th Chili Cook-off at Christ Lutheran Church.

The February *Smoke Signals* announced the death of 4GVN. As Mark Twain said about his reported death, it is greatly exaggerated.

BCC 2013 Performance thru February: 64 gigs to 2246 people.

MEMBERSHIP (at 53)

Renewals: Moss (11), Auquier (14), Cowlshaw (14), Downie (16), Frye (26),

Overdue: Bachmann, Domke, Metzger, Oberstadt, Stephenson

Due by April 20 : Alastair-Hunter, Blackstone, Blue, Doig, Holm, Holmes, Dar Johnson, Lawrence, Legator, Lynn, Marshall, Monroe, Murray, Myre, Owens, Pioch, Quinn, Roy, Spires, Valko

March Birthdays: Ted Prueter (9th), Eric Domke (14th), Walt Bachmann (16th), Bruce LaMarte (18th), Dan Valko (19th), Tom Blackstone (22nd), Bob Wallace (23rd), Bill Holmes (25th)

Barbershopper of the Month: Ted Prueter for his work as librarian

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Spring Pioneer District convention – April 19 to 21

The convention is Friday, April 19 thru Sunday, April 21, at the Grand Traverse Resort in Traverse City. This is a 3:20 drive from Waterford.

The site is: http://pioneerdistrict.org/nextconvention/convention_info.htm

The Big Chief Chorus will be singing Saturday, April 20, time to be determined, but probably between 10:30 and 1:30. Tom will want us earlier for warm-up earlier. Given the distance, most guys will drive up Friday.

Several chapter quartets will also be singing – including LIMITED EDITION, ON THAT NOTE, CLASSIC FIT and CODA HONOR. That competition is Friday night, probably starting at 7pm. The Quartet Finals (top eight quartets) are Saturday night, and it's a great show not to be missed, including songs by the winning chorus, et al. And Hospitality Suite hopping and tag-singing after that.

In order to sing in the chorus onstage you must:

- Be a paid-up member of the BHS (as of April 20)
- Register for the convention - \$35 (\$45 after March 22). This must reach Larry Parker by snail mail by March 22, or can be done online at the site above. I believe that new members still have their first convention fee waived.
- The chorus must be entered in the contest with two legal songs. (Secretary Charlie Perry will take care of that)
- Make a hotel reservation if you are going to stay overnight Friday and/or Saturday. The very-much-reduced rate (about half-price) for the Grand Traverse Resort is \$95/nite plus \$10 resort fee and 11% tax and fee. I wasn't able to get the reduced rate online (www.gtresort.com) but you can print out the reservation form provided on the Pioneer site that contains the rate and snail mail it, or give them a call at 1-800-968-7352. Or seek other accommodations.

Quartet competitors have their own special registration form to complete, at <https://ebiz.barbershop.org/ebusiness/CJ20/ContestEntryPreviousEntries.aspx>

Cliff Douglas

Ron Gillies posted this obituary notice:

“Sad to report that a wonderful barbershopper and friend Cliff Douglas passed away in Port Charlotte, Florida on Wednesday, February 20, 2013. Prior to moving to Florida several years ago, Cliff was a long time member of the Pontiac Chapter. Cliff was 83 years old. He was the Bass of the District Champion CURBSTONE SERENADERS. Also sang with the HARMONY KNIGHTS and THE SOUND OBJECTIVE. A sweeter Bass voice would be very hard to find.”

Another member of the CURBSTONE SERENADERS, Ed Lilly, died July 28, last year. This photo of the Curbstone Serenaders, as 1962 Pioneer District champions, was published in the October issue of *Smoke Signals*. http://www.bigchiefchorus.org/smoke_signals/2012/Issue-138October2012.pdf

Lansing Chapter's PR

The Capitol City Chordsmen have put out an impressive animated ad for their March 9 show. It's worth considering as we gear up for our Fall Show. <http://harmonize.com/capitolcitychordsmen/whartonshow.html>

AROUND THE WORLD

Toronto International Convention

June 30 - July 7, 2013, Toronto, ON

Celebrate the Society's 75th Anniversary...

There is a fine set of 60 historic BHS photos at:

<http://www.barbershop.org/celebrate-harmony-societys-75th-anniversary.html>

Harmonizer

“Both the November/December 2012 and the January/February 2013 issues of *The Harmonizer* are nearly finished and will be mailed together. The January/February 75th Anniversary issue will be the thickest, slickest issue of *The Harmonizer* in decades. More than 100 pages in your mailbox takes more time than usual, but we believe you'll be happy with the end result. Thank you for your patience!”

(From Smoke Signals)

Ten Years Ago

“Thanks to Wayne Cheyne and Gene Downie for managing this year's **Valentine's Day Sing-outs**, to Waterford Hill Florist & Greenhouse for donating flowers, and to B NATURAL, FOUR WHEEL DRIVE, HARMONY KNIGHTS, and a reconstituted HARMONY WAY (Norm Hunt – Tenor, Bruce Brede – Lead, Neil Braun – Bari, and Chuck Murray – Bass) for singing.”

Five Years Ago

“MEDIA EXPOSURE FOR BCC

The News Media needed a BIG STORY to follow the Primary Elections of Tuesday February 5th. What better story than that of the Big Chief Chorus. Starting on Wednesday at 6:00 PM on the Waterford Cable TV Network, Jack Teuber and B-NATURAL QUARTET were featured. (Thank you, Lyle, Roger, Dick and Freddie). It was a Big Chief Valentine Promotion which included Log Cabin Days, June 28th and the 64th Annual Show on November 1, 2008. Be sure to mark your calendars for those events.

This NEWS EVENT was followed by extensive coverage in the Thursday editions of *The Oakland Press*, *Clarkston News* and *Lake Orion Review*. All three papers carried a fine photo of a tuxedo-clad quartet, CELEBRATION. (Thank you Bruce, Greg, Bill and Jack).

The Clarkston News gets the award for most coverage as they also included a photo of the newly installed nine member board of the Pontiac-Waterford Chapter, Barbershop Harmony Society.

If the media assault was not enough, Ross Ensign and Jack Teuber were to attend Waldon Middle School on Thursday; however the school was closed due to a winter storm. The school quickly contacted Ross and Jack to attend Scripps Middle School on Friday, Feb. 8th. The purpose of the invitation was to include the Big Chief Barbershoppers in a workshop presented by THREE MEN AND A TENOR. A two hour performance by 3MT and the students will be presented on February 28th, 7:00 pm, Lake Orion High School. I'm sure the Big Chief Chorus will turn out in large numbers at Lake Orion High School.

Submitted by Jack Teuber”

What's the difference between a trio and a quartet?

I'm serious. There are many famous trios – The Bee Gees; The Kingston Trio; Peter, Paul, and Mary; Crosby, Stills, and Nash; The Andrews Sisters; The Bill Gaither Trio. So why don't we have barbershop trios? What is it that the fourth voice adds, and why didn't those trios realize it?

Just thinking out loud.

Daily Vocal Practice

For the Big Chiefs to improve as a chorus, each member needs to take responsibility for a daily practice.

Probably most of you already practice each day.

For those who don't, here is a suggested vocal practice that won't take even five minutes.

1. Hum, like Freddie leads us, on a fairly low note, and lower your jaw enough to open those little temporomandibular holes beside your ear lobes, which should get a cave-like resonance going in your head. A half a minute would be good, warming up all those vocal tissues.
2. Try lower-pitched hums, but not so low that you start to lose your vocal power. This will define your low note, from which you are going to ascend to your high note, probably 1 ½ to 2 octaves. You can do it in groups of four notes, like I have led you ... 1,2,3,4 (hold), 5,6,7,8 (hold), 9,10,11,12 (hold). And then back down.
3. First, do it on a hum
4. Do it on a bubble
5. Do it on a Zoo, really letting your face-mask vibrate on the Z.
6. Do it on a Whee, making a nice eee sound.
7. Do it on a Mah, with lots of space, raised palate, etc.
8. Do it on a Boh (Bow), punctuating the "B" sound.
9. I finish with a passaggio exercise, or call it the anti-yodel exercise. This is to smooth out the transition between our lower and upper registers. Starting high enough to be in "head voice," sing slowly and continuously downward on an "ooh." Eventually, your voice may crack, as you switch over to "chest voice." On that pitch, or even one or two tones higher, sing an "ooh" and slowly switch back and forth between head voice and chest voice. It should get smoother and smoother, the opposite of the yodeling transition. Since many of us tense up and restrict our vocal flow at about this pitch (about a B or C?), this exercise should be helpful.

That's it – four to five minutes. But, oh well, as long as you're all warmed up, it wouldn't be a bad idea to go on and practice one of our chorus songs.

(Next month's issue will include Tom Blue's suggested warm-ups.)

Media

A Complete Guide to Contemporary A Cappella Singing

Wayne Oberstadt found this fine site:

<http://www.brodymcdonald.com/?p=136#comment-11>

Here you will find, "Repetition is the mother of all learning" applied to vowel sounds.

"What singers need most is consistency. In order to make that happen, they must treat every bit of singing as a chance to enhance. We should not let repetition be for warm-ups, sight-reading or drills. We should build a mentality of repetition into every rehearsal.

"Let's take vowel purity as a test case. How many pure vowels are there anyway? I tend to stick to 7: EE (meet), IH (hit), EH (red), AH (father), AW (tall), OH (boat), and OOH (moon)... We can base almost ALL singing off of these seven, then add variation as needed.

"So, assuming we're working from seven vowels, then every time we sing, we're practicing our consistency producing those vowels. Around 90% of our singing is on vowels, so taking the mindset of constantly practicing vowel production always is nothing but beneficial. When a vowel is corrected in rehearsal, an OK singer will think "I need to sing taller on this note," but a great singer will think "all my AH vowels need to be like this."

Debra Lynn

...has posted a new video on an exercise to smooth the passage thru passaggio, that is, the transition area between a series of notes, usually occurring between [registers](#) of the voice (i.e., between the chest voice and the head voice or middle to the high notes of the vocal range). Where the transition points occur differs with each individual although it is generally somewhere between B flat below C to the F# above and can encompass anything from three to seven semitones.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9RgKgZAo88o&feature=em-sub&digest>

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING January 31, 2013

(Excerpts from Charlie Perry's minutes)

Attending: Pioch, Sturdy, Johnson, McMain, Mann, Perry, Greenwood and Teuber.

Treasurer's Report. Available funds - \$8,491.

Motion to bond every chapter member passed.

VP Growth and Development: Paul Moutan has filled out membership papers. There was discussion about treatment of visitors. Do we need a visitor committee, or mentor system?

VP Music and Performance. Holm reported that five of the eight new songs for 2013 have been handed out.

The chapter needs to find a new Librarian. Bill Maxfield?

Discussed possibility of having show cast party at Hero's. Concerns about seating were raised. Matter was tabled.
Barbershopper of the Month: Ted Prueter.

Letters

January 22, 2013

Hi Jack

The necktie that my mom Evelyn Beeler (Still alive, at 94, living in Clawson) gave me is enclosed. Sorry it's a little stained – that's how it was when I received it!

I remember Bill Pascher well. My sister and I used to hide behind the door to the hallway and listen when Three Corns and a Bunyan practiced in our living room. At that time Bill Pascher was Lead, Bill Otto sang Bass, Eddie Bunyan was Tenor, and my poor dad, Jack Beeler, sang Baritone. I say "poor" because baritone is such a hard part. It's my theory that no matter what else they do in their lives, all baritones go to heaven – and they deserve it.

My dad died in August of 1995, at 80.

More information about Bill Pascher: in 1958 Bill painted my grandfather's tiny travel trailer the same pinkish color as his Pontiac, and he and Evelyn and my folks drove to L.A. for the SPEBSQSA convention. They took a month to do it, stopping to see the sights along the way.

I'm so glad to have found a good home for the necktie.

Best –

Deanna Beeler

Attorney at Law

Bass, Sweet Harmony, Eureka, CA

Runs with Scissors quartet

From Paul Ellinger:

Just got done reading [the February Smoke Signals]. It was great. You guys are really an active and vibrant chorus.

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlshaw

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: Charlie Perry

Treasurer: Dick Johnson

Members at Large - Fred Pioch, Ray Sturdy, Jim McMain, Bob Greenwood

Chorus Manager: Open

Captain Sunshine: Bill Maxfield

Section Leaders: McFadyen, Stephenson, Cowlshaw, Moss

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

Prueter, Moss, Cowlshaw, and Stephenson

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

CALENDAR, 2013 (Times are Performance Times, Warm-ups 45' earlier)

Feb 26, T, 7:00 BCC Practice, Waterford Oaks Activity Center

Mar 5, T, 7:00 BCC Practice, Waterford Oaks Activity Center

Mar 9, Sa Wharton Show, E. Lansing

Mar 12, T, 7:00 BCC Practice, Waterford Oaks Activity Center

Mar 15, F, 2:30 Lockwood of Waterford

Mar 19, T, 6:30 Canterbury on the Lake

Mar 26, T, 7:00 BCC Practice, Waterford Oaks Activity Center

Mar 29, F 55th Annual Woodshed Contest, Pontiac CC

Apr 2, T, 7:00 BCC Practice, Waterford Oaks Activity Center

Apr 11 75th anniversary of the birth of SPEBSQSA

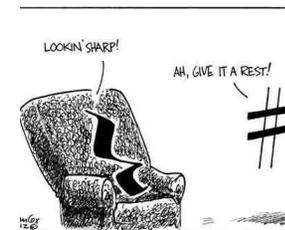
Apr 19-21 District Convention, Traverse City

Jun 29, 3-4 pm Waterford Hist. Soc's Log Cabin Days

Oct 18-20 District Convention, Kalamazoo Radisson

"Barbershop quartet singing is four guys tasting the holy essence of four individual mechanisms coming into complete agreement." (Meredith Willson)

The basses must sing way down low,
And the leads up an octave or so,
The tenors range high
While the baritones try
Singing notes that the others don't know.
[Ariel S. Bean]



From William Stutts' Face Book page