Christmas Chorus

With the return of our Christmas guests (Tom Burder, Art Carinci, Dick Knapp, Jim Lawson, and Gary Owens), we practiced four nights in November, reviewing old songs and refreshing “We Need a Little Christmas” and then plunged into our December schedule.

Tuesday, December 2

The Big Chief Chorus began its 2014 Christmas Sing-Out Season with performances at the Waterford Township Tree Lighting/Santa Arrival and at Lockwood of Waterford. Director Tom Blue led the robustly singing chorus, comprised of 36 men by the second gig.

At our 7th Township event, it was c-c-c-old as usual. The audience of 170 cheered enthusiastically at our return visit (each year since 2008). Township officials joined us for the finale of “We Wish You a Merry Christmas,” just before Santa’s well-timed arrival, and the chorus’s escape across M-59 to Lockwood of Waterford where the chorus’s Christmas performances have an even longer history (eight, since 2006; how did we miss 2010?). With some mixing and matching, two quartets and an octet added variety to the nine songs that the chorus sang. An octet sang our new Christmas number, “We Need a Little Christmas.” LIMITED FRYDITION had its first public performance of “Christmas Song – Chestnuts,” and BIDIN’ OUR TIME, with Cowlishaw at Bari, sang “Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town.” Walt Bachmann sang his German verse of Silent Night. 59 residents were present.

Thursday, December 4

Freddie was with his wife undergoing a medical procedure, so Tom Blue took a half day off from teaching and came in to direct. We are graced with free rehearsal time at Waterford Oaks Activity Center, so our performance for the Oakland County Retirees at White Lake Oaks, arranged by Tom Jackson, is a thank-you. The chorus sang to the 240 attendees, singing a mix of Christmas and jazz songs.
On to Independence Village of White Lake, where the chorus sang to the 66 residents, staff, and family that gathered to hear us. The chorus sang, as well as 4URPLEASURE, and LIMITED ODITIOM. Cookies and punch were served afterward.

LIMITED ODITIOM continued on to the University Presbyterian Church in Rochester, where nine members of the Delta Kappa Gammas enjoyed a half-hour informal show.

**Friday, December 5**

Two Big Chief quartets returned for the Annual Cheers to the Holidays Fundraiser for Easter Seals on Friday, December 5. The event is held in the spacious show rooms of Bowman Chevrolet on Dixie Hwy, White Lake Twp.

**Bidin’ Our Time** (Freddie McFadyen, Mike Frye, Ray Sturdy, and Roger Holm) and **LIMITED ODITIOM** (Wayne Oberstadt, Jeff Doig, John Cowlishaw, and Charlie Perry) sang to arriving guests, both as quartets and an octet. Then the men were able to join the 160 other Easter Seal supporters to partake of the food (provided by Lakes Grille) and wine tasting (provided by Neiman’s Family Market).

Charlie Perry sings in the chorus which has helped to establish a special bond between director Jackie Rhodes and the LIMITED ODITIOM quartet.

The Chorus was established in 1977, has 40 members, and Jackie Rhodes has been director since 1998. [http://www.hvcommchorus.com/about_us.html#sthash.v5TnAmJq.dpuf](http://www.hvcommchorus.com/about_us.html#sthash.v5TnAmJq.dpuf)

A portion of the concert proceeds helped support the Lakeland High School Singers, who also sang in the concert.

**Tuesday, December 9**

28 men sang to the 43 residents at Lakeland Place, always a fun place to sing. Three quartets also sang – 4URPLEASURE, 4GVN, and LIMITED ODITIOM.

The chorus then proceeded to Heroes for libations, food, and a scheduled performance to the diners. Jeff Doig led the BCC thru some numbers, and it also gave quartets a chance to do their thing. The music was enjoyed by an entranced young girl with her Christmas book, and by Charlene and her friends, Tom and Harry, who had ordered a special Merry Christmas cake for the chorus.

**Sunday, December 7**

LIMITED ODITIOM joined with the Huron Valley Community Chorus to present a Christmas concert at Lakeland High School. An audience of about 240 cheered the singers.
Wednesday, December 10

LIMITED FRYDITION sang in the Canterbury Chapel

Wednesday evening, December 10. It was a holiday dinner gathering of Leas. (Canterbury is organized into three levels – Independent Living, Leas, and Assisted Living).

Singing from the Chapel stage, the foursome sang eleven songs to the group of 83 residents and their families, as they finished their desserts.

LIMITED FRYDITION with Cindy Maybee who organized the event.

Thursday, December 11

The day began with BIDIN’ OUR TIME “singing at a noontime meeting of OPC (Old Persons’ Commission) at the Royal Park Hotel in downtown Rochester, a receptive group of approximately 63 people. We sang Christmas music as well as a few contemporary tunes.” (Mike Frye)

In the evening, the chorus sang at Canterbury on the Lake to 75 residents and families. Tom Blue led the chorus thru Christmas songs, and quartets added their music. 4URPLEASURE sang “White Christmas.” A VERY LIMITED EDITION (with Mike Frye at Tenor and Zaven Melkonian at Bass) sang “Christmas Song - Chestnuts.” Freddie arrived in time for BIDIN’ OUR TIME to sing a couple songs – “Christmas Chopstix” and “Santa Claus is Comin’ to Town,” the latter in a surprisingly high key.

Saturday, December 13

An octagig. (That’s eight stops, on our well-managed bus-capade). We 33 Big Chiefs sang for 20-25 mins at each station and covered 12 songs, singing to an estimated 387 listeners, and three quartets and their various permutations also performed.

Tired by the end of the day, but we spread the barbershop gospel and picked up a few bucks for the chorus.

At Mendelson, a roomful of residents, including a WWII vet from the African campaign, enjoyed our singing.

At Elmhaven, a smaller group of listeners, including only two men (sigh! They die earlier) gathered in front of two beautiful toy soldiers.

Ryan’s Fresh Market is the reincarnation of VG’s. The old staff, including the clerk who used to sing with us, is gone. There were a depressingly small number of shoppers, and half of them were at the liquor counter.

Pine Tree Place had their Christmas family party today, so the audience was large and enthusiastic.

At Krogers of Commerce Twp, we were surprisingly limited to a decatet (12 singers).

At Hillers of Commerce Twp we were able to sing near the deli, and a quartet delighted the deli girls afterward.

Walmart granted us a good space, and the crowd loved us. One worked for Channel 2.
Hillers of W. Bloomfield was particularly appreciative, and many cell phones of shoppers and staff recorded us.

Tuesday, December 16
23 members of the chorus journeyed to American House in Rochester Hills where we sang at two locations, Stone School, and Village.

Freddie led the chorus thru the standard Christmas set. In addition, the chorus sang “We Need a Little Christmas,” 4URPLEASURE sang “White Christmas,” VERY LIMITED EDITION (Frye, Doig, Cowlishaw, Murray) sang “Christmas Song – Chestnuts,” and BIDIN’ OUR TIME sang “Christmas Chopstix.” The latter quartet also sang “Heart of My Heart” to Alice McFadyen who had joined Freddie on this, their 55th wedding anniversary. As usual, Jeff Doig’s impersonation of Rudolph was a big crowd-pleaser.

The audiences were rather small – 41 at Stone School, and 21 at Village. Since the Rochester chorus also scheduled to sing at American House this year, and given the location, we may pass on these gigs next year.

Friday, December 19
“Friday there were 13 of us that sang at Lourdes skilled nursing facility. We sang in four different lunch rooms or Solariums as they call them. Each had approximately ten people eating and being somewhat attentive.

We then went to the Clausen Center at Lourdes and sang for 21 people.

Total in attendance 62. Freddie directed.”
Mike Frye

Tuesday, December 23
On the final day of the Christmas season, the chorus sang at Fox Manor Lourdes and Inn at Cass Lake.

At Fox Manor, Tom led us the chorus (19 men) through the Christmas rep and two de novo quartets (Teuber, Doig, DeNio, Wallace) and (Frye, Doig, Cowlishaw, Melkonian) sang to about 23 residents, which included five men (hooray!).

At Inn at Cass Lake, we sang to 75 residents finishing their lunches, and the two quartets (with John Northey replacing Zaven Melkonian) sang, despite sirens going off when a gentleman’s fall in the shower precipitated an intermittent siren and brought fire trucks.
Thanks to Tom Blue for his usual eloquence and to our guests this season.

P.S. As an afterglow, eight members (Frye, Doig, Lynn, Murray, Sturdy, DeNio, Pioch, and Cowlishaw) gathered at Bryan’s Coney Island to eat chili dogs and sing “Jingle Bells,” “Rudolph,” and “Coney Island Baby” to the delighted patrons and staff.

**AROUND THE PATCH**

**Sarah Decker Funeral**
Walt Bachmann’s step-daughter died unexpectedly Monday, December 15. Sarah Decker was 38 and the mother of three children. The Big Chief Chorus once again showed its solidarity and supportiveness as 22 members gathered, December 22, for the funeral service at the Wint Funeral Home in Clarkston. Bill Holmes led the service. Jack Teuber spoke movingly. BIDIN’ OUR TIME sang “Hands of Time.” Tom Blue led the chorus thru “Abide With Me,” “God Bless America,” and “Irish Parting Prayer.”

Sarah’s mother Margaret was hospitalized Monday morning with pneumonia and a suspected anxiety attack with possible cardiac impact, so that Walt and Margaret were not present, but daughter Jessica and family and friends received us at Wint and at the wake at the Bachmann home afterward, where there was a table of wonderful food, and where sophomore neighbor Maddy played her double bass, and the chorus members sang “Jingle Bells” and “Rudolph,” much to Jessica’s daughter’s delight.

Walt Bachman has let us know that Margaret is resting back at home.

**Dan Valko’s son, Matthew R. Valko** of Redford, died December 10 at the age of 52. He was interred at the Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, Michigan.

**Marcel “Ed” DePoofter** of Clarkston died December 8, 2014 at the age of 84. Ed was a member of the Pontiac chorus in the 1970s and our President in 1973. He was a mason by trade and also built, owned, and operated the Four Seasons Inn in Davisburg.

**David Stone** recently moved from Largo, FL, where he was a member of the Sun Coast Chorus, to Independence Village. He would like to sing with us if we can establish a **riding plan**.

**Fred Pioch** took the closing of Pontiac Sears as a sign and has retired.

Did you do the **Holiday Season Crossword Puzzle**? Let me know.

**Chapter 2014 Performances:** 116 gigs to 50,684 people

**MEMBERSHIP:** (at 50)

- **Renewals:** Jim McMain (4), Bruce Brede (17), Walt DeNio (17), Wayne Oberstadt (21), Mike Keith (33)
- **Due in January:** Ted Prueter, Bob Stephenson
- **Overdue:** Mike Doyle, Anthony Hoff
- **January Birthdays:** Len Barnes (Jan 3), Tom Blue (Jan 7), Bob Marshall (Jan 10), Ray Sturdy (Jan 18), Mike Doyle (Jan 30)
- **Medical:**
  - Ted Prueter – being treated for leukemia
  - Duane Roy – being treated for esophageal cancer
In Memoriam:
Jan 30, 2004, John Smith #34
Jan 30, 2012, Dave Monroe #131

District

"The Voice" - Pioneer's Youth Barbershop Chorus:
"Our chorus is ready to go - 24 young men strong. We feel truly blessed and excited for the chance to be singing in the Youth Chorus Festival in New Orleans on January 9th.
"Thanks to all of the men of Pioneer for your generous donations. All of our bills have been paid! We will do you proud!! Blessings for a wonderful Christmas. We hope to see you in N'Orleans!!"
From the young men of "The Voice"

Leadership Academy is for All (Jan 17)
"We have some great people heading for Central Michigan University to train you in lots of areas. This is important for our future as Barbershoppers so make sure your chapter leaders and future leaders come! I want to close registration on the 10th so we can arrange the facilities and food! Check out the link at http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/cots/leadershipacademy.htm.
I look forward to seeing all of you there!"
Mike Ridenour, District VP, Chapter Support & Leadership Training

International

BHS International, Pittsburgh, June 28 – July 5.
It is only six months away. Most of the action is Thursday night (AIC show), Friday (choruses and quartet semi-finals) and Saturday (Quartet finals).
Consider attending an International Convention, especially if you have never done so. Pittsburgh is only 320 miles away, a 5-hour drive, and could be handled financially in a car of four for about $20 a piece. A single registration, for all general sessions, is $179 to $249. You’d also want to register for the AIC (Association of International Champions) show, Thursday night for $35. The main convention hotel – Westin Pittsburgh - is rather pricey, but two men pr room for three nights in a cheaper hotel might be around $200 a piece. Total = $450.

“What’s Up, Jack Teuber?”
Jack, our five-year-long president, leads a busy life. Seems like he and Mary are always on the move. That’s because they have two grandchildren in Boston, two in Chicago, and two in Japan. Three of them are in performance (cross-country vocal musicians, national handball tournaments, and community drama productions) so Jack and Mary do weekend (or longer) getaways to view their performances.
“We traveled to Kyoto, Japan for the May 10th wedding of our son Dan and his lovely bride Eriko and visited with our grandsons, Kazuki and Tomoki. Almost all of our family was here in August including Eriko’s parents who enjoyed Michigan and also as trip to Niagara Falls. We all went to a Tiger game where Jack and his barbershop chorus sang the national anthem! Very special!”
As I talked to Jack, he was packing for another trip, to Chicago and Boston, to return January 3.
What do they do when they are at home? Much of their life centers on Christ the Redeemer Catholic Church in Lake Orion – helping in the soup kitchen, homeless shelter, food pantry, etc. Many hundreds of parishioners are involved in outreach. Their St Nicholas project includes a mixed-chorus singing tour on December 6. With his experience in the Big Chief Christmas program under his belt, Jack was in charge this year. (Other participating Big Chiefs included Jim Lawson, Jim Owens, Bob Brain, and Jim Jewell).
Jack and Mary’s health is good. Mary had a hip transplant three years ago, but can now walk three miles a day. Jack has had back problems, but an epidural shot eight months ago has given him relief. Long-distance biking continues for the two of them.
They have done Florida vacations in March and look forward to another this year at Cypress Lakes, a senior community of 1500 homes, which is just fifteen minutes from the Tigers spring training camp in Lakeland.
Other plans? “In May we take a Rhine River Cruise and visit our niece at the Ramstein Army Base in Germany. In June we have two nights in Stratford, Ontario for the theatre. In July we will attend The International Harmony Convention in Pittsburgh. In September, we plan
to participate in the Labor Day Mackinac Bridge walk for the 5th straight year.

**MEDIA**

Male monkeys' social bonds may ease everyday stress
(Maybe this is part of the appeal of barbershop.)

BY ASHLEY YEAGER, DECEMBER 10, 2014

Strong bonds among wild male Barbary macaques may help the monkeys combat stress.

Male bonding may help some monkeys fight the ill effects of everyday stress.

Usually when male primates live in groups with other males, the guys tend to fight over girls. But while studying wild Barbary macaques, scientists found that males with strong social ties to other males had lower stress hormones in their feces than males with weaker bonds. The results suggest that the stress-reducing benefit of friendship extends far beyond that seen among females and pair-living animals, the researchers report in the December 8, 2014 Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

**THE SINGING CRAFT**

Using Audacity to help learn your music.


Mike Frye discovered Shawn Cheek’s excellent videos on the Circle of Fifths (which is so central to the barbershop harmony).

Part 1 of 8: [http://youtu.be/pdF-uIeM33o](http://youtu.be/pdF-uIeM33o)

**Executive Board Minutes, November 20, Excerpts**

Members present: DeNio, Doig, Holm, Owens, Pioch and Teuber

Treasurer’s Report: Jim Owens reported a current balance of $12,306. The 70th Annual Show had a profit of $7,139, with 526 in attendance. The Show Program included 72 ads for a total of $8,110.

Roger Holm reported: INSTANT CLASSIC will be our Guest Quartet in 2015. John Cowlishaw is investigating having the Pioneer Youth Chorus directed by Aaron Pollard to perform as well.

“I’m Beginning To See the Light” and “What a Wonderful World” have been designated as Contest Songs.

The Bill Pascher Award winner was selected and will be announced in January. BSOY will be selected by Shew, Lynn and Doig. The Hallman Award will be discussed by the Music Committee.

Next board Meeting will be held on January 15, 2015.

Discussion of upcoming events included:

January 17—Leadership Training in Mt. Pleasant. (Owens, Pioch and Teuber expressed an interest in attending).

November 11—Veteran’s Day Recognition @ Great Lakes Cemetery (Jeff Doig will investigate this performance.)

Our 71st Show will be on Saturday, November 7. We need to have an Administrative Chairman. Our responsibilities for the Show need to be clearly defined. We were satisfied with our After-Glow at Heroes and anticipate a sold-out venue (After-Glow) with INSTANT CLASSIC appearing.

Submitted by Jack Teuber for Charley Perry

**Letter to the Editor**

John,

Thank you or sending the news of Sarah's funeral. We were sorry we could not attend. Big Chief is such a kind and caring group.

Thank you.

Eileen & Bob

**CALENDAR**

(With Performance Times; Warm-ups 30'- 45' earlier)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 6, T</td>
<td>7:00</td>
<td>BCC Practice, WOAC</td>
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<td>Jan 13, T</td>
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<td>BCC Practice, WOAC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 15, Th</td>
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<td>Exec Bd meeting</td>
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Jan 17, Sa  Leadership Academy, Mt Pleasant
Jan 20, T, 7:00  BCC Practice, WOAC
Jan 23, F  Uncle Sam Night, Knights of Columbus, 2401 Columbus
    Dr, Windsor, ON
Jan 27, T, 7:00  BCC Practice, WOAC
Feb 3, T, 7:00  BCC Practice, WOAC
Feb 13,14;F,Sa  Valentines deliveries
Mar 14, Sa  CROSSROADS at the Lansing Show
Apr 24-26  Pioneer District Convention, Battle Creek
May 8, F, 1:00  Elmhaven Mother’s Day
Jun 27, Sa, 3:00  Log Cabin Days, Waterford
Nov 7, Sa, 7:00  71st BCC Show

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP
Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)
Assistant Directors: Fred McFadyen, Mike Frye, & Bill Holmes
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: Jim Owens
Members at Large - Fred Pioch, Ray Sturdy, Jeff Doig, Walt DeNio
Chorus Manager: Open
Captain Sunshine: Bill Maxfield
Section Leaders: McFadyen, Stephenson, Cowlishaw, Moss
Music Team: Holm, Blue, Cowlishaw, Doig, Frye, McFadyen, Moss,
  Murray, Prueter, and Stephenson
Bulletin Editor: John Cowlishaw, (248-891-4498)