

ONLINE AT www.bigchiefchorus.org

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March 1, 2015

Deanna Downie



Gene Downie's wife of fifty years, Deanna, died Jan 30 after a lengthy illness.

The funeral was Tuesday, Feb 3 at Coats Funeral Home-Waterford. Bill Holmes spoke, Jack Teuber offered a prayer, and the Chorus sang "Abide With Me," and "Irish Parting Prayer" under Tom Blue's direction.

Gene and Deanna's three children (Scott, Brian, and Kristen Rose) also spoke, movingly and with some humor, about their mother, e.g. a sign on Deanna's wall, "Worry Works: I Know."

VALENTINES, 2015

4UR Pleasure, with Jim Owens



4 UR PLEASURE had four gigs, Friday morning, to 46 people, in Farmington, Troy, and Clawson. Jim Owens got his feet wet in gig-quartetting, subbing for the unavailable Gil Schreiner.

Bidin' Our Time

BOT had thirteen gigs to 283 people over the three-day period. They included restaurants, schools, hospitals, senior living centers, and individuals.

Limited Edition

LE had eight gigs to 244 people. Several gigs were particularly interesting.

It was a tearful response to "God Bless the USA" by the veterans at the American Legion in Wixom that Howard Lynn is involved in.

LE was hired by the Director of Body Language Yoga in Clawson to sing at the party that followed a "couples Valentines Yoga session." Needless to say, everyone was mellowed out.

The quartet picked up Chuck Murray's 10-yr-traditional gig at MacPhee's Restaurant in Ortonville, with many friends present.

And they sang at a private Valentines dance on the second floor of a private home in Clarkston. Couples danced as we sang.



4GVN

4GVN did us proud with their visit to MyFoxNews, Channel 2, Detroit, on Wednesday morning, February 4. They were on for almost 10 minutes, doing fine performances of “Heart of my Heart” and “Let Me Call You Sweetheart” to anchor Deena Centofanti. They also sang “Can You Feel the Love...” as the station went to commercial break.

They sang and talked with panache and self-assurance.

Congratulations to spokesman Greg for being very articulate, to Eric who answered the question about their most unusual gig (with a smiling face that would win any woman’s heart), to Greg for mentioning BHS and BCC and talking about the youth movement, for Bob’s strong lead, and Wayne for reaching those pearly high notes.



Their appearance generated a number of gigs. Wayne said, “Almost everyone we ran into in the last two days had seen us on TV!” Eric added, “I think 4GVN now officially holds the Big Chief record for the largest audience. The Tiger game was probably the largest audience before today. But we were told Fox 2 has 800,000 viewers.”

Special thanks to Al Monroe whose contacts got a recording of their performance to put on 4GVN’s Facebook page.

<http://tinyurl.com/pcm8jxx>

Of their other gigs, the most unusual one was in Southfield.

From Eric: “Our first gig of the day Friday was at a professional recording studio, K&R Productions. The owner, Ken Glaza, intended for us to sing for his girlfriend, but she had to leave town. How lucky for 4GVN because he decided to record us and send it to his girlfriend. He has quite the studio and gave us permission to use his work.

“When he ordered the Valentine, he had asked us to build a chord using “Bridget, Bridget” before singing “Let Me Call You Sweetheart.” Well, when we walked in, he said, “Could you make that a 7th chord?” How often has that happened?! And we did it.

“He had a recording of the original performance of the song by THE PEERLESS QUARTET from 1911 and then he synched our performance into a blend with the original! And the video was in front of a green screen where he post-edited the background.

“The result is on our Facebook page. Watch it! It’s cool! Our Fox 2 video is there, too.”

Here is Ken’s explanation- “Be My Valentine! This is a melding of the first recording of the song “Let Me Call You Sweetheart” in 1911 By Henry Burr and the PEERLESS QUARTET with 4GVN Quartet, who are part of the Pontiac/Waterford Big Chief Chorus. Charted at #1 in November 1911 it was written by Leo Friedman and Beth Slater Whitson. I did this at K&R Media Productions as a surprise for the person I love... Bridget!!”

Eric summed up 4GVN’s Valentine experience:

“What can we say? [Fox 2 was] our 15 minutes of fame (actually 7, but who cares). We may as well enjoy it while it lasts. When we show up to sing Valentines and almost everyone says “I saw you on TV,” or “I’m so glad YOU guys showed up,” it’s pretty neat.

“But soon it is even better to see that it is not about us but the recipients’ reaction and joy. I used to think that singing to the seniors at

Christmas was my favorite, but bringing joy and happiness at Valentines is hard to beat. So many people are overwhelmed by the thoughtfulness of their loved one. When someone's eyes well up and they remark that "I'm so surprised that he did this for me because we've been thru so much in the last three years," it is a good feeling to be a part of this happiness. Similar reactions were the norm this year.

"I appreciate the Big Chief Chorus, Tom Blue, and my quartet members."

(Details taken from Greg Moss's write-up)

From Director Tom Blue:

Men of the BCC,

Just a note to say thank you to all of you for your support of Gene Downie and his family. I continue to be impressed by your willingness to support one another in times of joy, sorrow, and need. Thanks, Bill Holmes, for officiating and your poetic use of words. (We teachers appreciate that - even if we need to correct the grammar to songs.)

Thanks also to all of the men who went with us to the Grosse Pointe Chapter "jug meeting." Neither cold nor even a winter weather advisory can keep us from singing in quartets. Thank you men for your support of quartet singing and chorus singing!

This week at school, I have really been emphasizing the breath and tone.

- Singing on the breath
- Lots of space between the teeth
- Tongue down
- Tall and round vowels...thinking ah, oh and oo

From Music VP, Roger Holm

It was a good time with our friends at Grosse Pointe (as well as friends from Rochester and DOC chapters), and we appreciated their hospitality - as well as the ice cream sundaes! Thanks Grosse Pointe!

And many thanks and a big round of applause to 4GVN too for representing us and Barbershop so well on Channel 2! Their promotion of our Singing Valentines program didn't hurt either!

AROUND THE PATCH

Bob Marshall

After spending a full month in Florida at The Villages, Bob and Eileen arrived home in Pontiac, and Bob walked into St. Joseph to receive a pacemaker. He spent one night in the hospital and was back at rehearsal Feb 10.

Jack Teuber will be in Florida, Feb 26 to Apr 2.

Freddie's Rep Review continues, including

No Business Like Show Business

Consider Yourself

Ain't Misbehavin'

Breakin' Up Is Hard To Do

Fred and Jeannette DeVries new email address is:

fajmdevries@windstream.net

Chapter 2015 Performances: 48 gigs to 801,011 people

MEMBERSHIP: (at 49)

Renewals: Eric Domke (8), John Cowlshaw (15)

Due in March: Tom Blackstone, Tom Blue, Jeff Doig, Mike Frye, Roger Holm, Bill Holmes, Dar Johnson, Bob Legato, Howard Lynn, Bob Marshall, Bill Maxfield, Dave Myre, Jim Owens, Fred Pioch, Duane Roy, Jeff Spires.

Overdue: Bill Auquier, Mike Doyle, Ted Prueter, Bob Stephenson
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)

Medical:

Ted Prueter – being treated for leukemia

Duane Roy – being treated for esophageal cancer

In Memoriam:

Mar 5, 2013, Austin Quinn, #98

District

Jug Night

An historical tradition in which Pioneer chapters gathered to quartet and raise money for SPEBSQSA competitors has been revived—Jug Night.

On Tuesday, January 27, the Monroe North Chapter invited D.O.C. to bring the Jug to Monroe North for a "Jug Night" party.

Then on Tuesday, February 3, Grosse Pointe had scheduled an old-fashioned quartet night, gang sing, ice cream social. And with support from D.O.C. it also became a Jug Night. D.O.C.'s Joe DeSantis announced that D.O.C. intended to get the Jug to as many chapters around the state as possible and thus sponsor these events, without the restrictive rules that contributed to the Jug's demise years ago. Basically, for any chapter that wants to sponsor an inter-chapter Jug Night and raise money for International competitors, D.O.C. will bring the Jug and collect and eventually distribute the funds. In order to challenge chapters to host Jug Nights and raise money, D.O.C. has pledged to match the first \$100 that any hosting chapter raises at its Jug Night. D.O.C. will also make sure each Chapter that assists in raising funds for the international qualifiers receives appropriate credit (and appreciation) for their donation.

Members from Pontiac-Waterford, D.O.C., and Rochester's Guardians of Harmony joined the Grosse Pointe members. The Big Chiefs bussed over from Waterford, all twenty-four of them. John Wade, Steve Pauling, and Art Schulte led the evening, which was heavy on quartet singing.

"In spite of crummy Michigan weather, the turnout was very good, I would guess around 60. It really helped that the Pontiac Waterford Chapter brought in a bus-load. D.O.C.'s Joe DeSantis brought the Jug and a nice contribution was made to help our District quartets get to International. I know that I really had a fun time . . . So which chapter will host the next one?" Dave Anderson, The Guardians of Harmony.

Ten photos from the Grosse Pte Jug/Ice Cream Party are on Google at:

<http://tinyurl.com/k5zgugd>

Troubadour

The February **Troubadour** is online at:

http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/Troubadour_Menu.htm

PIO District Convention

The web site for **registration** for the convention, and for the hotel is now available at:

http://pioneerdistrict.org/nextconvention/convention_info.htm

Deadline for early registration is March 28.

What's Up, Neil Braun?

Despite turning 90, Neil remains youthful in outlook and body. He does a 30-45 minute workout with weights each day. Wife Phyllis still ice-skates despite problems with macular degeneration.

He still works part-time. Last summer might be his last at Twin Lakes Country Club, north of Rochester, but he still works for his neighbor's SERVPRO office, where commercial cleaning and remediation is offered. Neil catalogs the movements of 600 gallon jugs used in the commercial cleaning operations, rugs, smoke, suicides, jelly smears, the gamut.

This winter he has had time to work around the house, for example, installing a weather block for his wife's gallery window.

In the chorus, he runs an informal lending library - books on WWII and aviation with Freddie and Ray, Air and Space with Howard and Zaven, Guns with Chuckles.

He and Phyllis live in Clarkston in the home they've owned since 1969. They have two daughters in Florida, and a son; four grandchildren, and one new great-grandchild.

MEDIA

Acappella How

[ACAPPELLA.HOW](http://acappella.how) debuted this week, and resources will eventually include many instructional videos and links from the barbershop world. Take a peek at the framework of what may prove another powerful teaching and outreach tool

A rich source of a cappella info by Deke Sharon

<http://acappella.how/>

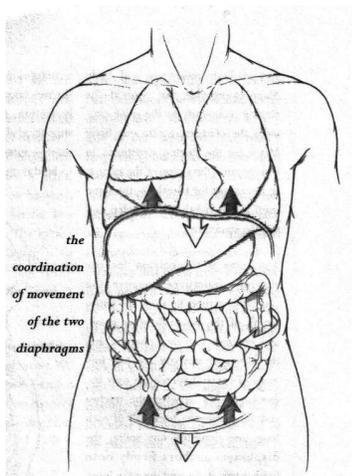
History

The African-American Roots of Barbershop was presented at MidWinter Convention by David Wright. <http://tinyurl.com/nvmaanv>

THE SINGING CRAFT - Breathing

With our recent interest on breath, Tom Blue forwards this: http://acda.org/files/choral_journals/April_2000_Sneed_B.pdf

The Second Diaphragm



We talk a lot about diaphragmatic breathing, but I only became aware of the “second diaphragm” from a book on breathing by Barbara Conable, loaned by Tom Blue.

The Pelvic Floor is the muscle group that lies between the pubic bone in front and the sacrum in back and between the sitting bones side to side. As the (upper) respiratory diaphragm contracts, it descends, pushing hard on all the viscera that lie between the diaphragm and the pelvic floor. That’s why our bellies extend as we take that deep, low breath. But the enlarging belly also pushes downward against the pelvic floor, creating more space as it presses that floor downward.

In the illustration, the white arrows show the descent of the two diaphragms during the in-breath, and the black arrows show the rising of those diaphragms during the outbreath, singing.

But there is this difference. The top (respiratory) diaphragm descends because it is being **contracted**. The bottom diaphragm will only descend if it is **relaxed**; both will spring back to neutral during exhalation.

You might have heard of Kegel exercises that are used to strengthen the pelvic diaphragm which helps improve bladder control and possibly improves sexual performance. <http://tinyurl.com/mejm4na> Try contracting that pelvic floor while taking an in-breath. You can’t breathe in as much air, nor exhale smoothly. Now sense the contrast if you relax that floor while breathing in. When a coach say that a good singing exhalation feels like emptying your bowels, it involves that relaxed pelvic floor.

Letter to the Editor

From Anthony Hoff:

I love you guys but I really don't have time in my life to come out on Tuesday nights at the moment. I am sure I will join another barbershop choir later in my life and perhaps a quartet.

Anthony

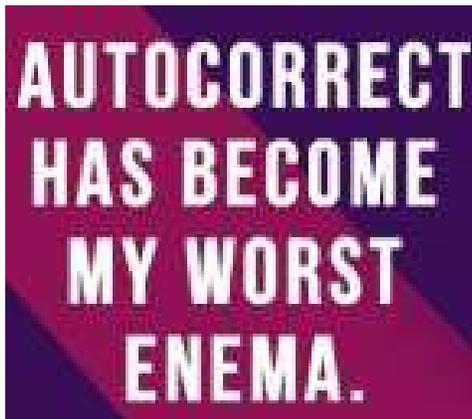
CALENDAR, (With Performance Times; Warm-ups 30’- 45’ earlier)

Feb 24, T, 7:00	BCC Practice, WOAC
Mar 3, T, 7:00	BCC Practice, WOAC
Mar 10, T, 7:00	BCC Practice, WOAC
Mar 14, Sa, 7:00	Crossroads at the Lansing Show
Mar 17, T, 7:00	St Pats Gig, Canterbury-On-The-Lake
Mar 24, T, 7:00	BCC Practice, WOAC
Mar 28	Early Registration Deadline, PIO Convention
Mar 31, T, 7:00	BCC Practice, WOAC
Apr 7, T, 7:00	BCC Practice, WOAC
Apr 24-26	Pioneer District Convention, Battle Creek
May 8, F, 1:00	Elmhaven Manor, Mother’s Day
2:30	Lockwood of Waterford
May 30, Sa	Great Lakes Harmony Brigade show, Okemos
Jun 23, T,	Flint’s Dead Creek Picnic (Bus at 5:30)
Jun 27, Sa, 3:00	Log Cabin Days, Waterford
Jul 1-5	BHS International, Pittsburgh

Jul 26 – Aug 2 Harmony University, Belmont Univ. Nashville, TN
Nov 7, Sa, 7:00 71st BCC Show “BCC Does the Grammys”

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)
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President: Jack Teuber (248-334-3686)
Past President: Doc Mann (248-628-0189)
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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, Cowlshaw, Moss
Music Team: Holm, Blue, Cowlshaw, Doig, Frye, McFadyen, Moss,
Murray, Prueter, Stephenson, Mazzara
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