St Patrick’s Eve Performance at Canterbury on the Lake – Thursday, March 16.

The chorus members gathered in the warm-up room, where they were treated to fresh popcorn and home-made chocolate covered giant peanuts, drizzled with green chocolate on the top. Pitchers of cold, ice water were made available by Canterbury. 6:30 p.m. came quickly, and the chorus rushed to assume their places in the chapel.

Tom Blue was energetic, and demanding, as he directed the chorus, with Emma's help!

The result was singing which was appreciated by the audience, as evidenced by their faces, and some mouths moving to the words!

There were two step-out quartets. One was 4GVN, who sang "What a Wonderful World", from the heart! Their Lead, Bob Greenwood, "put it out there," with his heart in his hand! The other quartet included Freddie McFadyen singing Irish Tenor, Jeff Doig singing the Lead, Charley Perry as the Bass, and Ray Sturdy as Baritone. They sang "An Irish Lullaby," the ACOUSTIX arrangement, with Charlie hitting those "Low Notes" on the words "...haunts me."

The BCC moved to the main commons area, just inside the front door, for some serious snacking and beer drinking and more singing! I had the privilege to sing in a pickup quartet. At Baritone was Ray Sturdy, (who will be heading down to Columbus, OH, with his quartet for coaching this weekend, and will have to miss the Big Chief Chicks' Breakfast at Fino's, tomorrow mornin'.) We sang the Billy Joel song, "For the Longest Time," and a song from Walt Disney's Toy Story, "I Will Go Sailing No More," with Austin Suthers as the Lead, and Pat Hefner as the Tenor. A pint o' Guinness washed down the laughter, as one old gal was very thoughtful, and donated a sparkling, green Irish party hat to Chuckles, to "cover his bald head"!

Another resident, by the name of "Mary Lou" expressed her dismay that the chorus had not sung her song, "Hello Mary Lou". (She was visibly upset!) (Maybe next year!)

Chordially,

CHUCK MURRAY

... The building and chapel were decorated in green with balloons, snacks and beverages everywhere. The hosts welcomed former employee Howard Lynn and the rest of the chorus with open arms. An appreciative audience listened to the ten songs from the chorus. In addition two quartets, 4GVN (Hefner, Greenwood, Moss and Domke) and BIDIN’ THIS EDITION (McFadyen, Doig, Perry, and Sturdy) sang.

Twenty-eight men represented the Chorus and a few additional quartets entertained at the After-Glow.

Jack Teuber
Len Barnes’ sister, Kathleen Waldrop, died March 4, at the age of 93, at home, in Waterford. A Celebration of Kathy’s Life was held Saturday, March 11, 2017, at First General Baptist Church, Waterford.

Bill Maxfield was at the Sydney, Australia Opera House, around March 5, as they performed La Traviata. Thru the wonders of electronica, we can hear what Bill heard, at https://tinyurl.com/ztj7x42

Doc Dave Stone’s sister, Marilyn Wollenweber, is making a donation in his memory.

Peggy McVea sent a nice thank you note to Roger Holm for sending her Dad’s “Barbershopper of the Month” award (from last July). She is going to frame it.

Bob Wallace is finally (after five years, he adds) engaged to Louise Roth!

When Eric Domke’s power went out the evening of March 8, he went downstairs to power up his generator and discovered his whole-house surge suppressor had caught fire and threatened to burn his house down. Somehow, Eric was able to extinguish it. Jim Owens helped with the necessary rewiring.

Our long-time source of performance uniforms, Harwood’s Tuxedo, is going out of business.

Jeff Doig traveled to the wetlands of Redding, CA Sunday, March 19, to wrap up his brother John’s estate; John died exactly a year ago.

Greg Moss is traveling to Iceland in May.

Avoiding Chest Breathing

Pat Hefner, Fred Pioch, and Jon Knapp practicing abdominal breathing (in Jon’s church) (from Chuck Murray)

This year’s Musical Theater at Rochester Adams High School is James and the Giant Peach, a musical adaptation of the beloved children's novel by Roald Dahl, and featuring songs by the award-winning songwriters of 'La La Land' - playing thru March 24,25. (F, Sa, 7:30)

From Director Tom:

Men and Friends of the BCC,
Some very good singing last Thursday and I appreciate it very much and so did all of those in attendance from Canterbury.
Thanks also for your good attendance of late; we do miss you when you are not with us though. It is very encouraging to see our quarteting and tag-time continuing. Let’s keep encouraging one another to continue that part of our rehearsal schedule.

* Hope to see some of you at the James and the Giant Peach performance, the kids are doing really well.
**I would like to encourage as many as is possible to attend contest and for us it is an opportunity to be evaluated and to show the other chapters in the Pioneer District that Pontiac-Waterford is alive and well. I would like to have between 25-30 men on the risers. There are some important voices that we need to have represent us. If you need to be seated for contest, then let us know so that we can plan.

If we can get all the way through “New York, New York” and “There’ll Be No New Tunes” this week, we could then begin to start a couple of our other new selections as well, so that our summer can be spent enjoying our new songs and our repertoire favorites.

During the second part of rehearsal, I would like to work on “Aura Lee” and “Cabaret,” our contest pieces! Let's work on the breath management of each piece. We need to engage our physical self. We added a couple of simple moves for the Aura Lee last week, thanks to Freddy! We need to review our “moves” for Cabaret. This one has a bit more and so our singing needs to be really confident so that the movement doesn't take away our voices but the movement adds energy to our singing!

See you ALL at our usual place of the Waterford Oaks Activities Center and maybe some new faces will again join us!

*March Madness is here. We need to keep our focus for a quality performance and singing at contest.
*Thanks to everyone for all you do to support the BCC.

### Quartets

**4 GVN**

4 GVN did two performances for St. Patrick’s Day. The first was on the 16th at Colombiere Center outside of Clarkston. Colombiere is a retirement facility for Jesuit priests and brothers. It was an hour program that included good interaction with the audience – all men, of course, except for the staff.

Afterwards, we stopped at a house on Walton Blvd for about a dozen seniors, one of whom is a friend of Pat Hefner. We did a few, much appreciated songs; then we had to head out for the chorus gig at Canterbury On The Lake.

Then, on the 17th we did the American House Elmwood in Rochester Hills. It’s the site of the Elmwood Elementary School. They had scheduled another of our quartets for Christmas, but medical problems kept that quartet from performing; so we stepped in for the rescheduling on Green Beer Day. This group was mostly women (who really appreciated the love songs!) with a handful of men. When we start “Aura Lee,” we ask people to raise their hand as soon as they know the song and who performed it (we start with the “Aura Lee” introduction and then skip to “Love Me Tender”). One man starts pointing to himself and then to his wife, who was next to him. He had sung this to her! – though not for a while. But he is proof that Elvis is alive and well and living in Rochester Hills!


Greg
Limited Edition
...will visit Tom Blue’s classes at Adams High School and Van Hoosen Middle School on April 11, in promotion of National Barbershop Quartet Day.

Chapter 2017 Performances: 21 gigs to 909 auditors (Thru Mar 22)

MEMBERSHIP: (at 51)
New: Jon Knapp. Welcome, Jon!
Renewals: Dar Johnson (11), Jim Owens (17), Jeff Spires (17), Bill Auquier (17), Gene Downie (19), Jeff Doig (24), Bob Marshall (26), Mike Frye (29), Roger Holm (29), Howard Lynn (40)

Due by Convention, April 24:
  Bachmann       Holmes
  Blackstone     Legato
  Carinci        Myre
  Hefner         Pioch

Apr Birthdays: Jeff Spires (16th)

In Memoriam: None in April

Pioneer District’s Second Service Project.
The 2017 Spring Convention will be the district’s second opportunity to participate in a service project, under the direction of Roger Boyer – Board Member at Large.
  Last fall in Kalamazoo, we provided 93 backpacks to the Kalamazoo’s YWCA Domestic Assault program.
  In Traverse City, the contributions will be to Jubilee House. The mission of Jubilee House is to provide assistance with daily living needs and support, which promotes the dignity and respect of the homeless, marginally employed and low income citizens in the greater Grand Traverse area.
  Details available on Pionet.
  https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/PioNet/info

Bill Grumbley, Tenor Extraordinaire, passed away February 22, 2017 in Bay City, Michigan. He started singing barbershop 71 years ago! He sang with quartets that have been Champions and near Champions. Four of his most celebrated quartets were THE SOLITAIRES, DELTA AIRES, ORIGINAL CHOICE and for over twenty years, the comedy quartet SMOKEY AND THE BANDITS.
  He ate, drank, and breathed barbershop, and he received two awards for recruiting excellence, with a lifetime total of 27 Men of Note awards. (From Ralph Brown’s letter)
Power Play

We have home-town pride in POWER PLAY. You can watch their rare 2016 AIC performance at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXbY8rmaYjM

Jack Slamka

Jack Slamka, bass of POWER PLAY, is going for Gold again. THE GULF COASTERS is a Southwest Florida barbershop quartet that formed last November. Jack, 66, Tim McShane, 61, and Rod Johnson, 73, have already won international gold medals. Bart Plescia, 83, is still hoping for his first. They will perform Thursday, March 27 in East Naples, as they prepare for the Sunshine District Seniors competition in Orlando, Oct 10-12 and the chance to compete in the International Midwinter Convention in New Orleans, next January.
(From the Neapolitan, Naples)

Great Lakes Harmony Brigade

The dates are May 19-21 with our show on Saturday night at the Okemos Conference Center. The guest quartets will include THE REEN FAMILY SINGERS/QUARTET.
Yours in XQ, Mike O’Donnell
http://www.harmonybrigade.org/glhb/

The Last Voyageur

The Northland Barbershop Chorus of the Sault, Ontario Chapter continues its tradition of imaginative scripts and big name guests.
Its 53rd Annual Show is entitled “THE LAST VOYAGEUR - All Fur Naught – A Barbershop Melodrama!” “Melodramas were traditionally performed with live orchestral or vocal music accompanying the action. They feature stock characters such as: the heroine, the hero and his sidekick, and the villain – a scheming, black-caped character who menaces the heroine whilst twirling his long moustache in evil glee. Despite dire circumstances, in the end, virtue always overcomes vice. The Northland Chorus has a tradition of presenting a melodrama every five years, having previously done so in 1997, 2002, 2007, and 2012. In 2017, the action is set at the ST. JOSEPH ISLAND TRADING POST, circa 1880.”

The 40+ man NORTHLAND CHORUS will present nine songs within the old-fashioned melodrama written jointly by chorus director BOB SHAMI and noted actor and director, HARRY HOUOT (who also handles stage direction). The standard melodrama characters are all present.

And what about that big-name guest quartet? Merely FOREFRONT, our new world champion.
Show date is Saturday, April 8, 2017 at the Kiwanis Community Theatre Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. Show info can be found at: http://www.northlandchorus.com/annual-show.html

Bush League

“Just received the word from Traverse City President Jess Kuznicki that the Bellaire High School Auditorium is set for the 71st Bush League contest and show . . . The Date will be August 11th and 12th . . . we are working on Shanty Creek Lodge for Headquarters Hotel.”

International


HARMONY UNIVERSITY - July 23-30, Nashville, TN

MIDWINTER – January 16-21, Orange County, CA

MEDIA

Animals sounds – are they singing?
Listen to a survey of sounds from birds to whales to fruit flies to fish. [https://tinyurl.com/jhmqnh](https://tinyurl.com/jhmqnh)

**The Roots of Human Musicality**

How did the capacity to process and produce music evolve in humans? If this question interests you, check out a March 1 article by Catherine Offord in *The Scientist*. [https://tinyurl.com/zorua2w](https://tinyurl.com/zorua2w)

**Valentines reprise**

What a beautiful venue for Zero 8, the Swedish BBS chorus, as they sing “When I Fall in Love,” a Brigade song from few years ago, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR9b8r0YG7o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rR9b8r0YG7o)

**Barbershop and Baseball**

A ‘shopper from Mesa AZ, Bob Shaffer, loves both barbershop and baseball so much that he has started a fantasy baseball league called the Barbershop Harmony League.

“We play this game on ESPN.com, and a link to get started at is [http://www.espn.com/fantasy/baseball/](http://www.espn.com/fantasy/baseball/). Once you are there, look to the upper right of your screen where it says to “Play ESPN Fantasy Baseball”, and click on the red "Draft a Team Later" button. In the search box, start typing "barbershop" (you shouldn't have to go beyond typing barber, it's the only league with that combination of letters so far).”

**Barbershopping Hamilton**

In the July, 2016 *Smoke Signals*, I wrote that Hamilton was the newest Tony-award winner for best Broadway musical, and I pondered whether any of its mostly rap songs would be barbershopppable. Well, FOREFRONT has tried, ☺️, singing (or rapping) “The King George Medley.” [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kq7Wv_pRza8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kq7Wv_pRza8)

**Amusia**


Author Tim Falconer didn't take his congenital amusia lying down. With the help of neuroscientists and vocal coaches, he tried to teach himself to sing against all odds.

**Web Sites**

The BCC chorus website is [www.bigchiefchorus.org](http://www.bigchiefchorus.org)
The Pioneer district website is [http://pioneerdistrict.org](http://pioneerdistrict.org)
The BHS website is [http://www.barbershop.org](http://www.barbershop.org)
The BHS YouTube Channel is [https://www.youtube.com/user/BarbershopHarmony38](https://www.youtube.com/user/BarbershopHarmony38)

**SINGING, MUSIC, AND PERFORMANCE**

**Tombo Sticker, $1.33**

If you own a Tombo Pitchpipe, BHS now sells a sticker to show the keys’ sharps, flats in the normal BHS manner. Letters are large enough to see on stage for a quick find for your starting pitch. Sticker is notched to fit your Tombo perfectly.

**Singing for Snorers**

A 2000 research project conducted by Alise Ojay suggested that singing exercises can reduce snoring by toning lax muscles in the upper throat. Learn more at [http://www.singingforsnorers.com/](http://www.singingforsnorers.com/)

**Upcoming Local Events**

*James and the Giant Peach*, Rochester Adams H.S., Mar 24,25

*I Love a Piano*. (Irving Berlin music), MBT, Apr 19 - May 14, 2017
The Four Freshmen and The Hi-Lo's: Thinking outside the (Barber)Box.

The Four Freshmen and The Hi-Lo's were close-harmony vocal quartets. As our barbershop cousins, they have been inducted as honorary members into our Society.

The Four Freshmen was formed in 1948 by two brothers, Don and Ross Barbour, their cousin Bob Flanigan, and friend Hal Kratzsch. With a soaring true tenor in Bob Flanigan, the group began a sound that forever changed the way vocal jazz harmony was heard and performed, and which has endured with changing personnel for over six decades. That sound was modeled on the trombone section of Stan Kenton’s band; when they all met, Kenton was hooked and promoted their career.

The Four Freshmen is considered a vocal band because the singers accompany themselves on guitar, horns, bass, and drums, among other instrumental configurations.

Tenor Bob Flanigan was inducted into the Society’s Hall of Fame in 2003.

Almost from the start, Puerling was enchanted by group vocals. "I loved listening to The Four Freshmen and their harmony, but I didn't want to follow in their footsteps," he said. Early on they even entered S.P.E.B.S.Q.S.A. competition, finishing in the top ten in 1949, but soon decided their style was more the close harmony of many 1940s jazz vocal groups.

Puerling later formed another vocal group, The Singers Unlimited, a mixed quartet. This group gave a wide range for Puerling's arrangements, for the four singers multi-tracked as many as 16 voices.

Often going against the tidal wave of rock, The Hi-Lo's defended the belief that music of quality can survive in any idiom, decade after decade.

Steve Allen once remarked, "They're nothing less than the best vocal group of all time."

Gene Puerling, inducted into the Society’s Hall of Fame in 2004

Listen and compare:

Stan Kenton Orchestra
Here's That Rainy Day
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9vTagBRt7hg

Four Freshmen
It's a Blue World
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iggWvFgp3KE

Laura
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6n2BUZtD688

Mood Indigo
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OKGzHybGUh0

Hi-Lo's
My Sugar is So Refined
**Membership growth: Excerpts from suggestions on PioNet.**

**Raleigh Bloch**
Ask the community (men & women) to join you, at practice, for just one song, to be sung on your annual show. If they come, they receive a ticket and will be brought on stage to perform.

**Ralph LeRoy**
Advertise your chorus practice date, time and location in your local newspaper. Take the time to meet the person in charge of this area.

**Wayne Oberstadt**
Have a "Barbershop Idol" or "Barbershop Voice" contest, where there is possibly a cash prize and perhaps a 1st year paid Society membership for the winner. "Non-Barbershoppers" could audition to sing the part of their choice with three others from a top-notch society quartet.

**Jason Hall**
One of the biggest successes we have had in Livingston is the purchase of jackets for the membership. We have locked in our "colors" with the burgundy and grey, our business cards reflect the same colors and we are now investigating spring jackets and other types of shirts we can offer in those "colors." Our brand, if you will.

**Raleigh Bloch**
Where are there singers? In church. How about singing in churches this summer when choirs are off...or in churches that don't have a choir.

**Michael Sobel**
Use your local media to your full advantage (most of which are HUNGRY for content!) – Local Television stations, Local radio, prepare a formal “Press Release” of events (Kalamazoo has at least five monthly magazines in the area.) An attached PDF Press Release will get far more attention (and look more professional) that simply putting the information into the text of an email.

**Steve Sutherland**
We have four new members in the last months. Three of them found us from our Web Site! Don’t give up on those.

**Dan Bezaire**
Anything that draws attention (jackets, advertising, etc.) And don’t ignore social media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) These are all good tools to get our product out in the public.

**Report from Big Chief Chorus-Southern Contingent:**

As our first stay in coastal Georgia comes to an end, I am reflecting on what I’ve learned here.

- It’s a wonderful place to be. Sure, that is partly because of the sunny warm weather (which will get too warm and humid in the summer, I know), but it is even more about the quality of life. Our lives have been filled with ecology, beaches, the arts, history, and wonderful people, all in an accessibly small region.
- The church choir at the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Coastal Georgia has partially filled the music hole for me. But
it has also made me appreciate more fully just how wonderful barbershop is - our attention to vowel matching, synchronization of attacks and releases, keeping pitch from going south, but especially just plain singing the right notes. This small church choir will miss what I have been able to bring to it from my barbershop experience. 

Looking forward to arriving home in time for the April 4th rehearsal and preparation for Traverse City.

Republicans at Sea Island

If you watched the news over the weekend of March 10-12, you might have seen several stories originating from Brunswick, Georgia. Well, the location was actually the Cloister Hotel on private Sea Island, just eight miles east of us, where the American Enterprise Institute holds an annual World Forum. (In 2004, the G8 Summit of world leaders was also held there.)

The AEI forums are so secret that in 2015, Bloomberg News joked that “no one would even say whether it had snowed.” Last year, billionaires, tech CEOs and top Republican politicians gathered there with a central concern of how to stop Donald Trump’s candidacy. This year, the meeting was purported to be about how to support the new American Health Care proposal. Word I heard, was that the “W” was one of the attendees. But details are pretty well hidden. Federal Aviation Administration records available on FlightAware.com show that a fleet of private jets flew into and out of two small airports near Sea Island. Fifty-four planes flew out of the airport on St. Simons Island, Georgia, on Sunday — nearly four times as many as departed from the airport the previous Sunday.

CALENDAR

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

Mar 28, T, 7:00 Chorus rehearsal, WOAC
Apr 4, T, 7:00 Chorus rehearsal, WOAC
Apr 11, T, 7:00 Chorus rehearsal, WOAC
Apr 18, T, 7:00 Chorus rehearsal, WOAC
Apr 22, Sa Pio Dist. Spring Convention, Traverse City, Class A
Apr 25, T, 7:00 Chorus rehearsal, WOAC
May 2, T, 7:00 Chorus rehearsal, WOAC
May 12, F, 2:00 Mother’s Day Celebration, Elmhaven Manor. Summer Class C
May 20, Sa eve Great Lakes Harmony Brigade Show, Okemos
Jun 16, F, 12:00 Auburn Hills Senior Center, Summer Class C
Jun 20, T, 5:30 Bus leaves for Frankenmuth Dead Creek Picnic. Short sleeve yellow polo and pants/shorts
Jun 24, Sa, 3:00 Log Cabin Days (Warm-Up 2:00) Summer Class C
Jul 2-8 International, Las Vegas, NV
Jul 23-30 Harmony University, Nashville, TN
Aug 11,12 Bush League, Bellaire, MI

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP

Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)
Assistant Directors: Fred McFadyen, Mike Frye
President: Eric Domke (248-674-2323)
Past President: Jack Teuber (248-334-3686)
VP: Chapter Dev: Walt DeNio (248-922-9090)
VP: Music and Performance: Zach Schroeder (248-929-1285)
VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber (248-334-3686)
Secretary: Charlie Perry (248-880-9356)
Treasurer: Jim Owens (248-682-4311)
Members at Large - Pat Hefner, Fred Pioch, Ray Sturdy, Austin Suthers
Chorus Manager: Gene Downie (248-682-9321)
Captain Sunshine: Bill Maxfield (248-698-1393)
Chorus Librarian: Roger Holm (248-623-7452)
Section Leaders: McFadyen, Doig, Cowlishaw/Sturdy, Moss
Music Team: Schroeder, Blue, Frye, McFadyen, Doig, Cowlishaw, Moss, Mazzara
Bulletin Editor: John Cowlishaw, (248-891-4498)
Endgame

From David Wright’s Harmony University course on the history of barbershop, “the reports of whose death were greatly exaggerated,” ala Mark Twain. (Notice the date, 1900, 38 years before “Tulsa.”)

“A noticeable advancement along the lines of the profession is the passing of the barber shop quartette with its barber shop harmony. It doesn’t take much of an effort of memory to recall when all quartettes sang their own self-made harmonies, with their oft-recurring ‘minors,’ diminished sevenths and other embellishments. This barber shop harmony, although pleasing to the average ear, and not altogether displeasing to the cultivated ear, is nothing more or less than a musical slang. It violates—at times ruthlessly—the exacting rules and properties of music. All forms, phrases and progressions of music go down before it. What does [sic] the barber shop exponents of harmony care for such delicacies as the forbidden progressions of perfect fifths and octaves? What do they care about chord progression in its correct form? Their chief aim is to so twist and distort a melody that it can be expressed in so-called ‘minors’ and diminished chords. The melody is literally made to fit their small stock of slang chords, instead of the chords being built around the melody.”

~ Tom the Tuttler, 1900

Being a musician isn’t about perfection. It’s about PASSION.
People don’t go to shows to hear a perfect performance. They go to FEEL something.