Chapter Executive Board

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VP, Chapter Development: Walt DeNio
VP, Music and Performance: John Smith
Secretary: Bill Holmes
Treasurer: Dick Johnson
Member at Large: Jeff Spires

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Service(Charity): Bruce Brede
Singing Valentine: Bob Marshall
Chorus Manager: Jeff Spires
Music Librarian: Roger Holm
Uniforms Manager: Bill Auquier
Sunshine(Chaplain): Don Denoyer
Bulletin Editor: John Cowlishaw

Calendar
Sep 18, 25, Oct 2,9. Next Chorus practices
Sep 28-30 Bush League, Gaylord
Oct 2 & 16 Next Linda Liddicoat coachings
Oct 11 Board Meeting
Oct 19-21 Fall District Convention, Battle Creek
Oct Election of 2002 officers
Nov 3 Fall show “Fortune in Dreams”
Nov 6 Christmas singout season begins
Dec 1-2 COTS for officers
Jan 20-27,’02 MidWinter Convention, Riverside, CA
Jun 30-Jul 7, ’02 International Convention, Portland, OR

Membership:
Ill: Bob Woodward is on chemotherapy after discovery of a suspicious spot on his lung.
   Mel Parrish’s wife has been moved to a nursing home.
   Pete Berton’s grandmother passed away.
   (Don Denoyer expresses all of our concerns and prayers by sending cards on behalf of the Chorus.)
Barbershopper of the month (August) Mel Parrish for his marketing efforts leading to an article in the Oakland Press

At this time of such overwhelming national and human tragedy, I have found it hard to keep singing. Yet it is important to keep singing, to use our voices to affirm the values we believe in: joy, melody, camaraderie, trust, harmonious interaction. Manhattan Barbershoppers are able to help in more direct ways. At this distance we can do our part by singing. Furthermore, our hearts go out to those who were directly affected. In a world where only “six degrees of separation” lie between us and the most remote villager, there are surely members of our chorus who have friends and relatives who have died or been injured.

This Big Chief chapter Bulletin now has an appropriate name, Smoke Signals, thanks to Jerry Twomey.

Be sure to mark your calendars and talk up our Fall show, November 3, at 8 pm, at Central United Methodist Church, Waterford, MI. Our theme is “Fortune in Dreams.” Guest quartets will be Philatoga Township & the SilverDomes. And of course we will be re-creating our hockey “shtick,” last presented at Battle Creek. Will Fast Freddie hire John-Paul for the Canadian Zed Wings?
Show chairman Pete Mazzara reminds us, budgetarily: same number of seats + increased expenses → ads must increase!
Face-Off at Battle Creek! The Big Chief Chorus as it prepared to sing its hockey routine.

As we prepare for the show, here’s a checklist for personal use:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Know the notes</th>
<th>Off the paper</th>
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<tr>
<td>If There’s Anybody Here</td>
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<td>It Had To Be You</td>
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<td>Fortune in Dreams</td>
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<td>Ain’t Misbehavin’</td>
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<td>O Canada/’Hi Stickin’ Medley</td>
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<td>Mistakes</td>
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<td>This Little Light of Mine</td>
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<td>Last Dream Left in the World</td>
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<td>Fun in Just One Lifetime</td>
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<td>Keep the Whole World Singing</td>
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**Smitty’s Kraft Korner**

Mistakes (And I don’t mean “the Song”)

The importance of knowing your part, whether singing in a chorus or quartet cannot be overstressed. The result of everyone’s efforts can be compromised by “ONE LITTLE MISTAKE”. First, let’s define a mistake. One common mistake is “not singing a note you are unsure of”. This results in an unbalanced chord and may convince the person next to you, who is suddenly singing a note all by himself that he may be wrong. Next time through he may try a different note. A similar mistake is not being sure of the note or word, so you mumble, or get close and tune in. The most difficult mistake to find and correct is caused by the boondoggler; he creates unbalanced chords and thinks he is on the right note. The best mistake to make is to really nail a bad one. This is easy to find and correct. So when in doubt, sing the note like you are sure of it and if it’s wrong we can get it corrected before you have formed any bad habits.

Now let’s talk about “how close is close enough?” If you take an average song with a couple hundred notes and you only miss one, that doesn’t seem bad; you were right 99.5% of the time. Now take an average chorus performance of 8 songs with 40 members and everyone right 99.5% of the time, look at the possibilities – “320 mistakes” in one performance.

So it’s very important that you know all the notes and words that are the basics of a song. Without 100% notes and words no song has a chance of sounding great and giving both you and the audience a thrill.

Enough said about mistakes. The chorus is growing, we have some new members and some old ones returning. We are having fun, sounding good, and thanks to our guest coaches are learning ways to improve our appearance and sound on stage. We now need to keep things rolling.

**Interview with Bill Pascher, by John Cowlishaw, July 18, 2001**

Bill Pascher is our most senior member, having co-founded the chapter in 1943. Our conversation continues:

JC Let’s turn to the Pontiac chapter. Did it average around 20 to 30 members? I know it hit a low point 4 years ago.

BP Well, we bounced off that low point several times. But the apex was while we were meeting on east side of Wayne St between Huron and Pike, on the 3rd floor rooms. Our membership rose to 120. It was an oddity. A guy would brag that he belonged to barbershoppers, and he’d pull out a card, cuz it only cost him a buck or maybe two. Everybody wanted to have a card.

JC Oh, I see, but not so many would come to practice?

BP Not 120.

JC So it was real easy to join it then.

BP This was at the very earliest meeting halls. In the middle ‘40’s.

JC At the Club Rio?

BP We never met in the Club Rio. There were a lot more halls for rent then, than there is now. Quite a few different places.

JC When did the Pontiac chapter become the Pontiac-Waterford chapter?
BP That vote came as a result of the agitation on the part of several non-city members after the Colored trouble we had, you know, in Pontiac. Guys were turning off about having any connection with Pontiac. I even worked with guys like that – Never going down to Pontiac again. At that time, the whole south end was practically empty, before the rise of redevelopment. I lived on the corner of Jesse and Chandler in Pontiac for many years.

JC I moved to Pontiac in ’68 and the riot was in ’70. So that’s when the name changed?

BP No, no, it was after we were already meeting at the Crary School. I made quite an emotional appeal, from a personal standpoint, being a charter member, to not discard the Pontiac name from the title. You may have noticed that the last few times that we’ve met with other chapters, all the references to us older members are to Pontiac; nobody used the word Waterford.

JC You met at all different places in Pontiac, and then eventually out to Waterford Crary?

BP Yes, from basements to attics. Hallman Drugstore, on the corner of Perry and Pike, had a meeting room below their drugstore, which was our locale for a long time. I’m thinking of names like Otis Spiker, who was an uncle of mine, and his buddy. They were operating a kitchen in the Hallman basement, Hallman Hall I guess they called it. Hallman was one of our members, a Music Man. I think he originated the Music Man trophy, of which I was one of the beneficiaries later on. He was most knowledgeable in four parts, and he would stop, in the middle of the music, and say, you’re supposed to be here, on this note. He was a baritone. He was always criticizing me, critiquing me, and others.

JC What programs? Talk about our history of programs. I know you’ve done a lot of the covers.

BP For each of those covers there was a show. We’ve had continuous annual shows; we’ve never had a break.

JC So there’s been a show every year since ’44?

BP Yup, in fact in ’44 we had two shows. Spring and Fall.

JC Were those ’44 shows related to the War?

BP Only from the standpoint that the singers, the performers, might be in military dress, but not the theme.

JC How did you escape the draft?

BP Well, I was lucky two or three different times, I guess. The first time I was just on the top edge of the draft, the second time I was working on a military contract.

JC The second time being Korea?

BP I don’t remember. At any event, I was never called.

JC Any memories about the early shows?

BP At that time we had a member Clinton Sanborn (nicknamed, “Chase”). Well, I had a hard time getting Chase interested in barbershopping. He was working at GM, in Material Control, I think, or Finance. He was a bass, and he just loved to get into a quartet where bass was dominant. He hobnobbed more so than I with the entertainment segment in barbershopping and shows. He went to many more shows than I did, across the state and so forth. But it prepared him for choices on quartets when it came time to make up an invitation list. They would choose top-notch. I think as a consequence our shows were much higher caliber than they are today. And we appealed more to other barbershoppers. I don’t know as how it affected our nonbarbershopper audiences much, but they wouldn’t know “Buffalo Bills” except from “Music Man,” but that’s the type of thing I’m talking about. Since he’s gone, other things have changed. The cost of top quartets. The quartet from Louisville, they were all young, in fact their mother came as a chaperone, we had to pay her way. That whole program cost us $1500. In those days that was a chunk.

JC Were Buffalo Bills here?

BP Yes, and the Schmitt brothers. The Buffalo Bills won in Omaha, no they did not. No, the Schmitt Brothers won in Toledo; that was in 1951. And we always had auditoriums that would seat near a thousand.

JC What auditoriums would you use?

BP The high school auditorium was only 900, I think. But we’d always try to find one that’d seat a thousand.

JC You mean places that have been razed?

BP Right. Or school rules changed to the point where the screws tightened. Made it harder and harder to handle it.

JC The Central Methodist Church is not a very good facility for us.

BP No, it isn’t. I’m very disappointed in that.

JC How long have we used it?

BP Four or five years, I think. I don’t think I was impressed enough with it to go myself the first year.

JC Are you designing this year’s cover?

BP Not yet. Probably no talk of it until the quartet is decided. But it’s not much of a job, not a burden. Right now, I’m very concerned about the Sage Lake weekend in September. I always make the background for the Sage Lake show.

JC Have you attended Harmony College?

BP Oh, yah, the first one and several since.

JC Tell me about the directorship of our chapter.

BP For years we subsisted without a chorus, that was a no-no in Pontiac. They all preferred quartetting. So it was a hard time getting a chorus started. But it soon developed, naturally, there wasn’t enough guys singing,
without a chorus. I think it was John Beaudin that got the first chorus together. For a few months, or maybe a couple years, he was the director. And that fell into the hands of Rawley Hallman. Rawley conducted for several years. Then Hallman moved out of town, I think to Florida, near Sebring. Whatever chorus we may have had was just unorganized. I don’t remember what year I picked it up, but I directed the chorus for 11 years. And then turned it over to (Dick) Johnson, who turned it over to Chris.

JC How long did Dick have it?
BP For two years, not as long as I had it, but he found the same problems.

JC What were they?
BP We still have them to a certain extent. Attention in rehearsals. There’s too much confusion. I’m talking about the chorus members, not the director. Chris has got more damn patience than I’ve got. That was one thing that drove me wild, was the lack of attention, having to do the same thing over and over. Then dedication. A guy’d come for one meeting, then he’d be gone for the next. Well, when he comes back, then you’ve gotta give him his part and that section is handicapped, that he isn’t up to date. And that slows the whole process down. The only guy that’s on top of every section and every bit of advancement is the Director. So the burden is falling on him always. I try not to speak up when he’s got the floor, and that’s all the time. It’s even hard to get a word in edgewise, as close as I am to him.

(Next month: O.C. Cash and the growth of Barbershop)

FROM AROUND THE PATCH

We’ve begun to see the fruit of work by Bill Auquier, Jim Owens, Jack Cavalier, and Jeff Spires, as promotional business cards with personalized photos are now being distributed.

And! Don’t forget the Big Chief Membership Contest, to run through Dec 31, 2001. First prize of $100 goes to the member sponsoring the highest number of new society members. Second Prize goes to the member sponsoring the highest number of guests. And a special Bonus Prize of two preferred-seating tickets to the 2002 international convention will be awarded to a member responsible for three new society members in that time period.

Have Tag; will Travel? (1) Our frequent guest, John Northey, related his experience at Harmony College. (2) Director Chris Miller was one of the enthusiastic attendees at the Buckeye Invitational, in Columbus, Ohio, Aug 17,18. (The Buckeye is for 2nd-place finishers, by invitation only, and includes female and mixed groups.) (3) And Jeff Spires and Chuck Barrett drove to Cincinnati Aug 16 to observe Cindy Hansen’s work with the Delta Kings Chorus. (She emphasized Focus; Body Energy; and Dynamics.)

Maintaining a long tradition, Sunnyside sang “Every Step of the Way” at member Dick Johnson’s son’s 25th wedding anniversary, August 17.

Over a hundred people turned out for Bob and Eileen Marshall’s 50th Wedding Anniversary party Aug. 18th, many of them being Barbershoppers or Sweet Adelines. At the next chorus rehearsal, Bob was fully dressed again.

The chapter held its annual summer picnic Saturday, August 25, hosted by Walt and Margareth Bachmann at their Clarkston home. Fourteen of us barbershoppers and our partners gathered, despite storm threats. Walt and Margareth’s exquisite workmanship includes: an entry room with a Jacuzzi and a spiral staircase, a kitchen with six-burner commercial-size gas stove with overhanging vent hood and inlaid tile counters, and rustic-Italian style broken tile floor. Added features were their own pond cum island, their unique African art collection, and Shelby, the untiring Frisbee-chasing German Shepherd. We
sat on their wooden patio, feasting on a table-full of potato salads, fruit and vegetable trays, deviled eggs, baked beans, cookies, and Margaret's pies and pastas. Bill Auquier donned the chef's apron to grill brats and Italian sausages. After our bellies were too full to allow a “complete breath”, we took to the “boards” to sing polecats and show tunes. Bruce Brede’s new quartet even did a “workout” with Chris. Jack Cavalier and John Cowlishaw looked for photo ops. As dusk fell, Walt lit half a dozen six-foot torches to light the yard and smoke out mosquitoes. Noticeably absent were Sunnyside quartet members John Smith, Len Barnes, Dick Johnson, and Roger Holm, who were probably still “lost” somewhere on the Walleye-filled rivers of northern Canada.

One of the nice things about socializing at a picnic is finding out new dimensions of members’ lives. For example, Bob Marshall talked about his participation earlier that day in the local Senior Olympics. Bob participated in nine Track and Field events, and medalled in eight. That brought forth from the DeNoyers, sitting across from Bob, the information that Don does daily 3-mile racewalking.

After several of us attended Singing Judge Ed Fritzen’s workshop on judging at Harmony Round-Up, Chris extended an invitation to Ed to visit our chorus September 4 to share with the whole group “how a chorus is judged in competition.” About 45 members and guests were present. Ed sings in Kalamazoo, but directs the Battle Creek chorus and was just re-certified as a judge this summer. He complimented us on our Web site (way to go, Yong!). Ed warmed us up with two reminders: sing from the balls of your feet, and sing with an airflow that would fog the mirror. Also, on high notes, sing down into the body. Then he gave his presentation on judging. Some notes jotted down by your editor: Consistency of judging? since 1993 an analysis of all scoring shows that 90% were within 10 pts of each other. Barbershop style? As a result of the Style Examination Committee report, two aspects of style are now recognized – Technical (Structural), and Artistic (Performance). Judging is in 3 categories: Music, Singing, and Presentation. Major triads and 7th chords are preferred because they “lock and ring” better. That’s a matter of physics (See Jim Richards’ “The Physics of Barbershop.”) Unlike diving competition, there is no reward for “degree of difficulty.” So sing to your strengths. Each judge uses a scale of A (81-100), B (61-80), C (41-60), and D (0-40). Benchmarks: 50 is a suggested minimum to represent Barbershop to the community. 76 is the minimum for a quartet to go to International. The average of all scores since 1993 (mostly district competitions since there are more of them) is 59. We concluded by viewing videotapes and comparing our evaluations with Ed’s. Then we sang one of our contest numbers for his critical appraisal. An informative evening!

Pilot John Cowlishaw and copilot Jeff Doig teamed up to fly John’s Piper Tomahawk to a 3rd place finish in the 45th Michigan S.M.A.L.L. Air Rally, on Saturday, Sept. 8. This race calls for precision in visual navigation, since all navigation instruments except the compass and speedometer are covered up. On a 230-mile course out of South Haven, their cumulative error at three checkpoints (Lakeview, Charlotte, and Watervliet) was 63 seconds. (The winners’ error was only 15 seconds!)

Harmony Way and Sunnyside sang at St. Perpetua’s festival Sept. 9 and, like last year, it rained cats and dogs and they finally had to quit and go inside the eating area.

Don Denoyer, writes: Our first annual Big Chief Golf Classic was held on September 11, 2001 at White Lake Oaks Golf Club. Ten of us played 9 holes of golf before being told of the crisis, so went home without having lunch. We had a beautiful day to play golf. The standings were: Two guys tied for 3rd place: Jeff Spires & Bill Neveau. Wally Plosky took second place. And the new Big Chief Golfer of the year is none other than tenor Don Denoyer. Don said as his crown was placed, “It took a tenor.”

The standard-wear Blue chapter shirts are now available at $24. (Some of those faded ones could even be replaced!)

New phone number for chorus directory: Irwin “Doc” Mann: 248-628-0189
Board Meeting Minutes
Chorus elections are in October. The Treasury balance is $4216.14. Pete Mazzara detailed show-committee responsibilities. Bruce Brede detailed an extensive Christmas singout schedule. Walt DeNio informed the Board that Dietrich Olds will sponsor us in a number of locations this year, including a special Nov 30 performance at Canterbury Village with Governor Engler and the Acoustix present. We may also sing at Somerset. Due to the larger number of possibilities, a committee of Brede, DeNio, Holm, and Spires is established with responsibility to establish the singout schedule. Section leaders are encouraged to appoint co-leaders who will be encouraged to get training/coaching to help improve chorus singing. In addition, President Gene is looking for people to fill three appointed positions: Historian, Music Librarian, and Chairman of Young Men in Harmony.

From around the Pioneer District and beyond

Other nearby performances:
Oct 27, 4:00 & 7:30 Rochester Annual Show “Through the Years” with “Freestyle” and “Rumors”
Nov 17 Sweet Adelines Show, “Stepping Out”

From 2002 Society President, Roger Lewis: “It might be fun to develop a Letterman type "Top Ten reasons to Sing," or "Top Ten Reasons to Sing Barbershop" list.” Could be used for humorous shtick in singouts!

From Fred Kienitz: “The Joe Barbershop Chorus for the fall convention will be singing "Teach the Children to Sing." The message is wonderful, but more important, it is vital that we make a concerted effort to keep this thought at the forefront in our barbershop functions. Each of us needs to keep this concept in mind so that our children and grandchildren have the same opportunity to "Keep The Whole World Singing" as we have had for the past 50-plus years.”

And finally, a little humor:
As I sing all my vowels with care,
This is my most fervent prayer,
“Dear Lord, help me blend
And right at the end
Please don’t let me run out of air!”

[David L. Labar]