Once again the quartets of Pontiac Waterford Big Chief Chorus played Big Chief Cupid, shooting romantic arrows into the hearts of local citizens, surprising, delighting, and educating. Four quartets took to the roads, singing 43 gigs to 650 people.

“Celebration Quartet started its two-day tour on Friday at 8:00 a.m. We were greeted by a warm, enthusiastic audience at Andersonville Elementary School. The breakfast event, attended by students, parents and teachers raised funds for cancer research. Later in the day Celebration sang at Oakland Schools and Birmingham Derby Middle School. The Derby Dragons’ Science teacher received a wedding anniversary valentine and was completely overwhelmed, with tears of joy. The quartet, wanting to lighten the moment, redirected attention to the students and sang the favorite, “Dragons, We Love You”. The students’ reception was great as was that of several staff members at the classroom door.

On Saturday morning, Celebration was on the road again. While enjoying lunch at Copperstones, we accepted an appointment from a couple in the next booth. We left the restaurant and sang to their mother who lived close by.

“We continued to Bass Pro Shop to deliver a birthday valentine at the credit department. After singing, we were approached by the manager to sing and pose with a bikini-clad model at a Boat Promotion. You can see our photo on the Bass-Pro website. Jack has the password.

“The highlight of the tour came at The Town Villages of Sterling Heights. Frank Bettendorf, a resident barbershopper from D.O.C. Chapter, welcomed us and sang several barbershop selections with us, including “Hi Neighbor” and “Keep the Whole World Singing”. The evening diners also applauded our efforts.

“Celebration concluded the tour by entertaining the Ortonville United Methodist Church’s Valentine Party at Pete’s Coney Island.

“The quartet included Bruce Brede (L), Bill Dabbs (Br), Greg Moss (Bs), Jack Teuber (T), and fifth-wheel Lance Shew.”

Submitted by: Jack Teuber (Photo by Lance Shew)

Waterford Crystal sang five gigs Friday. Mike Frye (T), Jim Claflin (L), John Cowlishaw (Br), and Zaven Melkonian (Bs), and Bill Holmes (5th wheel), sang to a theater arts middle school teacher, a Botsford Hospital nurse, a sweet Keego Harbor blind woman on her 92nd birthday, a clerk in a Wixom company, and an administrator among her senior citizens at Fountains of Franklin.

Katherine Martin on her 92nd birthday
(Photo by Bill Holmes)
NorthBound Sound, Terry Jamison (T), Joe Baldiga (L), Bob McCaffrey (Br), Chuck Murray (Bs), got a nice photostory in the Ortonville Citizen. They performed nine gigs for Valentines, concluding with a three hour stint at MacPhee’s Restaurant in Ortonville.

Photo from NorthBound Sound

B Natural (Fred McFadyen (T), Lyle Howard (L), Dick Johnson (Br), Roger Holm (Bs)) delivered eight Valentines. “Of the number of years of participating in our Valentine program this year’s is the most memorable for two of our presentations. First was delivering Jana and the girls’ Valentine to Tom at Rochester Adams High School, surprising him during the Chamber Choir class he teaches. Not only was he appreciative but he had his Chamber Choir entertain us. What a treat...what quality voices. We were equally entertained. Those 25 or so kids were good!! Oh - if the Big Chief Chorus could only sing like that! (Though, as Freddie commented, it’s truly amazing how much better the chorus is singing since in the Tom Blue era!) Second, we went to a Valentine party Friday night at 8 p.m. to sing for six couples in their 60’s or so. While we sang, the couples cuddled like they were newlyweds. It was truly an emotional and meaningful event for them.” Submitted by: Dick Johnson and Roger Holm

FROM OUR DIRECTOR

Men of the BCC.

Let’s do our best with regards to attendance as I have missed seeing and hearing some of you as of late. Our attendance has been down. I was getting used to hearing 45+ guys singing in harmony. I would like to encourage you to make a concerted effort to be at rehearsal.

Let’s continue to focus on those things that have improved our sound this past year. It continues to be the breath and the unification of our unit sound. I was especially noticing many of you starting to get involved in the “story-telling” with good facial expressions, slight but effective hand gestures and in general some physical movement. It livens up our performance and expresses to the audience that this is fun and we really enjoy it!

AROUND THE PATCH

The Oakland Press had good coverage of our Valentine program. “People looking for unusual ways to wish their beloved a happy Valentine’s Day may want to consider…The Big Chief Chorus will drive over to your sweetie and warble two Singing Valentines either Feb. 13 or 14 for $45. The package includes two love songs sung by a male barbershop quartet, a rose for the honoree and a photo of the event. Some of the songs on their list include “I Love You Truly” and “Heart of My Heart,” said Bill Aquier, (sic) a Clarkston resident who sings bass with the chorus.”

Next gig is Friday, March 13, at Waterford Oaks Activity Bldg, for the Oakland County Parks Employee Recognition Luncheon. Warm-up at 12:30, sing at 1:10, in yellow shirts and black pants.

IN VOICE Sweet Adeline quartet has agreed to appear on our November show. Emails are circulating about just what the name of our show will be, and whether we will have a second guest quartet.

Fred Pioch has agreed to operate the suggestion box, and also to serve as raffle assistant when Bob Legato can’t be present. Thanks, Fred.

Bob Greenwood has agreed to be our new chorus manager, thanks to Bob, and to the past service of Dave Myre.

Gil Schreiner’s email address is Gil.Schreiner@FairlaneTool.com

Stan Lawrence has rejoined our Lead section. He was a Big Chief long ago, and has recently been singing with the Lamplighters.

Bob Kleeman has an extensive past history with the North Country Chordsmen, with whom he performed on a trip to Ireland.

Terry Jamison is in the midst of a curriculum in robotic engineering.

The Waterford New Horizon Band will be performing Sunday, March 8, 3 pm, at Mason Middle School.

Lew Mahacek and John Cowlishaw crossed paths in Puerto Rico last month, two days after Bob and Eileen Marshall had stepped ashore in San Juan with the Sweet Adelines cruise.

Scratch “A Friend like Me” from last month’s 2009 Music Program repertoire.
Dick Johnson received his 60-year renewal certificate. He has been singing since he was five, first with his mother at the piano harmonizing with his brothers, then grade school, high school and college, in church choirs, high school and college quartets, college glee clubs, operettas, musicals, solos, duets, a dozen or so quartets, and four chapters, two of which sang at International. Singing tenor in a high school Barbershop quartet called FOUR-OF-A-KIND led to joining the Terre Haute chapter in 1949. That chorus finished 3rd in the 1953 International contest in Detroit, MI.


**Spring Singing Retreat**

Pete Mazzara reminds us of plans for our 7th Spring Singing Retreat at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, Higgins Lake. It will be April 3-5. Cost is $85 for a double room ($120 single) in the Straits dorm. Get your check, made out to the "Pontiac Chapter," to Pete as soon as possible.

**QUARTETS**

Up from the ashes (or is it glass fragments?) of WATERFORD CRYSTAL has arisen VINTAGE.

Our Celebration Quartet sang a Valentine’s set in tuxes to thirty-six seniors and their families at the Arden Courts Nursing Home in Bingham Farms on Sunday, February 8. Fourteen songs over a 45 minute period including two valentines, “Happy Birthday” to an 88 year old, “My Wild Irish Rose,” “Linda, Linda Bless Yure Heart” and others. This was a follow-up performance as Celebration had sung for this group at Waterford Oaks. They had stopped for hot chocolate following a Christmas Light Tour. There are several fine singers living at Arden Oaks. Resident Dave Ellis joined Celebration in singing “My Wild Irish Rose.”

(Bruce Brede and Jack Teuber)

Our Celebration Barbershop Quartet entertained Sunday, February 22, in the Canterbury Pavilion Dining Room. As a result of the Chapter Valentines promotion, Kris Hamsey had contacted Bill Auquier and wanted a quartet to celebrate the 95th birthday of her mother, Helen who is blind and had recently had a fall which broke her neck. Helen was joined by about 30 Canterbury residents and another ten members of her family. Celebration sang about seven songs including “Happy Birthday Dear Helen,” “Helen, Helen Bless Yure Heart,” “Precious Lord,” and “The Irish Blessing.” Their performance was well received, particularly by Helen's family and the Canterbury Staff.

(Bruce Brede)

**MEMBERSHIP** (at 63)

**New Members:** Bob Stephenson, Jim Claflin (16). Welcome guys! We love to see new members!

**Renewals:** Eric Domke (2), Doug Metzger (2), Ted Prueter (8), John Cowlishaw (10), Dan Valko (20), Bill Nevaux (34), Dick Johnson (60)

**Birthdays:**

- Camila Domke (14th), Eric Domke (14th), Walt Bachmann (16th), Fred DeVries (18th), Bruce Lamarte (18th), Dan Valko (19th), Tom Blackstone (22nd), Bob Brain (22nd), Bill Holmes (25th)

**Medical:** Mary Butcher continues her difficult chemotherapy. Bill Schoen's brother was seriously injured in a gas explosion.

**AROUND THE DISTRICT**

The Detroit Free Press’s fine promotional story on metro-Detroit Valentines program is still available at [http://www.freep.com/article/20090208/TWIST/902080325/1025/rss05](http://www.freep.com/article/20090208/TWIST/902080325/1025/rss05)

(From our new Pioneer District Contest Administrator, Ron Eubank)

“It’s time to be thinkin’ Spring! The contest website is set up and ready to be entered for the April convention in Traverse City. Quartets and choruses, go to [http://www.barbershop.org/](http://www.barbershop.org/) enter ebiz, and click on CJ20.

“We’re extremely fortunate to have two special classes in the works for Friday afternoon! Mr. Ron Black, music judge and current chairman of the society Music & Performance Committee, and Mr. James Estes, singing judge and society Music Educator - Youth in Harmony/Collegiate Development, will be leading classes of Harmony University quality.

“Competition will include the Senior Quartet Championship, the College Quartet Contest, the International Quartet Prelims, the District Chorus Championship, and the Chorus Plateau Championships. The JOE BARBERSHOP CHORUS will be directed by our special guest MR. BILL BIFFLE, current PRESIDENT of the BHS.”

**Big Chief members need to register for the convention.** The forms are at [http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/nextconvention/convention_info.htm](http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/nextconvention/convention_info.htm). The first two lines are for convention registration ($25 before March 27, $30 after) and hotel registration ($70-80 per night for a double; remember, you early-morning drivers, it’s 3:50 by car.)

Grand Rapids chapter has a new quartet, VOCAL ARTISANS with Doug Weaver (Br), Robert Ryan (Bs), Michael Baribeau (L), and Patrick Ryan (T). Their first gig was a Valentines package live on WXMI FOX 17 TV. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n76MvqSI9v0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n76MvqSI9v0)

Here is Michael’s delightful story of what got him started in barbershop: “Years ago I was at a Russian/American Wedding Reception. The evening’s
entertainment was of the guests performing something for the Bride and Groom. One after another the classically trained Russian tables got up and performed beautiful string pieces and folk songs. None of the American tables were getting up because all we knew was bad karaoke. Then one American table, a father and his sons, stood and performed a stirring a cappella barbershop quartet song. Their four part harmony brought a standing ovation from both sides of the room. That's when I realized we had lost touch with our heritage, and that it was important to help save this piece of original American culture. It inspired me to eventually join the Barbershop Harmony Society, Grand Rapids Barbershop Chapter The Great Lakes Chorus.”

The North Oakland Concert Band presents a concert, “Band Dancing,” Sunday, March 1, 3pm, at Lake Orion High School Performing Arts Center. Featured guest soloist is Dave Bennett, a world-class clarinetist and Waterford Kettering graduate. Dave has his own website at www.davebennett.com

Carol Portice, Director of Music at University Presbyterian Church in Rochester Hills, has extended invitations for participation and/or attendance at a concert, Music of Hope and Joy for Choir and Orchestra, March 22, 4 pm

AROUND THE WORLD

(From Shelley Herman’s online report on the Mid-Winter convention)

About 2000 members attended the Midwinter in Pasadena, CA this weekend. For the other 25,000 of you, you missed one of the best conventions the hobby ever presented.

First place, for those of you freezing your pitch pipes off in some other place than Southern California, the temperature here during the day was in the high 70's.

The seniors contest was very high level, with AUDACITY winning handily (with 911 points). *

The Youth Chorus Festival and Contest was great. We were watching the future of barbershop. The Northwest Vocal Project looks like the beginnings of another Westminster. The Denver chorus, "52eighty", under the direction of Chris Vaughn sounds and moves like GOTCHA! Wonder Why?

Having all those kids around the convention boosted up the excitement level of the whole convention by several notches. HOORAY!

I had the pleasure of watching Dr. Greg Lyne morph about 100 barbershoppers from just some guys who knew the words and music into a great sounding chorus with only five or six hours total rehearsal. Seeing Greg at work is really a pleasure to watch. His talent is awesome.

OC TIMES spent an hour with singing and some questions and answers. One of the big points they made was: Learn the Polecats, that's our roots!

CROSSROADS (2nd Place 2008 BHS and with Pioneer Mike Slamka on Lead) thrilled the audience with a performance that's going to be hard to beat in Anaheim.

Just when we thought we had heard everything, out came our International champs, OC TIMES with their usual incredible performance, as they finished the curtain behind them rose and there was the Masters of Harmony, our current chorus champions. OC TIMES took their usual places in the chorus and MOH gave us a reprise of their winning performance in Nashville.

The entire show was one for the ages. Except for International Conventions I don’t think many of us will ever be witness to a show like that.

*Congratulations to Pioneer District Senior Reps RESISTING-A-REST for winning Silver with 859 points! Pioneer District’s BHS wild-card drawn quartet SHOWTIME came in 24th scoring 748.

Changes in rules

The Society Contest and Judging Committee is responsible for maintaining contest rules and we periodically review the rules to determine if they are still valid. At nearly every meeting of the Society Contest and Judging Committee, we have some questions regarding the dual member rules as they apply to contest participation as outlined in the current Society Contest and Judging Rules Article I.B.4 thru I.B.6. We felt that this set of rules was overly complex and that a member should be able to sing with whatever group provides the musical satisfaction desired for his own barbershop life experience. (We do not condone any chorus that is actively recruiting other members from local chapters.) Based on this, the Society Contest and Judging Committee recommended to the Society Board of Directors that the dual and transfer member rules be removed from the contest Rules and the Board approved our recommendation at their Mid-Winter meetings in Pasadena in January.

American Harmony - The Single Biggest Public Relations & Membership Recruitment Opportunity Ever Presented To Chapters of the Barbershop Harmony Society


“Yes, a scant one year since its debut last summer, Harmony University eXtreme Quartetting Brigade— the premier freelance quartetting event of the year— will be held again in St Jo, Mo!

“If you are capable of learning and quartetting challenging arrangements made famous by medalists, and would love to quartet them all day and into the
night with other good singers similarly prepared, this event is especially for you! Just check this grrrrreat list!

**2009 HUXQB Repertoire:**

- When My Baby Smiles At Me – as sung by MICHIGAN JAKE
- I Can’t Give You Anything But Love – asb PLATINUM
- My Honey’s Lovin’ Arms – asb BLUEGRASS STUDENT UNION
- Old Cape Cod – asb CHIEFS OF STAFF
- Sold (The Grundy County Auction Incident) – asb OC TIMES
- Dinah – asb Michigan Jake
- When I Lift Up My Head – asb NIGHTLIFE


Thanks, Zaven. (From Mike McGee)

Folks,

A new podcast about our favorite hobby/lifestyle has just become available at [www.youbarbershop.com](http://www.youbarbershop.com) The podcast known as *YouCast* will feature news, interviews and opinions on information related to the Barbershop Harmony Society, Sweet Adelines and Harmony Inc.

Note: Your editor went to [http://www.youbarbershop.com](http://www.youbarbershop.com), clicked on “YouCast,” and tried it. The podcasts are big (20 MB), and will take a while to download. They’re not music, they’re news and gossip.

“The next issue of the AIC Medallion is now completed and available via [www.AICGold.com](http://www.AICGold.com). This issue is full of it! By that I mean LOTS (34 pages) of news, reports, articles and photos concerning all the news that fit to print of our gold medal champions.”

**MEET JOHN NORTHEY**

My interview with John included way more stories than I can report here; he’ll need to write a book. Here is my Readers Digest condensed version:

John was born in 1938 in Royal Oak. When he was two, the family moved out to Troy, because it was out in the country and was near his grandfather’s 128-acre farm. John still lives on a piece of that four-acre property, where his family raised vegetables for sale. John’s father also worked at the Ford Rouge plant in security and for 33 years was a member of the Troy Fire department.

John has a ten-year younger brother who works at White Chapel Cemetery. John’s elementary schooling was at a little country school called Smith School. He recently re-met one of his early teachers. He was called Jackie to distinguish him from his father, John. He moved on to Log Cabin School and finally to a new Troy High School where he graduated in 1956. In school, he played center field on the baseball team and ran the half-mile. He played clarinet...
for five years in the band, sang two years in the chorus, and was part of two quartets organized by his chorus teacher.

Following graduation he attended R.E.T.S., a radio and TV school in Detroit, but his next jobs were in construction, at Pontiac Motors, and with National Twist Drill. He finally got a job as custodian and foreman with the Troy Schools, from which he was happy to retire in 1994.

This work history was interrupted by two years with the U.S. Army in the Panama Canal Zone, where he worked in security and excelled in a jungle survival course, leading to his participation in a group that taught combat courses in Honduras.

He met his wife Sandy, a Henry Ford Hospital dietitian, when her YMCA group joined a program with John’s Methodist Youth Fellowship group. Sandy also received her Masters from CMU and has worked in Michigan Human Resources for ten years. They have two children, Sarah who works in marketing and investment in Birmingham (and grandchild Rachel), and Michael, who just moved with his wife to Indiana. Although Sandy is not a singer, we all know how supportive she has been of John’s long career in singing.

That career began in 1988 when John Schell of D.O.C. invited him to visit. Don Stewart took him under his wing to teach him to sing Bari. Eight years later, John began dueling with the Rochester chorus. In the meantime he had been attending Harmony College in St. Joseph Missouri for nine years, and during that time Jim DeBusman sensed John straining to reach C, and suggested he switch to Bass, which he has now sung for the last twelve years.

When the energy level of the Rochester chorus dropped, John experienced Big Chief Chris Miller and began coming around. Our welcoming was so warm that he joined four years ago.

His primary quartet experience was three years in Four Is Enough, in which Mike Green sang Lead, Mike Morey Tenor, and Dave Peary Baritone. They competed once at Bush League. John has had lesser stints in several other quartets. He has also held several leadership positions including VP of Marketing at D.O.C. and responsibilities for coffee, risers, and cleanup.

John and Sandy have done an immense amount of traveling. They have traveled by boat via the St. Lawrence Seaway to Nova Scotia, and cruised Alaska. They have gone on two barbershop-sponsored trips – Australia and New Zealand with Keepsake, and the Caribbean with Gas House Gang. They have also visited Hawaii, Puerto Rico, England, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Russia, and China. They will also be attending their 11th International in Anaheim next summer.

John’s other hobbies are car-racing, bowling, and hunting and fishing. He bowled 42 years with Pioneer Bowling of Fairlane, with whom he twice scored 277, and his best series was 640. And he has participated in several fishing tournaments. He also has a '29 Model A pickup truck that is being rebuilt for the street.

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**Big Chief Jeopardy, #26.** (Did you get these?)

1. **Answer:** Nashville, Tennessee, by adopted motion of the BHS Board.
   **Question:** Where is the new home of the Barbershop Harmony Society?

2. **Answer:** He passed away November 19, at Sunrise of Clarkston; Bill Holmes led the service, and the Chorus sang. **Question:** Who was Bill Pascher?

**Big Chief Jeopardy, #27.** (Try these.)

1. **Answer:** The GemTones
   **Question:** Who was Bill Twist Drill. He finally got a job as custodian and foreman with the Troy Schools, from which he was happy to retire in 1994.

2. **Answer:** He has hiked and backpacked for a week on Isle Royal and into the Porcupine mountains, and traveled considerably in Europe. He also collects antique scales, does photography, and plays racquetball at Highland Lakes. **Question:** Who was Bill Holmes? Following graduation he attended R.E.T.S., a radio and TV school in Detroit, but his next jobs were in construction, at Pontiac Motors, and with National Twist Drill. He finally got a job as custodian and foreman with the Troy Schools, from which he was happy to retire in 1994.

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**Interview with Jeff Doig** on his recent experience with the Lakeland Players in *Music Man*. Jeff had most of the “unnamed character” lines.

Q: You had six performances, to how many people?

Jeff: Cyndy, our stage manager, estimates that we averaged 140 people a night.

Q: Did you enjoy it? Will you continue with Lakeland Players?

Jeff: Yes I did enjoy myself a lot. With six performances I got to relax and just take in all that is theater… the audience, the theater itself, the lighting, the arrangement of actors on stage. And each of those performances was different.

Q: What was your rehearsal schedule?

Jeff: The rehearsals started in November with just Sunday 2:00 to 5:00 and Tuesdays 7:00 to 9:00 (but they always seemed to run until 10:00 - great for the kids). Then in December sometimes we went to Sunday, Tuesday and Thursdays, Thursdays being for specific scenes. January had us doing Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesdays. Some of this I brought on myself as I liked to take the place of missing actors. And I also got involved in some set building and techie stuff. The first few weeks of rehearsals were counter productive. The Director would block the scenes one night, then the Choreographer would change them the next. That got a little frustrating. But I was able to convey to the first timers, who got especially frustrated, that the show would continue to change right up until show night.

Q: How did it feel compared to doing a BCC show?

Jeff: I did get to see what our guys go through when we put on our show. The confusion and lack of planning can be very, very frustrating. As a Director I know it will work out, but now I see it as they see it. I think for everybody to enjoy the production, we, the show committee, should try to plan every thing out better. And I will try to do that. My thought was that since the Lakeland
Players have been doing this for fifty years, it should run like clockwork. Nope, no such luck.

**How to be a great bass** (from Bill Meyers, bass of *REVIVAL*, 1998 International Champions)


The bass singer delivers the essence and character of the barbershop sound. I just love to sing along with recordings featuring good, quality bass singers and from there develop my own style of singing bass. Guys like Jim Henry, Don Barnick, and Rick Staab.

**Bill's ten tips for better bass singing:**
- Sing every note with a quality sound
- Sing with full face vowels
- Sing every day
- Vertical "Ahh" on the inside of every vowel
- Every five seconds, energize
- Get a coach
- Step into the picture the lyric creates
- Sing on top of the air
- Resonant, warm spin in the sound
- Always be working on a new song

*Bill Myers teaches "How to Be A Great Bass" at Harmony College.*

Here is a new, voice-specific discussion list for Bass singers:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BBSBasses/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BBSBasses/)

**Personal Income Tax Deductions for Barbershoppers (USA)**

It’s that time of year. A reminder that “some things you do as a Barbershopper are tax deductible. If you itemize your deductions, you may be entitled to include some expense for barbershop activity. If you had verifiable out-of-pocket expense in connection with a chapter duty as an elected or appointed officer or board member, or, if you sang in one or more local shows, such expenses as travel (14¢ per mile, or actual cost) telephone, postage, parking, etc., for which you were not reimbursed are deductible.

Expense of travel to chapter meetings is not deductible unless you hold an office directly involved in conduct of the meeting.

A different rule applies to travel away-from-home. Transportation, meals and lodging may only be deducted if there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation or vacation in the trip. If golf games, sightseeing, and similar activities heavily overbalance singing and participation in meetings as a duty for the away-from-home expenses, these expenses would not be deductible.

The cost of tuition at schools is specifically barred as a deduction as well as dues.

If you use these deductions, here is the procedure. With Form 1040, use Schedule A, under "gifts to charity, other than cash or check," enter the total of your out-of-pocket expense. (Remember the words "non-reimbursed" and "verifiable.") If over $500 attach the appropriate schedule and categorize expenses by groups (lodging, transportation, etc.), captioned "Expenses incurred in connection with contributions of services to an organization classed as exempt under Section 501 (c) (3)." Then state the name and location of your chapter and the full name of the Society.

Your chapter should have a list of events that are applicable to this expense tabulation.

Your cash contributions to the chapter or the Society or to Harmony Foundation Inc. (for the General Fund or to the Endowment Program) are directly deductible. Include this figure in Schedule A, under "gifts to charity, cash or check." Be sure to retain verifying records such as appointment books, calendars with notes, etc.”


**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING:** February 10, 2009. Excerpts from Secretary Bill Auquier’s minutes.

Present: Doc Mann, Roger Holm, Bill Holmes, Wayne Cheyne, Dick Johnson, Bill Auquier.

Treasurer Dick Johnson’s report: $16,868. Marketing V.P. Jack Teuber’s report listed upcoming gigs, and noted our move to Waterford Oaks Activity Center as our new rehearsal venue on April 7.

Membership V.P. Bill Holmes’ report listed membership at 61 with two pending. Discussion of the title of our upcoming annual show was tabled.

**Brain-Teaser from Jan DeNio:** “What nine-letter word is still a word as you remove one letter at a time from it?” The answer is “startling,” with the last standing letter being “I,” but it’s still a mental test to figure out which letters to sequentially delete. Try it.

You can make your own puzzle in reverse. Take a different letter, say “a,” and try adding letters under the constraint that each new set of letters be a word.

**Letters**

Dear Roger and others:

Regarding signing up for, going to Spring Convention, and participating in the Chorus Contest, there may be some who are asking "Why?" Allow me to remind that we do not go to contest to win! Sure, we’d all like to "WIN!", but that is really a secondary goal. We go to contest to "get measured by our peers" on how well we are singing in the barbershop style of vocal music. Yes, we're all traveling down the same road of learning new things about the "craft" we call a
hobby, and we are all endeavoring to utilize all the things we have learned, simultaneously, as we sing.

Contest is an opportunity to show other BBshoppers how well we have learned the craft, and perform our absolute best for the audience.

Remember all those "barbershop pearls" we were given along the journey? By our Director, by outside coaches, by other BBshoppers? Contest is an opportunity to use those "pearls."

The judges are in reality some of the best "helpers" we can find to give us valuable feedback in our choral singing. The A&R sessions with them after the chorus contest are invaluable, as we learn about what we do well, and what we can work on to improve even further.

I am going to Spring Convention for another reason, too. The other chapter I belong to is "hosting" this year's Spring Convention, which means "I have to work!" My wife and I have volunteered to work on "Partial Registrations". Even that kind of work is "fun"!

I'm proud to be a Big Chief, and look forward to singing with you all on the risers in Traverse City.

Chordially, Chuck Murray

(From Walt Bachmann)
I am leaving to Tucson AZ, where I will enjoy the warm weather. I should be back by the end of February.

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlishaw