BUSY MONTH OF MAY, QUIET MONTH OF JUNE ☺☺ ☺☺ by Jack Teuber

The Big Chief Chorus, true to its mission, kept on the road with eight appearances in the month of May. The full chorus appeared six times with quartets adding two more performances. The chapter sang at three high schools, a County Retirees’ luncheon, two senior centers, a nursing center and a Veteran’s Memorial Service.

It’s great to be in front of an appreciative audience. It is a privilege for the Big Chief Chorus to entertain.

The only dates for the Big Chief Chorus in June will be the 10th, 12th, 13th, 27th, and 30th. (a slower pace!) June 10th is a big date for the chorus. The Naturals (Doig, Holm, Johnson and McFadyen) will take part in the Crary Middle School Motown Review. Members of the chorus will show their support for the chapter quartet by wearing their Yellow Chapter Shirts and assisting Crary Director Julia Kohring where needed. The event will be held at the Waterford Mott High School.

June 12th is the Annual Pioneer Send-Off in Windsor, followed by the Celebration Quartet’s appearance at the Relay for Life on June 13th. The cancer fund raiser will be held at Pierce Middle School. Celebration includes, Brede, Dabbs, Moss and Teuber.

June 27th the Big Chief Chorus will entertain at Waterford’s Historical Village as part of the Waterford Log Cabin Days. For further times or details see our website at www.bigchiefchorus.org

June 30th the bus leaves Waterford for Flint’s Dead Creek Picnic at 6:00 pm.

From Director Tom:

Gentlemen of the BCC,

Many, many thanks to all of you who gave of your time and voice for Sunday’s performance with the North Oakland Concert Band. I am continually amazed at how giving you are with your time and willingness to share music. I would say it was quite the success despite the 1/2 key change. Many compliments were shared with me, and the band was very appreciative. I even noticed a few “standing and clapping” following our portion of the performance (and no, it wasn’t my mom)!

It was another opportunity for a different part of Oakland County to hear us. Thanks again.

P.S. I consistently notice that when we breathe together and really utilize the breath, our sound is so much fuller and more in tune.

AROUND THE PATCH

The Big Chief Chorus sang May 7 for a National Day of Prayer Memorial Service at the Lake Orion Veterans’ Memorial.

The concert with the North Oakland Concert Band at Lake Orion High School May 10 was a success.

It was a new experience for us to sing with a band; they had to soften down; we were singing at the top of our registers. The chorus sang impressively, and we fielded three quartets: Vintage (Claflin, Cowlishaw, McFadyen, Melkonian), Local Color IV (Butcher, Holm, Mann, McFadyen), and B Natural (Doig, Holm, Johnson, McFadyen).

The concert was recorded “by George Sinnott (NOCB) and also the Lake Orion Cable Commission. As a part of the Can-Am Cable Agreement, Eileen Marshall may bring the recording to Waterford as well.”

If you’d like to hear Aaron Copland’s Lincoln Portrait again, and can’t wait for Tom Blue’s CD to come out, go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vJLdrS_Go

“We made a good appearance at Adams High School. All went well. The band was pumped up with the Military Color Guard. The audience stood through the Armed Forces Medley.” (May 20)
The chorus also sang May 12 at Lockwood of Waterford, May 14 at Waterford Oaks White Lake, and May 21 at Lake Orion Nursing Center.

Eric Domke is our chapter contact for Rockin’ Barbershop Camp. Check it out at www.rockinbarbershop.org

Interest in the Windsor send-off was not sufficient to rent a bus. Nevertheless, individuals are still encouraged to attend June 12. Location is “the Hellenic Banquet Hall at 1019 Highway # 3 in Windsor, Ontario. Lots of good parking. Doors will open at 6:30 PM and Dinner will be served at 7:30 PM. The cost is $20.00 per person (great bargain) and there will be a cash bar. Wives and guests are most welcome.” Just remember: “A Passport or ENHANCED Michigan driver’s license is required. You may also get by with a valid picture I.D. and a certified copy of your birth certificate.”

Down the tiles!
Jim Claflin reminded us last month that it is customary to turn to look “down the tiles” after a song. When Tom turns to the audience to acknowledge applause, we get to receive that applause also and we can smile appreciatively at the audience. It’s simple: when the director turns to the audience, we do too. When he turns back, we do too.

That second part is important also. When the director is directing, remember #6, no matter how cute we think we’re being, no matter how much we’d like to share a wink with all those folk over there to the left or to the right, who, gosh, must be just waiting for us to turn and grin at them.

The Big Chief Chicks continue to be active. Barbara Workman writes that their June event will be to join the Huron Valley Optimist Club’s Childhood Cancer Fund’s Victorian Tea at the Holly Hotel, Saturday, June 20, 2 – 3:30 p.m.

Good to have Len Barnes and Tom Blackstone back with us.

Bob Marshall was in three performances of Hello Dolly, May 7-9.

Total BCC performances thru the end of May, 62, to 2661 people.

QUARTETS
“On Thursday, May 7th, our tuxedoed Celebration Barbershop Quartet in red vests and red bow ties sang for over two hundred at a Mother’s Day Luncheon and Fashion Show at the Waterford Senior Center. Thanks to Roger for filling in for Greg.

“The 30-minute Fashion Show had nine models in fancy vintage outfits on a "runway" with narration and quartet backup. The quartet sat at a small "bistro" table to one side and, on cue, sang as the models entered and exited with “Heart of My Heart,” “Let me Call You Sweetheart,” “Wild Irish Rose,” “Sweet Roses of Morn,” and “Down Our Way.”

“When the Fashion Show was complete, the quartet sang “The Old Songs” as a transition into their 20 minute center-stage performance beginning with “Hi Neighbor,” moving into “Aura Lee” and “Let The Rest of the World Go By,” surprising the audience with “Mothers Mothers Bless Yure Hearts,” involving the audience with the “Do-Lord Medley” and “God Bless America” and then finishing to a loud ovation with “Precious Lord” and “Irish Blessing.” The quartet had time, during and after, to promote the May 10th Concert, the chapter activities, and barbershop in general.

“CERELATION was really appreciated (some said "awesome"), a good time was had by all and they received an informal return invitation for next year.”

By Bruce Brede

The Pontiac-Waterford Big Chief Chorus sent one of its quartets out on the road Tuesday, May 26 to drum up excitement for Rockin’Barbershop camp. VINTAGE, with Jim Claflin on Lead, John Cowlishaw on Bari, Zaven Melkonian on Bass, and Fred McFadyen subbing at Tenor visited Ms. Harness’s Vocal Music Class at Waterford Kettering High School.

The response was appreciative, and at times, one might almost say wildly excited, from the 50-some students and staff that listened. John announced why we were there, explaining that they were about to hear the kind of close harmony they’d be studying and singing if they attended the camp, and then Freddie introduced four songs as representative of various genres, “Heart of My Heart,” “Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah,” “Lida Rose,” and “Hello Mary Lou.” We left brochures that we had printed off the web site at http://www.rockinbarbershop.org/RBCamp2009/www/

Thanks to Eric Domke and Jack Teuber for arranging the visit.

MEMBERSHIP (at 66)
Renewals: Pete Mazzara (10), Jack Teuber (10)
Pending: DeVries, Flatoff, Mersino, Tailford.
Birthdays: Cory Flatoff (6th), Bob Legato (13th), Fred Pioch (18th), Bruce Brede (22nd), Al Monroe (24th)
Medical: Zaven Melkonian had surgery for a rotator cuff injury, May 22. Dave Shantz is wearing a brace and using a cane and awaiting a decision as to whether surgery on his foot will be necessary. Bill Holmes is recovering from his sciatica.

AROUND THE DISTRICT
“Due to a health situation with our long-time host and Chapter member John Voss,” Flint has moved its Dead Creek Outing to Tuesday June 30.
Jeff Pierson, the coordinator of our district’s Rockin’ Barbershop Camp, up north in August, has sent a clip of the young quartet from Bowling Green that is going to be the “clinicians” for the Camp, PRESTIGE. The kids should love ‘em. Listen at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kg-8yeioNc. Eric Domke is our chorus’s coordinator, and he is working to get local high school kids interested. VINTAGE isn’t as young as PRESTIGE (notice the similarity in name, though, as you say Pres – TEEJGH and say Vin – TAHJE) but we sang to an excited response at Waterford Kettering on May 26 to stimulate interest.

Presentation Judge, Mike O’Donnell wrote of an interesting experience. The 70th anniversary show of the Grand Rapids barbershop chapter featured not only their own 39 members, but 24 Indiana Harmony Brigade singers. Brigade members receive music and learning CDs to learn a 10-song package and then meet to quartet; this group had met in 2007. The Grand Rapids chapter decided to build their show around that package, learned the songs, and then invited singers from the Brigade to join them. They were delighted to do so, and almost doubled the size of the ensemble. “The sound was incredible. There were a total of three standing ovations during the ten-song set and a final one when we sang AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL with MOXXY quartet singing the Joe Liles arrangement of the America Overlay.”

Michael Baribeau’s extensive set of photos of the Spring 2009 convention in Traverse City are available at: http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/online/2009/05/picsX where X is finals, prelims, pre, chorus, or post.

Pioneer President Brian Dunckel writes that “our barbershop movie, American Harmony, has been accepted into the 9th Annual Waterford Film Festival in Saugatuck MI. The festival runs from June 11-14. The WFF is one of the leading destination film festivals in the Midwest, regularly hosting Midwest premieres of Academy Award-winning and nominated documentaries.”

There is word that American Harmony will be shown locally at the MJR Theater @ VanDyke & 15 Mile, in Sterling Heights, on a date to be determined.

MEET AUSTIN QUINN

Austin was born 84 years ago into an Irish American family living in Toronto. They soon moved to the John R and Six Mile area in Detroit, where Austin’s father sold newspaper ads. His mom was a home-maker, raising Austin and his sister, Marie.

Austin attended St. Benedict’s Grade School, then the Sacred Heart Seminary High School. While there, he sang Gregorian chants and was a lineman on their football team. His intention of becoming a priest ended when “Greek became too Greek to me.” Austin graduated from the University of Detroit with majors in Business and Psychology, and he pursued graduate studies at Michigan State University, all of this in night classes.

His first job was as a bookkeeper on the old Detroit-Cleveland Boat Company that ran between Buffalo and Chicago. Then he worked in the Fisher Body Tank Purchasing Department until WW II ended.

While working for Fisher Body, Austin organized a thirty-person entertainment group which was transported to local military camps by the Red Cross. Bill Muncey, “the greatest hydroplane racer in history,” was then a student at Royal Oak High School. Bill persuaded about sixteen instrumentalists to provide the music for the show’s singers and dancers.

Austin joined his father who had started a drapery and Venetian blind company. A few years later, he returned to Fisher Body working at the Tech Center as an Engineering Specification Writer. Then, Austin was transferred to the Finance and Accounting Activity where he worked as a Cost Estimator, and then as a Cost Analyst.

Austin received a medical retirement in 1983 due to a stroke, which left him with a partial loss of memory. He is currently active on the Board of the Fisher Body Tech Center Retirees. He chairs the annual October Harvest Ball dinner-dance.

AROUND THE WORLD

The order of appearance for International Quartet Competition in Anaheim has been drawn. Our Pioneer reps, The Party, will be singing 52nd (out of 52).
Austin married his wife Martha in 1950. They live in Royal Oak. Martha and Austin have six children – Tom, Maureen, Colleen, Brian, Eileen, and Kathleen. They also have nine grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Austin attended the 1981 SPEBSQSA International Convention in Detroit. He soon joined the Oakland County chapter. This chapter later merged with Detroit #1, to form the present-day Detroit Oakland Chapter. That is where his primary allegiance remains because D.O.C. has contributed half of his cost to attend five Harmony College sessions. He has served as Publicity Chairman at D.O.C.

Austin has always sung Lead. During auditions he was told that he had too much vibrato for quartet singing. He deals with that by good breath support.

Over the years Austin has been a dual member of Wayne, City Lights, Macomb, and now the Pontiac-Waterford chapter. These dual participations have been as a consequence of his following directors he has admired, including Matt Coombs, and now Tom Blue.

When Austin and Martha attended the barbershop Harrisville Labor Day camp in 1988, Martha met several Sweet Adelines, and began singing with them. She joined the Great Lakes chapter where she has participated in seven International Conventions.

When the Shine of the Little Flower membership grew too big, Austin and Martha moved their association, three years ago, to Royal Oak St. Mary’s. Through that church he serves, once a week, as a Chaplain’s Assistant at Royal Oak Beaumont Hospital, distributing the Eucharistic Sacrament to Catholics, so identified by the parish office.

Austin has been a Boy Scout leader. He enjoyed coaching junior high basketball. He has also played golf and tennis, and gardened.

Singing in the Shower

When the other patrons left the steam room at the Waterford Bally’s, I broke into song. Gosh I sounded good. I got to wondering why, so I googled “Why does Cowlishaw sing so well in the shower?” No hits. Oh, well, I deleted Cowlishaw and then got a lot of hits.

According to www.exploratorium.edu/music/questions/shower.html a shower works like a low-tech sound mixer to modify the voice in at least three ways – volume, reverb, and bass boost.

(1) Hard smooth surfaces absorb very little sound, containing the sound energy in a small space.

(2) With many reflected sound waves bouncing around in a shower, some sound waves wind up traveling further than others, blurring the voice by multiple reflections and stretching out the sound you hear, an effect called reverberation, or reverb; it also evens out variations in pitch, just in case we wander around the pitch.

(3) A shower stall functions as a resonant cavity. In an average-sized shower, the fundamental resonant frequency is 100 hertz with some higher resonances at multiples of 100. These frequencies fall in the low end of the frequency range of the human voice (80 to 10,000 hertz). The resonant amplification of these bass tones gives one a deeper, fuller-sounding voice.

Big Chief Jeopardy, #29. (Did you get these?)
1. **Answer**: It was his 50th and final Woodshed contest. **Question**: Who was Bill Pascher?
2. **Answer**: He worked to gain passage of a millage for the Oakland county park system that was subsequently developed under his care. **Question**: Who is Tom Jackson?

Big Chief Jeopardy, #30. (Try these.)
1. **Answer**: Their most recent gig was the Memorial Day parade through Sylvan Lake and Keego Harbor.
2. **Answer**: His school associations have included Pontiac Webster, Oxford High School, Roberts Wesleyan College, West Middle School, and Rochester Adams High School.

Almost anybody can be “loud” by Tom Wheatley, editor (and acoustics engineer) Dundalk, MD Charivari.

… we shouldn’t mimic pianos where every fresh note is a new dynamic attack when the keys strike the strings. However, there is a musical instrument group that is frequently compared to the human voice, and that would be the violin family.

There are good reasons for this. Violin strings and the human voice have similar activation mechanics. For the violin, the string is more or less continually vibrated by the bow moving over the strings. Our vocal cords (vocal folds) are similarly activated by the air from our lungs moving across them.

When a skilled violinist draws the bow across a string, it vibrates not only at a fundamental frequency, but also at the harmonics above it, giving it a rich and resonant sound. However, if the violinist does not play in good quality, the sounds can become just a tad harsher, especially if he tries to play loud sounds.

When a skilled singer holds a note, the vocal cords similarly vibrate at many harmonics with very little noise content. If the singer doesn’t use his vocal cords with good quality, the music will suffer and those sounds will contain more noise and less harmonic content, and it doesn’t get better when you get too loud! If your quality starts falling apart at 70% of your loudness limit, STOP GETTING LOUD! In short, scale your singing to your quality limits, not your loudness limits.

(Borrowed from Paul Howe’s Lansing Woodshedder)
A special BCC Directors Meeting was held April 30 to discuss future BCC contest involvement and attendant strategy. Here are the highlights from Roger Holm’s minutes.

1. **Do we want to enter the chorus contest again next year?** Yes. This group recommends that district chorus competitions (probably only once a year) should remain an important part of our chapter program. As such, they provide chapter interaction with, and support for, our district, and a gauge of our chorus singing-quality level.

2. **What songs do we choose?** Songs we’ve done before and know? New Songs? Show songs? Songs rich in barbershop-choral harmonies? Past popular songs (i.e. Ain’t Misbehavin’)? Up-tunes? Ballads? The relative values of each of these considerations were discussed, with the main controversy between old vs new songs. Tom will leave the choice to the music committee, and he will conduct our choices (I think we’d like him to rule on our abilities to sing those choices!). Accordingly, Fred and Dick – who collectively have significant knowledge and experience in barbershop – accepted an assignment to come up with a short list of candidate songs from which the committee will choose our two contest songs.

3. **When do we introduce the songs to the chorus and start work on them?** As soon as we possibly can! This brought up the issue of priority, since we are constantly very busy. It was reiterated that our first priority is to do what we do best – perform (as often as we can) for the community, and resist the temptation to become more competition-oriented!

4. **What can we do to improve our performance in contest?** Dick suggested that we devote more time to sectional rehearsals – both at chapter meetings, and in between meetings, as much as possible. Tom (and Freddie) wished we could sing in contest like we sing at sing-outs (intimidation factor!). The “intimidation factor” seems to especially affect our song entrances, and this could possibly be helped with multiple song-start practices during warm-up, and, as Freddie suggested, blowing the pitch after getting on the risers, but before signaling that we’re ready. And, there’s no substitute for absolute knowledge of the music – especially when we sing “shotgun” style! Uninviting contest performance accommodations, such as those recently experienced at the Grand Traverse Resort, certainly don’t help.

**A reminder:** Thousands of favorite contest performances are available at [www.iTunes.com](http://www.iTunes.com) Search the online library with the keywords “barbershop contest.”

Steve Cook has created an **on-line part-dominant training track of pole cats.** It’s at [http://www.jazzinbrighton.com/bshop/](http://www.jazzinbrighton.com/bshop/) We should recommend it to all our new members! It’s also a good review for all of us.* Furthermore, if you want to try out another voice part, as the Board has decided to encourage **would-be tenors** to do, this is the ticket. The songs included are: “Down Our Way,” “Heart of my Heart,” “Honey, Little Lize Medley,” “Let Me Call You Sweetheart,” “My Wild Irish Rose,” “Shine On Me,” “Sweet and Lovely,” “Sweet, Sweet Roses of Morn,” “The Old Songs,” “Wait Til the Sun Shines Nellie,” “You are the Flower of my Heart,” “You Tell Me Your Dream,” and “Down by the Old Mill Stream.”

* As **Steve Shannon** says, in a paper on “High Performance Standards,” “Men do not make mistakes on purpose, but, unless corrected, they make them purposefully. Chances are that men who are singing wrong notes do not know it.”

**Excerpts from Ron Eubank, District Director of Contest and Judging, in a response letter to Ross Ensign:**

I’ve checked with fellow C&J guys around the Society and nine of the fifteen responded. (In general, everything about our conventions comes down to costs.)

**Chorus Sound Check** -- Two districts responded they do allow the chorus sound check, four said they do not, two others said if time permits and one responded they leave it up to the host chapter. I will discuss this with our District Management Team and decide how to proceed with their input.

Most responded the key to this activity is to control the time very tightly. Those who said they allow it all said there is only ten minutes allowed, including time to get on and off the stage. They also all required choruses to request the time so a schedule could be developed and those that don’t request don’t get time accommodations, such as those recently experienced at the Grand Traverse Resort, certainly don’t help.

**Lighting** -- Two districts responded they use the same venue with professional lighting all the time, two others always use schools auditoriums or theaters, four use rented lighting because they use flat floor venues and one other uses both flat floors and auditoriums. Our venues are mixed, but except for trying to widen the distance between lights we are stuck when we need to rent. The most common comment was that there is not enough light when rented because of the cost. One district guy recommended if the lights are too bright maybe we should back off the amount of lighting we rent. Of course, the problem with that would be filming.

**Curtain** -- Five districts responded they always or almost always have a curtain. three said they never use a curtain and one uses mixed venues with and without a curtain, the same as our district. I will discuss this with our District
Board also, but given the cost and the quality of mechanical capability involved, we are not likely to purchase a curtain.

All those who responded said they communicate well in advance and don't get complaints.

**Stage Flooring** -- Stage flooring is not a district choice. The stage is provided by the venue selected. It is true that Jerry Ditto must make the floor an item in his concern as he negotiates an agreement with a provider. In this case, Grand Traverse replaced two sections of their stage just recently. If you specifically had a problem with support, and if they also heard from others, I would imagine they would have to consider replacing other parts or risk an accident.

**Shell** -- Three districts use a shell, five do not and the other only uses if the venue has one to provide. I was reminded by one of the districts that the Society has specifically stated feedback monitors are the norm. Perhaps more monitors are necessary for all to hear -- I will ask about the feasibility of multiple monitors for the chorus contest.

The most inclusive comment I received was "Preference is use speaker monitors. Good shells are difficult to find, expensive to rent, and, if used by a facility, may not be in good condition. Speaker monitors are a known quantity to sound people and a standard of the entertainment trade for technicians and entertainers alike."

Well Ross, I hope this helps put things in some perspective. I know I learned a lot because of your questions. Thanks for your concern and I hope you reconsider and continue to compete.

**Barbershop Quartetting... is it a lost art? (from LiveWire)**

"Currently, we have 1444 REGISTERED quartets in the Barbershop Harmony Society. That means, approximately 5776 (or less since several men are registered in more than one quartet) members of our Society sing in a registered quartet." That is 22%, in a quartetting society!

**Letters:**

(From Al Monroe)

All is about the same here out West. We lost Jessica (as Director) after the first week. No word on a search for a replacement. Del Sparks is running the show for now. I must admit that singing tags and polecats every week is taking its toll. I miss the trips to BCC but not the drive. The chorus has two singouts planned for the end of May and June.

I'm now taking one more new med to control blood pressure to the small kinked veins and one new constant release nitro for chest pain. We hope the veins will find a new path.

Al

**Erratum:**
For the third (not second) year in a row, top honors in Bulletin contest and Public relations contest went to Chieftains John Cowlishaw and Jack Teuber.

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlishaw

**CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)
Assistant Directors: Fred McFadyen, Dick Johnson, & Bill Holmes
President: Doc Mann (248-628-0189)
Past President: Zaven Melkonian
VP: Chapter Dev: Bill Holmes
VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm
VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber
Secretary: Bill Auquier
Treasurer: Dick Johnson
Members at Large -- Bob Butcher, Wayne Cheyne, Ron Clarke, Erik Domke
Chorus Manager: Bob Greenwood
Music Team: Holm, Blue, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Murray, Prueter, Moss, Cowlishaw, and Brede

**CALENDAR** (Times are Performance Times, Warmups 45’ earlier)

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jun 2, T, 7pm</td>
<td>Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks</td>
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<td>Jun 9, T, 7pm</td>
<td>Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks</td>
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<td>Jun 10, W, 7pm</td>
<td>The Naturals sing at Crary Concert, Mott H.S.</td>
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<td>Jun 12, F, 7:30pm</td>
<td>Pioneer District Send-Off, 1019 Highway #3, Windsor</td>
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<td>Jun 16, T, 7pm</td>
<td>Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks</td>
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<td>Jun 23, T, 7pm</td>
<td>Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks</td>
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<td>Jun 27, Sa, 3pm</td>
<td>Log Cabin Days, Fish Hatchery Park. Yellow shirts</td>
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<td>Jun 28-Jul 5</td>
<td>BHS International, Anaheim, CA</td>
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<td>Jun 30, T, 6-11pm</td>
<td>Frankenmuth Brat Fest, Blue shirts</td>
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<td>Jul 7, T, 7pm</td>
<td>Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks</td>
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<td>Aug 4, Tu, 6pm</td>
<td>Auburn Hills Community Center. Yellow shirts</td>
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<td>Aug 21-22</td>
<td>Bush League Quartet Contest, Gaylord</td>
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<td>Sep 11, Fr, 7pm</td>
<td>Fallen Heroes (Blue blazers, white shirts, gray pants)</td>
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<td>Oct 16-18</td>
<td>District Convention - Kalamazoo</td>
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<td>Nov 7</td>
<td>Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show</td>
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