

**BIG CHIEF CHORUS**  
**SMOKE**  
**SIGNALS**



**Pontiac/Waterford Chapter**  
Meetings on Tuesdays: 7:30 to 10 PM

**Vol. 6, No. 11, (#71)**

**March 1, 2007**

**Singing Valentines**

The 2007 Singing Valentine program extended from Sunday (2/11) through Friday (2/16). We delivered Valentines in fifteen different communities. We visited one school, Rochester Adams High School, and had a memorable performance with the students on Valentine's Eve. The Big Chief Chorus sang nine songs during a ninety minute joint performance. The concert concluded with the Big Chief Chorus joining the 75 students in singing "KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING." Our gratitude goes to Tom Blue, Adams Choral Director and Big chief Chorus Director.

The highlight of our day was the opportunity to have one of our quartets spend time with their vocal music classes. FOUR WHEEL DRIVE ( Jeff Doig, Al Monroe, John Cowlshaw and Zaven Melkonian) listened to the students perform, entertained them and taught the classes Barbershop tags. In the students' words, "4WD was awesome." Appearances at two other schools were cancelled due to the snow.

The Valentines Week concluded with CELEBRATION entertaining and educating a Valentine Dinner at Royal Oak's First Presbyterian Church.

CELEBRATION (Greg Moss, Bill Dabbs, Jack Teuber and Bruce Brede) presented a 40 minute performance and audience participation, teaching barbershop history and leading an audience sing-along in four parts.

LOCAL COLOR (Doc Mann, Bob Butcher, Terry Jamison, Fred Devries and Bill Nevaux) received the award for most miles covered and B-NATURAL (Lyle Howard, Tom Tailford, Roger Holm and Fred McFadyen) the award for most compassion, singing to shut-ins.

Thank you's to Howard Lynn and Dar Johnson for being the fifth-wheel drivers / camera men. Thank you's to Bob Brain and Bob Butcher for filling in for CELEBRATION at some of their venues.

The Valentine Project involved twenty-one BCC men and presented a positive image to Oakland County and the City of Lapeer. It provided a lot of fun and fellowship for all participants. Special Thanks to the Big Chief Chicks for their crafty cards.

It was difficult to replace Bill and Barbara Holmes, but Dave Myre was like a bulldog, in taking reservations and dispatching. Dave is to be commended for his hard work. In 2008, Dave will need to provide snow shovels for each quartet. This would eliminate wading in knee-deep snow to deliver the Valentines. They may even pick up tips by shoveling snow.

Submitted by,  
Jack Teuber (Dave's underling)

**AROUND THE PATCH**

Thirty-five of us joined with the high school choruses to sing to the audience of several hundred at the Rochester Adams High School Highlander Choral Music Department presentation of "Music to Warm Your Heart." We sang Aint Misbehavin, Happy Trails, Hello Mary Lou, In My Room, In the Still of the Night, Let the Rest of the World Go By, Ridin' Down the Canyon, Under the Boardwalk, and Keep the Whole World Singing, the latter with the combined choruses of the High School. My, that was fun!

In the audience, says Jack Teuber, were "the Rochester Youth in Harmony Chairman, Don Lewis and the Lake Orion Parade Promoter, Wes Fueling. They both had compliments on our performance and efforts."

**(From our Director, Thomas, the unBlue)**

"You all sounded great last evening and if you can't tell, I am enjoying working with you immensely. I hope all of you are enjoying it as well. I know we have worked hard but the results are being noticed by all of us."

**Jack Teuber** is arranging a **gig August 7**, at the Awards Banquet for the **Michigan Senior Olympics**. Number of participants, according to Ann Brewer, of the Michigan Senior Olympics, should be between 500 and 700.

On August 9, 7 p.m., we will give a joint performance at the **Oxford Summer Concert Series in the Park**, with the Great lakes Sweet Adelines Chorus.

A **Milford High School quartet** may join us for the White Lake Summer Concert Series (Mid-July).

Fellows:

"Here's a **link** to see the video produced by Fox2 News when the Bath City Boyz sang a very special Valentine for fellow barbershopper from Taylor, James MacDonald and his friend, Trish Blackman, an employee of the "upscale store" at Troy's Somerset Mall" on the 14th. **James proposed** to Trish during our singing."

<http://www.myfoxdetroit.com/myfox/pages/News/Detail?contentId=2384089&version=2&locale=EN-US&layoutCode=VSTY&pageId=3.2.1>

Chordially,

**Chuck Murray**

**Roger and Zaven's Handy Dandy Pointers, from Bruce Odell's seminar at this year's C.O.T.S.**

- (1) "Take care of your own business (in your space on the risers) and the chorus will succeed. Don't - and it won't!"
- (2) "Knowledge is confidence!"
- (3) "You get only one chance to make a first impression!"
- (4) "Attitude equals Knowledge, Energy, Articulation, and Fun!"
- (5) "Pitch is NOT an area!"

Under the header of the **BCC 2007 Calendar** is the statement, "A Snow Day for Waterford Schools is a Snow Day for the BCC". The subject was discussed at last Wednesday night's Executive Board Meeting and ended with the following conclusion: Although the Waterford School District may deem travel unsafe for school busses and declare a "Snow Day", the BCC will still maintain its rehearsal schedule for that evening by rescheduling at an alternate site, usually The Central United Methodist Church on M-59. The only two exceptions will be (1) travel is deemed to be too hazardous and presents a safety issue, and (2) an alternate site has not been secured on short notice. In either of those two instances, section leaders will notify their respective members and the rehearsal will be cancelled.

Zaven

**Additional Valentines Reports:**

As a result of FOUR WHEEL DRIVE'S Valentine to a young mother in Waterford, CELEBRATION was able to sing at Suzie's Bar (formerly Dillenger's) on Perry St., Pontiac. "I am happy to report that the parking lot was well lit and

we were able to sing for a predominately male, ethnically diverse audience. We sang for a pool shooting audience of forty. There were probably five females in the audience. I am most happy to report that the audience responded enthusiastically and I left with my skull intact. My thanks to FWD for this opportunity and for well-lit parking lots." (Jack)

Regarding B-NATURAL'S singing valentines report, yesterday we delivered just five valentines, four of which were to elderly members of Trinity UMC in Waterford that are now quite restricted in their activities due to age and ailments. These were purchased by the church. (I'm also a member of that church.) In each of the first two, we sang to a couple; in the third - at Lourdes Nursing Home - we sang to the recipient and a dining room filled with probably 50 to 60 people eating and serving lunch! The fourth was to an elderly lady in Clarkston (not a member of our church) plus two other family members; The fifth was to a church member residing in Canterbury On The Lake. Each of them was well received and appreciated by the folks we sang for, and certainly a fulfilling pleasure for us! We had a 6th one ready to deliver for the church, but learned just prior (fortunately!) that the lady's husband had passed away the previous day! The lady at Canterbury, who's an absolute sweetheart, wanted to know when we barbershoppers were coming to sing for them there again. When I told her St. Patrick's Day, she said "Oh I hope you sing that Irish song (Irish Parting Prayer) because I'm part Irish, and I have that prayer inscribed on a plate" (or plaque - we didn't see it). So we sang it for her! (Roger)

Valentines' highlights for FOUR WHEEL DRIVE were: being the singing/teaching quartet in Tom Blue's Tuesday morning classes, singing in the lobby before the Tuesday evening show, and surprising Jana Blue with our "Valentunes" at their home, Wednesday night. (John)

**MEMBERSHIP (at 55)**

**Welcome back:** Jim Troeger

**Renewals:** Len Barnes (52)

**Bye- Bye:** Bill Auquier, Andrew Lesnew, Tom Newman

**March Birthdays:** Ted Prueter (9<sup>th</sup>), Walt Bachman (16<sup>th</sup>), Fred DeVries (18<sup>th</sup>), Bruce LaMarte (18<sup>th</sup>), Dan Valko (19<sup>th</sup>), Tom Blackstone (22<sup>nd</sup>), Bob Brain (22<sup>nd</sup>), Bill Holmes (25<sup>th</sup>).

**Medical:** Dick Johnson continues around-the-clock care of his wife, Rexetta.

**AROUND THE DISTRICT**

**Detroit-Oakland's annual show** is this weekend, at Clarenceville High School in Livonia, featuring a musical tour of New York City with the GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS CHORUS and chapter quartets, and featuring FLIPSIDE (5th place international quartet) and NOVELTY SHOP (that zany Sweet Adeline quartet). There are seats available at the box office both Friday

and Saturday night. Tickets are \$18 at the door. Curtain rises at 7:59pm on Friday (Feb 23) and at 7:29pm on Saturday (Feb 24). Clarenceville High School is on the west side of Middlebelt Rd, south of 8 Mile Rd, in Livonia.

The **Lansing Chapter** will host its annual show on Mar. 10, 2007, at the Wharton Center on Mich. State campus, 7:30p.m. The chorus will perform along with quartets, SOMETHING BIG, PATCH CHORDS, SIDEKICKS, and special guests **METROPOLIS** (2006 Internationalist Medalist). Tickets are available at 1-800-942-7866.

#### **Pioneer District Convention** (From Al Fisk)

Remember to enter before the deadline which is two weeks prior. Ideally, I'll have all competitors entered by Thursday March 29th at midnight.

Our Joe Barbershop Chorus is going to be outstanding once again. The Mr. Mark Hale (director of the Masters of Harmony, Michigan Jake member, Music judge, coach, etc.) will be here to direct "Sweet and Lovely" and "Nellie." Let's see if we can top last Spring's 200 guys on stage with Jay Giallombardo!

Here is my annual rant/plea/request to have your DVD check for \$35 sent to me prior to contest so I can give you your DVD during evals.

#### **Harrisville, 2007 (from Dave Anderson)**

Even though its snow and freezing out, its time to start planning your Labor Day camping trip to Harrisville. Just dream of those balmy late summer days with the sun on the beach, playing golf, the singing around those campfires, and ringing tags through the night...and then get your plans ready to be there!

What you need to do now is to plan which day you want to come into the park, back that up by six months, and circle that day on the calendar, and then call the reservation number at exactly 8AM on that day. Have your credit card handy and be prepared for a price increase from last year. Its also handy to have a map of the park with you, so you can tell which lot you want.

I have heard that FERMATTA NOWHERE will be up there this year and I would like to encourage all Pioneer men's quartets to come up and be a part of the festivities, especially the Saturday Night Show and the Sunday Afternoon Show at the marina. Its also one great time to try out any new quartet that you want to put together.

See You There,

Dave A., Unofficial Third Temporary Assistant to Craig Pollard  
(To make your life a little easier, the phone number for Harrisville reservations is (800) 447-2757. You can also do this online at [www.midnrreservations.com](http://www.midnrreservations.com) )

#### **PioNet (from Jim Styer)**

(Jim Styer and Matt Tipton are co-operators of the PioNet, despite Jim's retirement to Florida.)

He wrote:

"Hey, the big day slipped by me ... PioNet has celebrated its 10th birthday. "It officially began on Feb. 1, 1997, with 30 subscribers. Today, it has 419 subscribers -- not just barbershoppers (including some in other districts), but also some Sweet Ads.

"Over the 10 years, 9,649 messages have been posted. In 1977 (PioNet's first 11 months), 544 messages were sent. The busiest calendar year was 1998, the second year, with 1,471 messages. In 2006, subscribers posted 530 messages.

"Congratulate yourselves on being participants in one of the most-active -- and (now) well-behaved -- district barbershop e-mail lists in the Society!"

Jim Styer, PioNet co-operator  
5253 Lake Village Drive  
Sarasota FL 34235-2046

The **Pioneer District web site** has all kinds of linked goodies at

<http://www.harmonize.com/Pioneer/links/links.htm>

such as: Harmonizer online, PROBE online, Live 365 Radio, and LIVEWIRE.

Watch the **next issue of Troubadour** for a special article on **Tom Blue**.

INTERSTATE RIVALS were the teaching quartet Feb 3 at Royal Oak Church of Christ, where MOXXIE, BORDER CROSSING, and WILDCARD took advantage of the Top Gun quartet training during the day and then listened to the 1987 International champs in a \$5 evening show. Jeff Spires, Al Fisk, Dave Bartilson and John Cowlshaw were there. The members of INTERSTATE RIVALS are Kipp Buckner (T), Joe Connelly (L), Paul Gilman (Br), and Jay Hawkins (Bs). Joe couldn't be there, but Mike Slamka filled in admirably. All four RIVALS went on to 2<sup>nd</sup> Gold medals within eight yrs of Gold in 1987, and Jay just won a 3<sup>rd</sup> Gold in the first old-style Quartet competition at the Mid-Winter convention in Albuquerque.

#### **AROUND THE WORLD**

Ooh, this Missouri quartet got coverage.

[http://www.ksdk.com/news/news\\_article.aspx?storyid=112637](http://www.ksdk.com/news/news_article.aspx?storyid=112637)

(Click on "video")

**Julie Siepler, Media Relations Manager** at headquarters in Kenosha, wrote:

Just wanted to say thanks to all for your work in promoting barbershop through media coverage of Singing Valentines. My "clipping service" is limited to Google Alerts, but I have seen some really good stories come through. While brief calendar listings, etc., are important and not always easy to come by, I am especially encouraged to see lots of Valentines coverage that includes background information and quotes that tell a broader story about barbershop.

Many of those stories are posted to [www.barbershop.org/presskit](http://www.barbershop.org/presskit) > Barbershop Harmony Society in the News

Keep up the good work in your public relations efforts, and keep building on your successes. And remember to write down some great delivery stories to share.

Thanks for all you do.

Julie

## VOCAL ITEMS

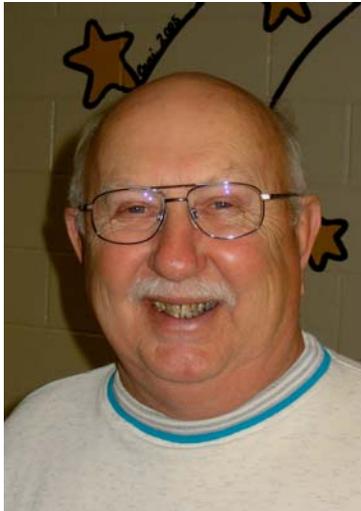
### Sound and Music (the 12<sup>th</sup> in a series by Bruce Brede)

For the barbershop philosophers to consider..."It has been said that it's the space between the bars that holds the tiger and it's the silence between the notes that makes the music"

**Ross Ensign** sends along the following story (to be treated as entertainment, not science!). "For reasons that remain mostly mysterious, **the note we call B flat** does the oddest things. Here are a few of them:"

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7442915>

## MEET TOM JACKSON



Tom was born in Highland Park in 1937. His father was a vice-president at Miller Homes, the largest developer in Michigan. Tom has an older brother and sister, but neither they nor his folks followed the athletic and musical path that Tom did in school. The Highland Park schools had vocal and instrumental

programs and swimming pools in each school. Tom played the clarinet and bass clarinet and sang in the choruses and in St Alban's Episcopal Church choir (and, as an adult, at Birmingham St. James Episcopal for forty years). He started swimming in grade school, and continued with butterfly and breast stroke in YMCA and in high school where he won four letters and co-captained a team that was one of the better ones in the state.

During Basic Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, his swimming team whipped the officers' team and won the post championship. Then Tom went on to Central Michigan University where he swam on the college team and gained his Associates Degree in Business.

His work life began at the Highland Parker, a printing plant that printed the local paper by that name. It didn't survive the transition to offset printing, but used to be located across from the Ford Motor plant just off Woodward between 5 and 6 Mile Roads. Then he worked in sales at Meyer Brass and Aluminum.

In the early 1960's he began working for Oakland County in the Civil Defense department. Recall that at that time, missiles were stationed around the area (one on Wise Road), and there were four unoccupied, but ready-to-be-used, 200-bed hospitals, (one at Northland Mall).

Later, he worked with Ken Vannetta, head of the Grounds Department, to gain passage of a millage for county parks, (the first successful millage in 30 years). From their office at the County complex on Telegraph Rd, Ken and Tom and their Administrative Assistant Pauline xxx, began to buy up properties for county parks. The first was Springfield Oaks, and there were ten others by the time Tom retired in 1993. Tom also ran the Wave Pool, the 2<sup>nd</sup> one in North America, and the inaugural Soap Box Derby, for which a hill was built in front of the Sheriff's department. He had hand-on management of Waterford Oaks, the headquarters park of the system. Nowadays, we can count on Tom's connections to facilitate bus rentals for us, and summer singing location at "the Fridge."

Tom and his wife Joana have two sons, Steven who lives in Florida, and William in Michigan. In the winter, Tom and Joana spend a month in Florida, this year at Hudson, near New Port Richie, renting a home next to a 17<sup>th</sup> green. He will also visit his high school buddy who still competes in seniors swimming.

In the summer they spend the weekdays at their home in the Harwoods, a thousand acre estate on Hubbard Lake, which Miller Homes helped to develop in the 1940's. Its location near Alpena has allowed him to see the Alpena barbershop shows, and occasionally attend the Harrisville barbershop weekends. His interest in barbershop made him ripe for the plucking when Bruce Brede, a breakfast companion, urged him to come to the Big Chief Chorus seven years

ago. He has done some quartetting, singing tenor with Bruce, Jeff Spiers, and Jack Teuber.

### **Judging the Barbershop Style (What is contestable?)**

Well-known arranger and judge **Tom Gentry** wrote the following on Harmonet:

“We Music judges discussed "**Summertime**" in our online forum not too long ago and leaned toward the view that the emperor had no clothes. For one thing, the piece is in minor mode (henceforth, evidently, to be known as "Phrygin' minor mode").

“Now, even though major triads and barbershop sevenths need to predominate to make a piece good barbershop, we are loathe to rule out minor-mode songs in blanket fashion. Too many songs that seem to fit us well would be lost. Thus, we sometimes take this requirement with a grain of salt.

“However, "Summertime" has an additional flaw, one that is by no means, um, minor: There are not enough circle-of-fifths chord progressions. Specifically, none of us can find what we consider to be a featured occurrence of either a II7-V7-I or VI7-IImin-V7-I progression. (Eyes roll back in some readers' heads.) Somehow we have hypnotized ourselves for the last couple of years into thinking the song probably passed muster, therefore giving it the benefit of the doubt. In my estimation, that situation is unlikely to continue, so singer beware.”

Tom Gentry

### **Letters to the editor:**

#### **(From Raleigh Bloch)**

Hi: I agree with your new director, Thomas Blue, music can be a life time involvement. That's why music in the schools is so important. Sports are fine but I don't see many 50 year old guys playing football.

Raleigh Bloch

Pioneer District President

#### **(From Matt Tipton)**

Congratulations Big Chieftains!

What great and exciting news! The Pioneer District has a lot to be proud of in your chapter. Don't be shy about letting us know about the many wonderful accomplishments that I'm certain lie ahead for you.

Dream big!

Matthew Tipton

Director of Music & Performance, Pioneer District

#### **(From Laird Geyer)**

Hi John,

Congratulations to all at Pontiac-Waterford on the appointment of your new director. May you enjoy a long and successful run with a man who sounds like he can make the Big Chiefs even bigger.

I like his idea about a lifetime of involvement with music. Having achieved senior citizen status myself, I look back and really can't remember a time when music was not a part of my life.

Best wishes and God's blessings to all.

Laird Geyer, Bari, **IDENTITY CRISIS**, Grosse Pointe Lakeshore Chorus

#### **(From Art Carinci)**

How are you John? How's the 4WD crew doing? I want you to know that I miss you and the group tremendously. I can't even sing out loud in the apartment because I would probably disturb someone and I might get a shoe flying through the window.

Things here are still tough because of the "stuff" that has to be done. Getting the apartment together, teach from a new textbook which I never saw before, deal with 35 plus students per class, French club, filling out forms, more forms and still more forms, syllabi, class expectations etc, etc, etc. What makes it all harder to handle I still haven't found a barbershop group here, nor am I playing hockey. I even haven't had much time to spend in the casinos--which might just be a good thing.

Well, give my best to all. Good luck with the Valentine sing outs. Thanks in advance for keeping the communications open. I love reading the Smoke Signals.

Art

Note: All un-attributed articles and photos are by John Cowlshaw



## **CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

Director: Thomas Blue

Assistant Directors: Dick Johnson, Fred McFadyen, Lyle Howard, & Bill Holmes

President: Zaven Melkonian (248-698-1144)

Past President: Pete Mazzara

VP: Chapter Dev: Wayne Cheyne

VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm

VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber

Secretary: Bill Holmes

Treasurer: Dick Johnson

Members at Large – Ron Clarke, Dar Johnson, Dave Myre, Gil Schreiner

Chorus Manager: (open)

Music Team: Holm, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Melkonian, Murray,  
Prueter

## **CALENDAR**

Feb 23,24, F, Sa	D.O.C. show, “The Songsters Take Manhattan”
Feb 27, T	Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Mar 6, T	Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Mar 10, Sa	Lansing show, with METROPOLIS
Mar 13, T	Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Mar 20, T	Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Mar 27, T	Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Mar 30-Apr 1, F-Su	Spring Singing Retreat, MacMullan Ctr, Higgins Lk.
Apr 6, F	Annual Woodshed contest
Apr 13-15, F-Su	Pioneer District Convention, Traverse City
Jul 1-8	BHS International convention, Denver
Jul 28, Sa	Goodrich Summer Concert Series, Goodrich Village Park
Jul 29 – Aug 5	Harmony University 2007, St. Joseph MO
Aug 7, T	Michigan Senior Oympics Banquet, Rochester OPC.
Aug 9, Th	Oxford Village Park (with Sweet Ads’ Great Lake Chorus)

