Vol. 7, No. 5, (#77) September 1, 2007

From Director Thomas the Blue (but oft wearing Yellow, when it’s not in the Laundry!)

Men,

Thank you all for your time, effort and continued good singing throughout all of our "summer tour" sing-outs. I appreciate all that have made efforts to be at as many as possible. Let's continue to have as our focus, good vowels (tall or round), singing on the breath, solid intonation (listening ears and correct pitches), watching the conductor, facial communication with audience of song texts, and overall enjoyment of singing. Sometimes we let the "little things" that will almost always be there distract from our singing "big picture." I think our audience response has been very positive at each of our performances and that is because we all try our best and want to do well for the audience, ourselves and the music.

The summer has been a very busy and yet very productive musically and communicatively to a wide reaching audience. As we work our way to the fall, let's all made a concerted effort to encourage guests, not just at guest night, but anytime. Our rehearsals are open and I think our rehearsals are some of the best times musically and provide opportunities to connect with new singers and each other.

Again, thank you men for all of your time and consistent attendance at rehearsals and sing-outs. Please be sure to thank all of those who continually do things for all of our success.

From the Prez:

Men,

Our annual election of chapter officers is rapidly approaching. The election is scheduled for Tuesday, October 16, 2007. I have asked last year’s nominating committee to once again assume those duties. The chairman is Al Monroe. Assisting him will be John Cowlishaw and Jeff Doig. They will be contacting each of you regarding an interest on your part of serving on the 2008 Executive Board. Please consider all board positions to be open to anyone wishing to be placed in nomination for any of the board positions. When approached by any of the committee members, please give careful thought and consideration to any proposal that they may make regarding a specific board position or a board position in general.

IMPORTANT: If you have a board position that you feel you could be effective in, please don't hesitate to contact a member of the nominating committee and ask to be put on the ballot. I repeat......ALL POSITIONS ARE OPEN TO ANYONE WHO MAY FEEL QUALIFIED TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF THAT OFFICE.

Congratulations NORTHBOUND SOUND!! I think I speak for the entire Pontiac-Waterford Chapter in extending my congratulations to the Macomb-based quartet with two BCC members in key roles. Terry and Chuckles, we're proud of you guys. Please pass along my kudos to Bob and Joe. You guys are off to a great start.

It's great to be a barbershopper!!

DOC FUN NIGHT (August 21) by Zaven Melkonian

The threat of rain was very real as DOC Fun Night approached. I had even taken the precaution of asking about an “alternative plan” at Monday night’s DOC rehearsal. Earl Berry, who was in charge of the event, assured me that the party was still on. Based on his answer, I sent out the “rain or shine” memo and lo and behold the weather gods smiled upon us. The weather was perfect! It appeared that almost every BCC member who had signed up to go showed up for what turned out to be a stellar evening.

Jack Day, at whose home the event took place, was more than ready for the crowd. The 100 year old house, located in a quiet Royal Oak neighborhood, boasted a huge yard, large enough for the crowd with room to spare, beginning with enough tables and chairs to accommodate everyone, but there was even a stage, complete with quartet microphones, all ready to go. The sound system was set up to produce a CD of the performing quartets which was then passed out to each group at the close of the evening.
Suffice to say that there was more than enough food and drink for everyone. The DOC crew provided brats, beans, potato salad, chips and much, much more. No one should have gone home hungry. The funding for all of that was provided by a voluntary purchase of 50/50 tickets.

After eating, Carl Dahlke, Freddie McFadyen and Steve Sutherland each got a chance to direct a gang sing of one of their favorite polecats. Then the evening’s entertainment began, first with some quartets, and then with each of the choruses singing. Among the quartets were LOVING MEMORY (with Melkonian from Pontiac), CELEBRATION MINUS TWO (Cheyne & Butcher filled in), NORTHBOUND SOUND (Murray & Jamison from Pontiac) and THREE WHEEL DRIVE PLUS ONE (DOC director Steve Sutherland filled in).

Tom Blue directed the BCC as we sang “Ain't Misbehavin”, “Let The Rest Of The World Go By,” and “Precious Lord”. A number of DOC singers commented on how good the chorus sounded.

Steve Sutherland directed the DOC chorus as they sang “Darkness On The Delta” and “If The Lord Be Willin' and The Creek Don't Rise.” He then wrapped up the evening’s entertainment with “Keep the Whole World Singing.”

The Fun Addicts band was in full stride with our own Bob Marshall on trombone, Len Barnes on trumpet, Bob Legato on saxophone and Mike Keith on the keyboard. Non-members rounded out the sound with clarinets and drums. Eileen Marshall was their Lead singer and joined in most of the songs by some of our BCC hams.

Then the Big Chief Chorus sang three songs under Tom Blue's direction, followed by Bob Butcher singing “Heart of my Heart” to his wife, backed up by our CELEBRATION quartet of Bill Dabbs, Jack Teuber, Greg Moss and Bruce Brede.

What a time was had by all and we got to drive home without the windshield wipers going.

Thanks again to Eileen and Bob who entertained us all in the rain amidst a major kitchen remodeling.

AROUND THE PATCH
Thanks to Dave Shantz for bringing his keyboard to our Fridge rehearsals. It was available for Tom to play out any parts we were having trouble with.

Dave Myre has agreed, with just a modicum of arm-twisting by Prez Zaven, to be our new Chorus Manager. Thanks to Terry Jamison for serving in that capacity after Art Carinci skipped town. (Just kidding, Art.)

Art’s mother required extra care after she fell and broke some ribs and punctured her lung. Art’s wife Maria and brother will take over that job as Art returned to Las Vegas August 19 to resume teaching.

Freddie McFadyen’s polecat college finished its 10th week.

John and Sandra Northey traveled thru Scandinavia.

Dick Johnson hopes to sing with his quartet in the show.

Our choral and directorial quality is attracting guests. Welcome to Fred Pioch, Lance Shew, Bob Wollard. Hope you keep coming!

(From Music Chairman Roger Holm) We are officially “off the paper” on “Lida Rose” as of August 28, followed by “Wells Fargo Wagon” on September 4, “County Roads” on September 11, and “MacNamara's Band” on September 18! All of us probably won't make those dates, but we gotta start getting them under our belt soon - and since we don't have another sing-out until October 9th, we can really concentrate on them for a few weeks here!

(From Lyle Howard) It's with sadness I report the loss of an old time member from an era long past. Ardean (Whitey) Ryden, a one-time very active member of the Pontiac chapter passed away August 19. He was 86.

From the days when we used to cook a meal for our members and many guests on our third Friday of the month meeting night, those who remember will not forget Whitey's “Dego Beans and Hot Dogs” when it was his turn to cook. Never anything else. Whitey had a great sense of humor, and was much fun to be around.

Whitey abruptly ended his barbershopping hobby when his son was sent home from Vietnam in a casket. From that time forward he was never quite the same and never got over it.

A memorial service was held August 25 at Riverside Chapel.
On July 14th, our Lead Section Leader started something new – electronic sectionals. They have been sent to the Leads about weekly after regular rehearsal or a public gig. As of August 14, five electronic Lead sectionals had been issued.

Chuck Murray has asked an interesting question about our sound system:
“Do we have any monitors for our outdoor sound system, the one used for BCC sing-outs? I can envision two to four monitors across the front of the chorus. I feel a great need to hear what the other singers are singing. I'll wager many other guys have a similar problem. It's hard for the harmony parts to try to harmonize to the Leads when we cannot hear them!”

**QUARTET NEWS**

**NORTHBOUND SOUND** (Tenor Terry Jamison, Bass Chuck Murray, Lead Joe Baldiga, and Bari Bob McCaffrey from Macomb) is starting to make a name for itself. It sang at the DOC picnic, which emanated into an invitation from Jack Day to sing at his Classic Car show next year during the Woodward cruise.

Here’s Terry’s report on their 4th place finish at Bush League, singing “For All We Know” and “After You’re Gone”:

**BUSH LEAGUE**

“SHOWTIME, with Jim Johnson (the ringer) blew everyone away. Second place went to SINGING WITH DAD, from Macomb, and third to BORDER BOYZ, from Ohio. NORTHBOUND SOUND took 4th and was just four points behind SINGING WITH DAD. Macomb can boast having two quartets placing 2nd and 4th. Pontiac-Waterford too should be proud with NORTHBOUND SOUND, having two of its members in that quartet.

If there were just one word to describe the experience of bush league it would be WOW!!! After the morning’s competition there were five hours of coaching that afternoon…..wow! It can be said our tool box is now full of tools. These tools will help us go from a good quartet to a great one. A very helpful tool we used is the digital recorder. After each coaching session we used the recording to make notes for future use.

FERMATA NOWHERE took a liking to us. Tom and Jeff were two of the four coaches we had. Tom was something else. He always started by saying six years ago he was in a quartet with this lead who did this or that. We think of Bush League as a learning tool for new quartets, which is true; however the friendships made are just as important as the learning tools we gained. Pete welcomed both Joe and me to the fraternal order of quartet competitors as this was our first ever to compete as a quartet. I’m no longer a rookie and look forward to returning next year to pin the medals on you guys.” Wow! To compete in Bush League… $70, to gain learning tools… $125, to experience Bush League… priceless. WOW!!!

(From Jack Teuber)

On August 1 our CELEBRATION BARBERSHOP QUARTET sang in the Cass Lakefront home of Thelma Wright for her 80th birthday. Her extended family of five joined her as Bruce, Greg, Bill and Jack sang nine songs including, of course, “Happy Birthday” and “Thelma, Thelma Bless your Heart.” Arrangements were made by Arturo and Linda Sanchez, longtime supporters of our Chapter Valentines program. Arturo is Thelma’s brother, Linda sings with the Church Street Singers and the whole family are lovers of Barbershop Harmony. They are certain to attend our November 3rd Show and order some February valentines too.

**FOUR WHEEL DRIVE** sang on August 8 for the Sponsors Banquet for the Michigan Senior Olympics. Michelle Smith, organizer of the event, wrote to Jack Teuber:

“FOUR WHEEL DRIVE was wonderful! They sounded great and we were so lucky to have them to celebrate the Michigan Senior Olympics. It was a good size crowd too! I was really surprised that they could take on the National Anthem at such short notice when the scheduled soloist was a last minute cancellation.”

Thanks to Tom Jackson for making this appearance possible. Thanks to FOUR WHEEL DRIVE for helping to re-pay our debt to Oakland County Parks and Recreation for the use of the Fridge during the summer.

Footnote: When the Big Chief Chorus sang at Clarkston, it preceded TERRIE LEA & THE MUSTANGS (Outstanding Detroit Country Vocalist for 2004, 2005 & 2006). When FOUR WHEEL DRIVE sang at the Senior Olympics it grabbed an after-bite at Appleby’s and were waited on by Terrie Lea’s daughter. (Don’t ask how that connection was made.) It jiggled her daughter so much that she spilled a full glass of ice water in Al’s lap. A chilling experience!

**MEMBERSHIP (at 56)**

September Birthdays: Greg Moss (8th), John Cowlishaw (10th), Neil Braun (13th), Mel Parrish (13th), Dick Johnson (24th), Dave Myre (29th)

Kenosha is “down” so I can’t learn of new September birthdays or renewals this month.

**Barbershopper of the Month – Al Monroe** – for his commitment shown by driving 140 miles round trip, singing in FOUR WHEEL DRIVE, and chairing the nominating committee.

**AROUND THE DISTRICT**
Fall convention, from Al Fisk.

So far we have three quartets signed up for contest - SHOWTIME (seniors, too), SOMETHING BIG!! and BARBERSHOP STYLE. No choruses yet. Deadline is October 11th at midnight.

Mr. Bill Rashleigh, entertainer, educator, and former Society staff member, is doing our Joe Barbershop Chorus. One tune will be “Heart of my Heart” with his own tag that he'll teach that day. Not sure what the other will be yet.

If your group is planning on talking on stage, see the new directive from the Presentation category. You may wish to rethink your strategy. Looks like they're going to start doing what the category description says to do - dish out penalties for excessive talking. Read here http://www.pioneerdistrict.org/C&J/TalkingRuleUpdate.pdf

Macomb is bringing its portable curtain for all to use. Cool! So, plan on having a curtain.

(…and from Rick Anderson, Pioneer Marketing & P.R.)

Hello Pioneer!

This fall, the Pioneer District will be sponsoring a mustache contest as a fund-raising event for Harmony Foundation. The entry fee is just $10 and will be judged by the barber located in the Radisson Plaza. If you haven't already, start growing your mustache now! The Labor Day weekend is a great time to get started.

Also from Al Fisk:

Greetings, former Tiger fans...I am pleased and proud to announce that Pioneer District is home to three recertified judges and one brand new certified CA!!!

Returning to the ranks are:

1) Mr. Al Fisk – MUSIC
2) Mr. Roger Lewis – PRESENTATION
3) Mr. Mike O'Donnell – PRESENTATION

Joining us in this wonderful fraternity:

4) Mr. Ron Eubank - CONTEST ADMINISTRATOR

Congrats, Ron, and welcome to our brotherhood.

From Jim Styer in Sarasota, PioNet co-operator, formerly 20 years in Battle Creek chapter

“My head has been elsewhere the past several months, which is why I haven't gotten around to telling you PioNet pals what's been going on with me this year. Except for the lethargy I feel pretty good… The doctors now say that any cancer may be so small that it can't been seen by scans. The treatments are primarily to make sure it either is all gone, or that it doesn't grow. They are optimistic.

I am not singing barbershop because of other priorities in my life now. But I am still a SPEB member and staying in touch with the great Sarasota FL chapter, whose members have been supportive. Other friends down here also have been most supportive: Many visitors, lots of prayers, and more than 100 e-mails!

AROUND THE WORLD

Jim Henry's Keynote Address at Harmony College has gotten a lot of press. It is available as text or video at: http://harmonyuniversity.blogspot.com/2007/08/gold-medal-moments-by-dr.html

An era ends in Kenosha (by Brian Lynch, BHS staff, from Harmonet)

August 27-August 31: Moving to Nashville, unpacking.
September 1-3: Labor Day Holiday weekend.
September 4-7: Training and orientation for new staff

Our new shipping address is:

Barbershop Harmony Society
110 7th Avenue N Nashville TN 37203-3704

“After 50 years in this city on the lake, the Barbershop Harmony Society is uprooting itself to make a new home for itself in Nashville, Tennessee. Around the world, Kenosha has been to Barbershoppers what Cooperstown is to baseball fans: the single place synonymous with their beloved hobby. And throughout that time, the Society has been faithfully served by scores of employees who also called Kenosha home. Some were Barbershoppers who came to Kenosha to work for the Society; others were Wisconsin natives who took employment at the stable, reliable Society, and gave good measure for reasonable pay for many years.

“As it happens, only two of the "natives" have chosen to relocate their lives and families to Nashville. And so, at the close of business Friday, the retirees will gather their personal items, kiss goodbye, and walk out of the barbershop world. In most cases, forever...

“Our barbershop world celebrates its barbershop heroes above all, and certainly our staff Barbershoppers give their time and energy unstintingly, publicly, all year long. But the world will little know [or] honor the daily contributions to the hobby made by the largely anonymous toilers who have kept the blood circulating for so long... So hail to our Kenosha staff... Hail to good work done quietly, faithfully, constantly. Godspeed and good fortune to all.”

AVIATION AND BARBERSHOP

As of the end of 2006, there were 597,109 active pilots, or 0.2% of the US population (one out of 500).

However, in our chorus are eleven members that are pilots or have at least some flight training or have had other close association with aviation.
As soon as I joined the chorus, I learned that director Chris Miller owned a share of a Cessna 182 Skylane and sold aviation insurance for a living, and then I learned of others. Are pilots attracted to Barbershop? Are Barbershoppers attracted to aviation? Meet our aeronautical aficionados:

**John Cowlishaw** began flying lessons fifteen years ago, at the age of 54, when his summer salary was no longer needed to pay kids’ college bills. He trained at Troy and Pontiac, getting his license in 1992. He immediately joined the Warren Flying Club, which owned two C-172’s and a C-182. Most of his flying was in their Skyhawks, but he did fly with two others in the club’s Skylane to Alaska during the summer of 1993. Since then, he has owned a Piper Cherokee, a Grumman Tiger, and now a Piper Tomahawk, which is a second-generation two-seat trainer. He flew IFR in the first two (the hardest thing he has ever done), but is content to fly VFR nowadays. He also has certified in float planes. His hours total 1400. He missed the chorus picnic because of his most recent flight to Birmingham, Alabama.

**Doc Mann** flew for about four years in Illinois. His training was in a Beech Musketeer, at Joliet, IL. Then he built up time and split costs with a friend who owned a Beech Debonair. Wanting his own plane, he bought a C-172 Skyhawk which he flew for a year, and then sold, after another friend with a V-tailed Bonanza (a variant of the Debonair) offered co-piloting and eventually co-ownership. This master pilot gave him lots of practice, probably 50 hours under the hood, and some aerobatics, in this variable-pitch, retractable gear aircraft. Doc sold his half-share when he moved to Michigan with about 300 hours total time.

His memorable experiences include a bold landing at O’Hare, (in parallel with a 747), and a peaceful full-moon night flight being shattered by a bird-strike, perhaps a night-hawk, at 4500 feet.

**Howard Lynn** got a ride from “Buck” Rogers in 1944 in Toronto, when Canadians were trying to get lads interested in becoming pilots. He was in the American navy by the time of his next ride, packing a 45 on a “guard mail” flight into Pusan Korea, ten ft above the water, under the range of enemy gunfire. He finally took lessons as a civilian, in 1954-55, out of the Trotts Brothers Airport at Almont, MI, in their J-3 Cub and Ercoupe. The spins and stalls practice, however, were performed in a “Commonwealth,” a old high-wing, radial engine, that Howard’s instructor put into a hammerhead stall at 10,000 feet, and that Howard brought out of the descent at 1200 feet. He soloed after eight hrs. But training ended without a certificate at about thirty hours, when Howard’s first kid arrived and money was tight.

Howard’s other contact with aviation was working for almost twenty years at Williams International in plant heating and air-conditioning. There he got to see the Williams Aerial Systems Platform (the WASP or “flying pulpit”) and X-jet, up close.

**Terry Jamison** has had many links to aviation. On the USS Kitty Hawk, he kept track of all airborne aircraft within a 500 mile radius of his carrier with a grease pencil and a board. During the Iranian takeover of the American embassy in Tehran, his carrier was stationed in the Persian Gulf where the helicopters left his carrier deck for the abortive American rescue attempt.

In 1985, he joined the Confederate Air Force. A group of WWII veterans, appalled at the destruction of military aircraft, bought surplus aircraft, and when the federal government objected, formed a nonprofit corporation with that moniker. By the time Terry joined, they were the 13th largest air force in the world and owned 143 aircraft with 8000 members including 500 pilots. Terry helped them as a military historian and was also certified as a flight engineer in B17s, B24s, B25s, and the B 29.

For the last twenty years, he has given talks to high school students on World War II air power or the Civil War. He arrives in a period uniform which jumps out at the students and enlivens their otherwise drab history book.

Terry has quite a library, with several hundred books on military history, and tons of magazines, (*Arm Forces Journal*, *Naval History* etc.) He has the complete eight-volume set of *WWII Airpower*, the confidential report for American airmen on survival techniques and Nazi air abilities.

**Dick Johnson** flew a 65 hp Piper Vagabond for a couple years out of Paul Cox Airfield in Terre Haute, IN. His neighbor, Alan Barr, owned it and was eager to have a flying companion, so 24-year-old Dick flew all around Indiana with him and took lessons from him. Dick’s memories include a close call getting out of a tall-grass field, just clearing the cornstalk tassels at the far end, his first side-slip landing over the high tension wires at the airstrip, and navigating in southeast Indiana where “French surveying” was anything but N-S, E-W. Dick almost invested in an Ercoupe but decided to curtail his flying as a young father with family responsibilities.

**Zaven Melkonian** cannot recall a time in his life when he didn’t respond excitedly to a plane going over. The old PCA (Penn Central Airways) DC-3’s flew ~2500 ft right down Woodward Ave over his house on their way out of Detroit airport to points north. So when he was 15 he started secretly taking lessons in a J-3 Cub at the Pontiac airport, paying for it with his salary from the Pharmacy in Sam’s Cut Rate Department Store so that his mother wouldn’t know. Alas, money ended, but not his interest, which has been lifelong, and continues now with subscriptions to Wings, Air Power, AirTrails and Warbirds International. One other result of his interest was successfully encouraging his brother Dodge to join the Army Air Corps and become a pilot in WWII instead of being a “mere soldier.”
J-3 Cub
V-tailed Bonanza
Piper Tomahawk
Beech 400A
Eipper Quicksilver MX
Cessna 172
H-21 Shawnee
Piper Vagabond
B-17
Ercoupe
Walt Denio joined the Air Force Reserve. After Aviation cadet school in Chanute, IL, he flew single engine jets and then settled into a career as a helicopter pilot, (1954-1964), flying the Bell H-13 Grasshopper, the Sikorsky H-19, and the H-21 that carried 21 in troop transport. His stint overlapped Korea and Vietnam, but was spent stateside.

As a new officer, he could suddenly afford to buy a sparkling Ford convertible. When he got reassigned to Elmendorf Air Force base in Anchorage, Alaska, he drove there, along the AlCan Highway. After four years in Alaska, he was transferred to Duluth where he resigned from the Air Force.

Younger brother Larry had always looked up to his pilot brother, so upon Walt’s return to Pontiac, they bought a C-140 taildragger together, in which Walt got his civilian ticket, and then instructed Larry. At one time Walt even ran a small aviation business, selling aircraft cleaning products at airports that he visited. The brothers went on to co-own a C-177 Cardinal and a C-182 Skylane, which was sold about 15 years after Larry’s move out east. Walt lost his eye in an auto accident in 1972, but got his medical back after a year. Now, as Walt says, “I still stay current in my dreams.” His hours totaled about 3500. In that whole time, “I had eight engine failures, but never had an accident!”

Jeff Doig has always had a strong interest in aviation. With GI Bill support, Jeff got his Private pilot’s license, and Commercial, Instrument, and Multiengine ratings. He and Katherine took trips to Mackinaw Island, and he accumulated about 350 hours before family responsibilities took over. John Cowlishaw capitalized on his talents when the two of them flew in the 2001 S.M.A.L.L. race, taking 3rd place.

Jeff also flew ultralights for a while back in the early 80s. He flew an Eipper Quicksilver MX out of Spencer field until maintenance on the rented aircraft became so bad that he felt that they were no longer safe to fly. “But it is the closest thing that I’ve found to flying like a bird.”

He also did one static-line parachute jump. “The parachute was square and you could actually fly it like a plane. It was awesome and I would it again in a heartbeat.”

Not only is his brother an airplane mechanic in California, but also his son Justin has a B.S. in Avionics from Embry Riddle University.

Ross Ensign was a frequent passenger in his work-life, flying to stores across the Rockies and from coast to coast. Some of it was between St. Louis and Columbia, MO, on “a small commuter airline called TransMo. It was the pilot who showed up at the terminal gate, took your tickets, and loaded the baggage. They flew I think a five-seater Cessna and another twin engine plane (I used to refer to it as the Sky King plane) that I liked a lot. Often I got to sit in the copilot seat and converse with the pilot. Had a couple close calls on those planes, one having to find an alternate airfield in bad weather and almost having a jet land on top of us and the other in the Cessna hitting a severe cold front, tons of rain & wind and having the engine quit all at the same time.”

This led to Ross’s taking a few lessons when he was in Salt Lake City. He also has flown kites, a gas model on the control line, and he attended the EAA convention in Oshkosh last year.

Paul Smith took his training at Fallston Airport, northeast of Baltimore, MD. He did his check ride and received his Private Pilot’s license in 1968, the day before moving to Michigan with GM. Here, he joined the Warren Flying Club, and flew its three planes for four years. When he and his wife moved to Ortonville, the distance inhibited further flying, terminating his hours at 140.

Cory Flatoff is our one and only professional pilot in the chorus.

His first flight, when he was 14, convinced him that flying was in his blood. He graduated in 1993 with a Bachelor of Aeronautical Science from Parks College, Saint Louis University, earning his Private Pilot’s license in a Tomahawk, his Instrument rating in a Mooney and his Commercial/Multi-engine rating in a twin Cessna 310R. He built time as a Flight Instructor in St. Louis, and slowly worked his way up the corporate flight ladder, flying charter in a Multi-engine Beech Baron 58, then a King Air 90, King Air 200, to the right seat of a Mitsubishi Diamond Jet, which later became the Beechjet 400A that he currently flies. He flies for Aerodynamics, Inc., out of Oakland County International Airport (PTK), and has around 4800 hours of flight time.

Besides this group, our past member and recent guest, Dave Willett, is an aviation mechanic, running his own business, C ‘n D Wings and Things, out of Oakland Troy Airport.

Why are so many Barbershoppers also involved in Aviation? My only guess is that each activity is selective for a certain kind of adventurousness, getting off one’s seat and being active.

Max-Q Gold Medalist Tony DeRosa coaches the Great Lakes Sweet Adelines’ chorus

Three of our members were able to attend the coaching session on August 4. Here are some selected comments.

From Dave Shantz:

1. Since everyone in the chorus knew all the words and notes, he did not have to spend any time on those issues!

2. Instead, he focused on a very large number of phrases in each song, talking about the exact pronunciation of key words and sounds, so that
everyone was on the same page re vowel sounds. It certainly added to the unit sound of the group and the clarity and sharpness of the words!

3. He also discussed the tempo and dramatic emphases in many key phrases in each song, and had the chorus sing them repeatedly in an effort to engrain them in “procedural memory.” It seemed clear that a chorus that worked that hard on that many issues would probably sing better than a chorus that only worked like that on a smaller number of singing issues!

4. On a number of occasions Tony reminded the group to “keep singing through to the end of the phrase.” It is the same issue Tom raises when he encourages us to “keep the breath coming all the way through the phrase.” They are both criticizing our tendency to start cutting back on the amount of air passing over the vocal cords in order to have some left at the end of the phrase. As a result, the end of the phrase sounds thin and more wispy than it should.

5. A final point I got from the session was the importance, as Tony put it, of singing from “the front of the brain, not the back of the brain.” The back of the brain is where the procedural memory lies, and it should have the music so well learned that it can just flow out automatically without conscious thought or direction; you should not have to think about what comes next, it comes automatically. This allows you to think with the front of the brain which is where you develop a conscious image of the characters, the story, the context, the meaning of the song. This is what “sells the song” but you can't focus on this frontal lobe task if you don't have the mechanics down pat. Alternatively, if you are singing only with the back of your brain, the sound will be technically correct, but sound mechanical and uninspired.

From Doc Mann:

Gentlemen, I have attended several all-day coaching retreats with the Big Chief Chorus, and we could not hold a candle to the sixty-some women who stood on the risers for 3 ½ hours without a break until a one hour lunch. Their attention and focus on their director and on Tony was consistent and professional. Tony emphasized some of the same things our directors and coaches do – vowel sounds, singing tall, expression, lifting the voice at the end of the phrase, breathing properly and in the right places, and unit sound.

By the afternoon session, fatigue began to set in and voices were less sharp and crisp. With so many small changes in five songs and two long sessions, I felt the chorus members would not retain all the teaching. They did not videotape and there were few recorders.

Jeff Doig and I agreed that such coaching should be carried out early in the learning process, before bad habits are learned. Every chorus member appeared to know words and notes to each song so well that it was automatic and therefore they could work on things like choreography and subtle changes in music.

All in all, I felt the coaching session was productive and Mr. DeRosa’s mannerisms made it at times light and fun for the chorus singers.

Tony Bennett is interesting to barbershoppers both because of the songs he sings, and the way he has dealt with aging.

I watched the PBS special on Tony recently, and then heard a CBC radio show a few days later. Suddenly he’s the cover of the September AARP magazine. Here are some excerpts.

“…for all his gravitas, Bennett is as rapt as a kid when he talks about art. Maybe more so. Age, he finds, breeds enthusiasm. “When you get older, you count your blessings a lot more,” he says. “It’s a glorious day to take a walk in the park. When you’re younger, you say, ‘Oh, another day.'”

…has produced such standards as “Rags to Riches,” “The Best is Yet to Come,” and “I Left My Heart in San Francisco.” … Music and painting are his life’s dual passions. “It’s not that I want to paint or I want to sing,” he says. “I have to.”

Michael Buble, the popular young crooner, says the secret of Bennett’s multigenerational appeal is his love of the music he sings. “Joy emanates from him as he effortlessly moves through a song,” Buble says. “It’s infectious.”

Every song has an emotional story, Bennett explains. It’s his job to put that story across.

…legendary producer Phil Ramone says, “I think he’s one of the ultimate artists in seeing life from a musical point of view.” Whereas many performers need a crowd’s response to spark a fresh idea, he adds, “Tony completely comes from within himself.”
So, for Bennett, the work of life continues. “When someone questions me about retiring,” he says, “I say, ‘No, I have too much to learn yet.”’

**Selling Show Program Ads**

One of us shares his experience selling show program ads:

About eleven years ago, I began to consider selling, but I'm no salesman and detest walking in cold off the street.

About eight years ago, our treasurer gave a speech about how Ads can be our biggest money-maker, explaining that there were virtually no expense involved, because we had to have some kind of Show program anyway and what does it cost to print a few more pages. He explained that most guys average about 80 bucks an Ad so two Ads each times 50 guys results in revenue of 8000 bucks.

So I was inspired to do my part and I set my objectives. Two Ads the first year and two new ones each year after until I got to ten total. I reached my goal in three years not five. My other objective was to never contact anyone who didn't already know me.

Here are some examples! I approached our family funeral home first... “How's your mom since your dad died?” “Not too bad but I don't think it will be too long for her, but hopefully my wife and I are still a few years away!” Now there's a potential loss of say $30,000 bucks! Result, $250 each year for 6 years running. Get it?

Then I was sitting with the Manager of my car dealership, about to spend $10,000 on a new 3-year car lease knowing he wanted to close the deal...”Are we ok with the price?” “Yeah but I just need a couple sweeteners that wouldn't cost you much!” “Like what?...you know for your retiree discount, the Company won't let me do much more” “How about a Show Program Ad like the dealer across the street takes each year?” Need I say more?

Then there's our dentist who likes our continuing business and our kitty's vet who likes her continuing business and a local electrician who responded after my request for an estimate on a new $600 master panel and our massage therapist who liked the idea of a “Recommended by .......” tag line under her Ad and the new owner of a local Cafe who said, “yeah” but wanted to know if my quartet was going to sing Christmas carols there this year again and then my barber, and my auto shop and the local grocer. Each case was where the merchant had business to lose.

To solidify the relationships, my quartet takes four hours on a Saturday in December to sing carols at four of our sponsors. I want them to sense a loss if we don't show up for their customers.

And, by the way, this is a great way to start your new quartets. At Christmas, people are jolly and used to hearing unison caroling from bad singers. How do you think you will be received when you hit a few “sevenths” dressed to the tee?

Hope this gives you some ideas and confidence to go and get a couple Ads from your usual doctors, lawyers or Indian chiefs.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING: August 8, 2007, Excerpts from Bill Holmes’ minutes**

Present at Wayne Cheyne’s home were: Zaven Melkonian (chair), Wayne, Dar Johnson, Dave Myre, Roger Holm, Jack Teuber, Gil Schreiner and Bill Holmes.

Previous minutes were approved as distributed. The treasurer’s report prepared by Dick Johnson showed a balance of $18,401.

Wayne noted some of our guests have returned to our rehearsals. But recruitment comes primarily from two sources: the Christmas Chorus and Guest Night. The members should be encouraged to invite the men who sing in church choirs to attend our rehearsals. Ross will be asked to develop an insert for the show program regarding the Christmas Chorus.

Roger reported contest songs are being reviewed, tho’ it looks like “Aura Lee” will be one of them. Rehearsal schedule was discussed and it was noted that we are a busy chorus; ergo, much time is devoted to our sing-out songs and our show songs. The board approved a motion that any quartet or ensemble who wishes to sing in the show will be auditioned by an outside musician (professional).

Chuck Murray made written suggestions about our sound system, which the board fully discussed and received positively. It was noted that Jeff Doig is looking into an up-to-date sound system for the chorus.

Jack referred to a Thank-You letter received from Michelle Smith of the Mich. Sr. Olympics expressing their appreciation for the presentation by FOUR WHEEL DRIVE. Jack also presented a draft music program schedule for the sing-out at the Orion Township Library to be held on Sunday, October 14, 2007. The board was impressed with it and foresees very little revision.

Ross Ensign and Dar Johnson were authorized to receive and/or handle money on behalf of the chapter.

The BSOM is Al Monroe, who inhabits such a remote part of the state, yet aids at sing outs, at rehearsals and at Four Wheel Drive performances. All these attributes earn him our commendation and admiration.

**NO FLATTING**

Chuck Murray quotes the arranger David Wright:
"This arranger dislikes the sound of a sagging tonal center. Therefore the proper key, relative to the initial key, should be always maintained. If an arrangement goes flat, the arrangement police will enter the premises and collect a fine of $10 per singer per semitone flatted, with an extra $2.00 assessed against leads. All flatting fines will be donated to the Young Singers Foundation."

Jim Troeger writes from Orlando, Florida where his new address is:
127 Blackstone Creek Road
Groveland, FL 34736
Ph: (352) 989-4327
bbshopbassman@cfl.rr.com

All articles and photos are by the editor unless indicated otherwise.

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP
Director: Thomas Blue (248-814-9627)
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: Dave Myre
Music Team: Holm, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, McFadyen, Melkonian, Murray, Prueter

CALENDAR Times are performance times; Class C=Yellow Shirt+Black pants
Sep 4, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal. Return to Crary.
Sep 11, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Sep 12, W, 7pm Exec. Bd Mtg @ Wayne Cheyne’s home
Sep 18, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary, Guest Night
Sep 25, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Oct 2 T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Oct 9, T, 1pm Greater PTK Tues. Musicale, Central Methodist Church
Oct 14, Su, 2pm Orion Township Library
Oct 16 T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary, & Elections
Oct 23 T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Oct 26-28 District Convention, Kalamazoo
Oct 23 T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Nov 3, Sa, 7pm BCC 63rd Annual Show