It’s the end of March…and a winter to remember. The National Weather Service says that our area had 68 inches of snow instead of the normal 40 inches. And much of it fell on Tuesday rehearsal nights.

It’s payback time, right? April should be lovely. And what a better way to enjoy it than at the Big Chief Chorus Spring Singing Retreat at Higgins Lake!

St. Patrick’s Day Singout
By Jack Teuber

A Big Chief Chorus tradition continued on Friday, March 14. The annual St. Patty’s Party hosted by Canterbury on the Lake featured the singing of the Big Chief Chorus in St. Luke’s Chapel. The party continued in the Pub with several pick-up quartets entertaining the residents of Canterbury. Dexter Wise, a resident and former Pontiac Chapter member joined in on Lead with several quartets.

Green beer, green punch and snacks made the evening complete with good fellowship, good fun and great singing. Thanks to the thirty-four men who made the performance possible. Special thanks to Director Tom Blue, who left a Rochester Adams rehearsal for the stage play State Fair to lead the chorus in the performance.

Emphasizing Irish, the chorus sang The Story of the Rose (Heart of My Heart), Sweet, Sweet Roses of Morn, My Wild Irish Rose, Lida Rose, Aura Lee/Love me Tender, MacNamara’s Band, Ain't Misbehavin', Let the Rest of the World Go By, In My Room, Abide with Me, Precious Lord, Irish Parting Prayer, and Keep the Whole World Singing.

From Director Tom:

Our St. Pats. Day sing-out at Canterbury Friday (14th) was another successful outing by the Men of the BCC! Thanks to all of you who made the effort to sing and be a part of our sharing. Thanks to all who were responsible for the organization of the event, the refreshments and the organizing of our group from line up to warm-up. A special thanks to Freddie for his warm-up and run-through of songs. It means a lot to me to have all of your support and encouragement even when my tempos aren’t what you sometimes expect.

Thanks again for all that each of you do! It takes all of us together! Let’s continue to pack the place in 2008 at Crary. Continue to encourage each other to maintain our good attendance record. We have missed some of you and we look forward to having some of you back from vacation or business.

AROUND THE PATCH

The BIG CHIEF CHORUS SINGING RETREAT 2008 is April 4, 5, & 6 at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center on the North Shore of Higgins Lake. For its web site, go to: http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,1607,7-153-10365-71716--,00.html

We have 38 men who are planning on attending the retreat. If you have some Barbershop item you would like to donate to our Retreat awards table, please bring it with you (i.e. a CD, a tie, etc.) Also, bring your yellow shirt for Saturday’s gig.

New email addresses:
Chuck Murray: chucklesmurray123@charter.net
Jack Teuber: jmcteuber@comcast.net

The Big Chief Chicks met for breakfast Saturday, March 15, at Fino’s on Dixie Hwy in Waterford. Sandy Northey has offered to host a Cinco de Mayo celebration in May.

John Cowlishaw and Jack Teuber received word that they will once again be representing the Pioneer district in the International Bulletin and Public Relations contests next July.

Through March, the chorus and its quartets have performed 58 times to 1335 people.
QUARTETS
(From Terry Jamison and Chuck Murray)

NORTHBOUND SOUND had the honor of singing for Nicholas Robertson from Flint, on March 15. He is a 3 year old with a Wilms Tumor (a rare pediatric kidney). This outing was a fundraiser, at Luigi’s Restaurant, Davison Road, in Flint, to help the family with medical costs. The quartet sang two sets to a changing audience as people came in to eat pizza, enjoy the singing, and then leave. By the end of the four hour gig, about 80 customers had enjoyed the quartet and helped raise money.

NORTHBOUND SOUND will hold off on other gigs till May. The quartet will be learning some new songs. The quartet is looking forward to this year’s Bush League and the fall district contest. Our next gig is May 10, the national barbershoppers’ “give blood day.”

(From Chuck Murray)

I’ll be brief! An article something like this was in this week’s local newspaper, The Citizen, complete with a group photo of the quartet and preschoolers. “NORTHBOUND SOUND Quartet did a Singing Valentine at the Brandon Early Education Center on Sherman Court in Ortonville for one of the employees. After the Valentine was delivered to a teary-eyed recipient, they were asked if they would sing to some of the kids. The next thing they knew, they were in an all-purpose room singing songs for thirty-some kids and teachers. The children absolutely loved the singing. One little boy mouthed every word as NBS sang. On the way out, the NBS Bass said to the little boy, ‘You’re gonna be a singer!’ Smiles all around!”

(From Bruce Brede)

On Good Friday evening, our CELEBRATION BARBERSHOP QUARTET entertained leadership of the Oakland Ave Evangelical Presbyterian Church formerly located across from Wisner in Pontiac. The occasion was a potluck dinner for a missionary couple, retiring from OC International, who had served there 43 years ago and were good friends of Bruce & Bonnie in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Thank you to Roger Holm, filling in for Greg Moss, who joined Bill Dabbs, Jack Teuber and Bruce Brede in a six-song, 15 minute set including “Let the Rest of the World Go By” and “Irish Blessing.” The group was very enthusiastic and complimentary.

Four Wheel Drive:
John Cowlishaw will return from a two-month Florida trip March 31 and Al from a two-week Florida trip the following week. Jeff will be visiting his son Justin in Iowa, April 12, whose wife just made Jeff and Kathy the proud grandparents of a baby girl, Madison Avery, born March 1. Zaven just keeps hangin’ around.

MEMBERSHIP (at 60)

Renewals: Terry Jamison (3), Bob Butcher (3), Greg Moss (6), Wayne Cheyne (7), Al Monroe (8), John Cowlishaw (9), Bill Auquier (9), Gene Downie (11), Chuck Murray (13), Jeff Doig (16), Dan Valko (19), Mike Frye (21), Roger Holm (21), Dick Johnson (39)
Birthdays: Jeff Spire (16th), Wayne Cheyne (25th)
Barbershopper of the Month – January The entire BCC, for their continued support of the Chorus. Each rehearsal was attended by 40+ members.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Pontiac Waterford is one of seven choruses so far to sign up for the Spring District convention. The seven quartets that have registered so far include no Pontiac Waterford foursomes, but do include out-of-district favorites and likely top-ten finishers Metropolis and SEP (a reincarnation of Saturday Evening Post).

Dave Anderson, President of the Macomb County Chapter, announces the appointment of Mr. Glen Hipple as the Director of the Guardians of Harmony.

The March issue of the e-Troubadour is now online. Just go to the PioD website and click on the Troubadour true blue button. http://PioneerDistrict.org

AROUND THE WORLD

The International champion Westminster Chorus will perform on webcast on Sunday, March 30 at 3:00 pm when they present THE FANTASY QUARTET SHOW. You can hear the unique combination of four champions with ten gold medals between them. Sharing the stage will be The Westminster Chorus’ very own 2007 International Silver Medalist quartet, OC TIMES, and 2007 Collegiate Silver Medalists, THE CRUSH.

LIVE Internet Video Webcast tickets are on sale now for only $15 - by visiting: www.WestminsterChorus.org/fantasyquartet and clicking on the PayPal BuyNow buttons.


Big Chief Jeopardy, #18 (Did you get this one?)
Answer: He had lunch in 1963 with Diane Sawyer, now co-host of ABC’s Good Morning America. He’s also run five marathons.
Question: Who is Bruce Brede?
**Background on our two contest songs:** From Greg Moss

"I'm Beginning to See the Light" is a popular song and jazz standard. It was written by Duke Ellington, Don George, Johnny Hodges, and Harry James, and published in 1944. The song has been featured in such movies as *The Matrix*. It was performed in 1945 by Ella Fitzgerald and the Ink Spots. The Matrix is a 1999 film that won many awards, including the best soundtrack album: “A computer hacker learns from mysterious rebels about the true nature of his reality and his role in the war against the controllers of it.” *(IMDb.com)* Interestingly, even though it is part of the movie soundtrack, it is not on the soundtrack CD – perhaps because the CD falls into the “heavy metal” category along with having “explicit lyrics.”

“Aura Lee” (also known as “Aura Lea”) is an American Civil War song about a maiden. It was written by W. W. Fosdick (words) and George R. Poulton (music). The Elvis Presley song “Love Me Tender” (lyric by Ken Darby) is sung to the same tune as “Aura Lee.” A later Presley recording for the film *The Trouble with Girls* entitled “Violet (Flower of N.Y.U.)” also used the melody of “Aura Lee.” There is also a marching band version of “Aura Lee” called “Army Blue.” Aura Lee was memorably sung by Frances Farmer and a male chorus in 1936’s *Come and Get It* *(film)*, based on Edna Ferber’s novel. *(Wikipedia.com)*

**Request for blank CDs:** From Ross Ensign:

I just delivered 08 Repertoire training CD’s to the guys last night. We’ve reached a point that a few donations of blank CD’s for the music training aids program would be helpful. We could also use a box or two of the paper CD sleeves. Thanks

Guys,

Mike Frye was kind enough to forward this tag website to me and I hope you’ll take the time to learn some of them. Let’s have some fun with it.
http://harmonize.com/rubix/tags/tags.html

Zav

**EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING: February 20, 2007, Excerpts from Bob Butcher’s minutes**

President Irwin Mann presided at Bob Butcher’ residence with additional attendees being: Jack Teuber, Dave Myre, Roger Holm, Ron Clarke, Walter DeNio (for Wayne Cheyne), Zaven Melkonian, Dick Johnson, Bob Butcher, Gil Schreiner, and guest Jeff Doig.

Jan 9 minutes accepted. Current membership is 56 plus an unknown number of renewals in process.

Dick Johnson presented the Treasurers report. There is $25,640 in the treasury.

Walt DeNio presented the V/P of Chapter Development Report for Wayne Cheyne.

Jack Teuber presented the report from V/P of Marketing and Public Relations.

Old business: Scheduling of the Woodshed Contest. After discussion, a separate meeting was held Feb 26 to nail down May 3 as the date of the Contest, and Pontiac Country Club as the location.

Roger Holm presented his report for Music & Performance. There have been clarifications made in regards to the chorus’s approach to providing song-learning aids. Roger also presented for review the edited drafts of two music-related policies, #8 and #9 for the Chapter Policy Manual. Roger Holm presented three possible show quartets: RESISTING-A-REST (from Pioneer District), CHICAGO TIMES (from Chicago), and JURASSIC LARKS, all of which are Senior Quartets. There was also discussion about new member voice placement testing.

A motion was defeated to charge a fee for replacement sheets.

Gil Schreiner was appointed to bring inputs from the suggestion box. Are non-members able to come to our retreats? President Mann appointed Roger Holm to write a new policy in the Policy Manual to address this matter.

The Board decided not to participate in the upcoming Blood Drive of the International Society, despite its worthiness, due to time constraints with the Retreat, upcoming Contest preparation and future sing-outs.

The Board chose Waterford Oaks Community Center for our summer rehearsal location, June 1 to October 1.

President Mann opened for discussion the Adjunct Award program for service, and past/present BSOM, BSOY. Discussion ensued about trying to keep the awards significant and meaningful for the recipients, both individual, and collectively.

The Board approved Jeff Doig’s proposal for downloading music from a password-protected site on the internet and appointed Jeff and Zaven Melkonian to investigate implementation of the plan.

Jeff Doig brought a proposal to replace some of our audio system. The Board unanimously approved the proposal.

A motion to commission Jim Owens to create Chapter business cards for Chapter members was passed unanimously.

President Mann appointed Walt DeNio and Greg Moss to perform an audit of the chapter books as required by the Society Headquarters.

The Board decided that the entire BCC should be awarded the BSOM for January because of their continued support of the Chorus’s directive. Each rehearsal was attended by 40+ members for the entire month of January.

A motion to compensate Tom Blue and Fred McFadyen for room and board for the Spring Retreat weekend was unanimously approved.

Doc will discuss the Fall Cast Party with Tom Jackson and Bruce Brede.
President Mann has stated that Bruce Brede will continue as developer of Quartet Activity.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

John:

I am imposing this attachment on you because I'm pushing for the Mountain Town Singers.

**Eclecticity, A Formula for Hilarity** – Friday night at the spring convention, immediately following the quartet prelims. Free admission (it will cost you to get out)

We are singing on Friday evening, April 25, in Battle Creek, after the quartet preliminaries. This is part of our effort to raise money to pay our way to the International convention in Nashville, where we will compete Friday July 4 (to a chorus of "ooohs" and "aaaahs", we hope).

We will sing for score but not for competition on Saturday April 26 and of course we will have some kind of hospitality suite at the McCamly after the quartet finals Saturday night. We will also be going to the June sing in Windsor where barbershoppers buy a spaghetti dinner and financially support all the Pioneer District representatives at the Nashville event. Perhaps we'll see you then too.

Many thanks, Bill Kocher

Here is a tidbit of news for the April issue of “Smoke Signals.” The store owner at A.J.’s Music Cafe in Ferndale had a singing marathon starting on Sat. a.m. (3/15) thru Mon. till 5:00 p.m. (3/17). The owner planned on singing the song “Danny Boy” for 50 continuous hours, to beat the Guinness Book of World Records, which he achieved. I was one of the singers. I sang on Sun. evening. It was a lot of fun, I enjoyed it tremendously. I sang in front of an approx. 40 people. There were a lot of very good singers, even in the short period that I was there. They even had a chorus sing called “Langford Men’s Chorus,” who were very, very good. They got a standing ovation with the people wanting an encore, which they gave.

Fred Pioch

“THE BCC IS APPRECIATED”

When seated for the Big Chief St. Pat's concert at Canterbury on the Lake, I was next to a lady in a wheelchair. I greeted her and commented on how beautiful the stained glass windows were in the sunlight. She just nodded her head but did not reply, eyes looking down and appearing sad.

When Tom came down to introduce the first "rose songs", she was very close to him, sitting on the aisle and she gave him her whole attention. As the Chorus began singing, she sat up straight and began to brighten. She seemed to know well and enjoy the sacred songs and reacted actively to "MacNamara's Band." Afterwards, when the guys came down and greeted the audience, she was smiling as some shook her hand then she turned to me and said enthusiastically, "Well THAT was a lovely program!"

I can only guess what she might have done that Friday eve had not the guys showed up to contribute a little bit more to her life.

Bonnie Brede

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlishaw

**CHAPTER LEADERSHIP**

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

**CALENDAR** (Times are Performance Times)

Apr 1, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Apr 4-6, F-Su Spring Retreat, MacMullan Ctr, Higgins Lk
Apr 5, Sa, 4pm The Brook of Roscommon
Apr 8, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Apr 11, F, 1pm OC Parks & Rec, 2800 Watkins Lk Rd
April 11 Barbershop Harmony Society founded 1938
Apr 15, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Apr 22, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
Apr 25-27 Pioneer District Convention – Battle Creek
Apr 29, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Crary
May 3, Sa, 7:30pm 52nd Annual Woodshed Contest, Pontiac Country Club, 4335 Elizabeth Lake Rd
May 8, Th, 1 pm Waterford Senior Ctr, 3621 Pontiac Lake Rd.
Jun 28, Sa, 3pm Log Cabin Days, ~4490 Hatchery Rd, Waterford
Jun 29 - July 6 International Convention
Aug 10, Su, 4pm Detroit Princess Cruise, detroitprincess.com
October 17-19 District Convention - Battle Creek
October 25 Rochester Chapter Show
Nov 1, Sa 64th Annual Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show