



BIG CHIEF CHORUS

SMOKE SIGNALS

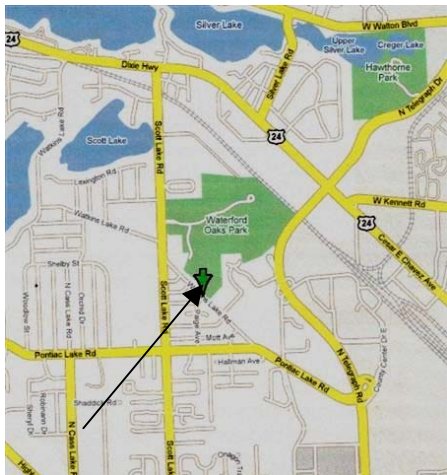


Pontiac/Waterford Chapter
Meetings on Tuesdays: 7:30 to 10 PM

Vol. 8, No. 2, (#86)

June 1, 2008

Summer is here! Chorus practice moves to Waterford Oaks County Park.



AROUND THE PATCH

On May 8, the Big Chief Chorus sang for a **Mother's Day Luncheon** at the Waterford Senior Center. The 36 men were tightly packed on the small stage, in front of 162 attendees. B NATURAL provided a quartetting respite.

Several of our singers, including Roger Holm, Bob Greenwood, and Bill Dabbs, joined the 52-member chorus that sang at the **New Horizons band concert** at Central United Methodist church on Friday, May 16.

New Horizons is a band that was created for adults who want to continue to play with an orchestra after leaving school. It includes several of our members.

Prez Doc Mann spent a week in Troy Beaumont Hospital for tests and treatment for a long-standing intestinal problem. He returned in his usual rare form:

"I'm Back..."

AND NOT ONE MOMENT TOO SOON, I CAN SEE----
YES MY FELLOW MUSIC-MAKERS, IT HOLDS TRUE WHILE
THE CATS AWAY YOU MICE WILL PLAY-----

Although homebound for a few days, you had better be there Tuesday night [when I return].---

I missed you guys and sincerely appreciated those of you who touched base, had me in your thoughts and even those who didn't---

I will be continuing the recovery process for some period yet but am planning, as I am able, to fulfill my responsibilities to the chorus,

LOCAL COLOR IV & 1 / 4 to the best of my abilities----

So lets keep things rolling with our commitment to 1/2 hour of home rehearsal a day---

See you all soon---- Doc"

(From Roger Holm) **Director Tom** will be with us for the next four Tuesdays before he and his family leave for some time in **Europe!** So we need to work extra hard before he leaves!

On Friday, May 3rd, a large group of BCC members attended the **Rochester Adams High School** production of the Rogers and Hammerstein Musical, "**State Fair**", under the direction of our own Tom Blue. The entire production was very well done. Sitting in the audience, it was difficult to imagine that these "youngsters" not only had the time but also the talent to perform not only vocally, but also some very intricate dance numbers. The show flowed flawlessly from scene to scene, with each cast member giving a credible performance of their individual parts. To a man, our BCC contingent thoroughly enjoyed the evening. Kudos to Tom Blue, his assistants and the entire cast and crew for a job well done. (From Zaven M.)

On Tuesday, May 13, 36 Big Chief Chorus members, resplendent in their yellow chorus shirts, played hooky from their regular chapter meeting/rehearsal and attended the **Rochester Adams High School "Spring Sing" choral concert!** Under the direction of Mr. Thomas Blue, the five ensembles, eleven soloists, one mixed quartet, and one operatic duet absolutely enthralled the audience - including the Big Chief Chorus! Their collective performances were a testament to the excellence of the Adams students' voices and hard work - and Mr. Blue's many skills and fine choral program! The Big Chief Barbershop Chorus salutes Mr. Blue and all the students who took part in their "Spring Sing"! Together, we can: "Keep the Whole World Singing"!

Chuck Murray is Vice-Chairperson of the Brandon-Groveland Youth Assistance Program (BGYA), which is coordinating **Tim Horton's Foundation** sending four "at-risk" youths from Brandon-Groveland Townships to summer camp at Tatamagochie, Nova Scotia, for free.

You can help support this Annual Camp Program sponsored by Tim Horton's, by buying a cup of coffee on Tim Horton's Annual Camp Day! (Around June 6th.)

Art Carinci's new email address is Artcarincia@yahoo.com

Tom Blue suggested he might be replaceable by Honda's Asimo, the robot who/which directed the Detroit Symphony last month.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cf5szwz6Qzc>

Interesting, but no thanks.

From our Pioneer-District-champion PR man:

FELLOW CHIEFTANS,

The summer months are filling up for the Big Chief Chorus. We have Sing-Outs scheduled for June, July and August. The Frankenmuth Bratfest, June 24th, is always a fun evening, as we travel by bus to the event. Waterford Log Cabin Days, June 28th will be good exposure for us. See details below and watch for further summer events.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13th----- Windsor Send Off. (Current border-crossing rules: passport, or a government issued photo ID (like a drivers license) AND a birth certificate are required (June 2009 a passport becomes mandatory). See <http://detroit.about.com/od/artsentertainment/a/Bordercrossings.htm>

TUESDAY, JUNE 24th-----Frankenmuth Brat Fest, Heritage Park. (The bus will leave Waterford Oaks at 6:00 pm and return to the garage by 11:00 pm). We will be joined by Flint, and other chapters for an evening of Barbershop Fellowship.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28th-----Waterford Log Cabin Days (Performance Time is at 3:00 pm with a tentative warm-up time of 2:00 pm). We will meet at Pierce

Middle School, 5145 Hatchery Rd. A shuttle bus will take us to the performance site, nearby.

Tuesday, July 15th @ 7:00 pm, Lockwood of Waterford, 1407 Skipper Dr.
Jack Teuber
VP Public Relations

Roger Holm has distributed a **list of songs** to be familiar with for singouts, our repertoire. We want to make singouts available to all our members.

QUARTETS

On Saturday 3rd, at the Frankenmuth Bavarian Inn, CELEBRATION entertained about 45 family members and guests to celebrate Greg Moss' mother's 90th birthday. Phyllis Moss was very appreciative of her son's extensive family planning and the quartet's special trip to sing for her and her family. After a beautiful luncheon, the quartet led a Happy Birthday group sing followed by "Precious Lord," "Aura Lee," "Shine/Doo Lord Medley" and others.

MEMBERSHIP (at 62)

Renewals: Cory Flatoff (1), Jack Teuber (9), Fred McFadyen (42)

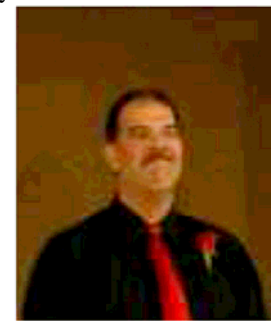
Pending: Art Carinci, Mel Parrish

Birthdays: Cory Flatoff (6th), Bob Legato (13th), Fred Pioch (18th), Bruce Brede (22nd), Jim Troeger (23rd), Al Monroe (24th)

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Huron Valley has lost a young director, just as Pontiac-Waterford did.

"It is with extremely heavy hearts that the Huron Valley Chapter announces the sudden passing of our director, Paul Hanson, Saturday morning, May 17, 2008. Paul passed away in Cleveland while attending the Sweet Adelines



Convention in which his beloved daughter Chelsea was competing with the County Connection Chorus from our area. Paul was a talented musician and singer, and dearly loved all his barbershop brethren. He was our assistant director for several years before taking the director position in September 2006. Many

years ago he was the bass for the IVY LEAGUE. His passing has left a void in our lives and he will be missed.

Cards and well wishes may also be sent to:
Chelsea and Alissa Hanson
2644 EastLawn
Ypsilanti Mi 48197"

(Posted by Gregory P Humbel)

Brian Dunckel writes that the cancer, for which **Dan Bezaire** shaved his head at last fall's Pioneer District convention, has returned to his significant other, Adele Kreling.

Russ Seely wrote: "Sadly, as I reported at convention, **Donna Van Tassell**, the widow of icon Glen Van Tassell (Pioneer's two-time gold medalist) who was diagnosed as terminal did in fact, pass away on May 1, in Florida. Following Glen's death Donna was stricken with cancer and now her struggle has ended."

AROUND THE WORLD

Herb wrote on Harmonet: We sang Greg Lyne's arrangement of "**God Bless America**" on a Southwest Airlines flight at 35,000 ft. as we returned from the "Pioneers" Chicago gathering on 9/11 a couple years back. The response was great, with hats over hearts, tears, smudging mascara, etc. The adults chimed in with us, but we did notice that none of the young folks knew the song.

Grady Kerr, our international historian and past president of PROBE, sent out notice that "Jim Schmitt has died (1931-2008). Jim sang lead for the Schmitt Brothers. They went on to win the International Barbershop competition in Toledo, Ohio in 1951. The quartet performed on the Arthur Godfrey radio show, Ed Sullivan show, Lawrence Welk show, and in Carnegie Hall. They toured Army camps in Alaska and entertained thousands of people for over 35 years. He was the last surviving member of the 1951 Champion Schmitt Bros."

Posted by: "Rosalind Frizzell" bostonshrimp@yahoo.com

"The reason why we have a kinship to one another is because we share our love of family, friendship and the harmony that binds us together.

"For those of us, who remember Joseph, Jim, Paul & Francis – The Schmitt Brothers epitomized everything gracious and loving about the melding of family & song. You could feel the tight harmonies that only brothers can make together. ...Four part harmony sung by real brothers and shared with the world. America The Beautiful, Tell Me Why, Alabama Jubilee, When I Leave The World Behind were some of the songs you may remember."

MEET DARWIN JOHNSON

Dar's father emigrated from Denmark to Michigan as a teenager to escape induction into the Prussian army. He and his wife raised two children, Dar and a

brother (now retired in St. Helen, MI). Dar was born in Pontiac 72 years ago. He attended Bloomfield Hills Lahser High School, where he played football and sang in the school choir. At that time the region was much less populated; his graduating class had 21 kids. Dar's family attended Kirk in the Hills (Presbyterian) church, influencing Dar's decision to attend Alma College.

At Alma Dar majored in Economics and Business Administration and graduated exactly 50 years ago; shortly he will attend their reunion. He learned to play the bagpipes and played at a few functions. In his senior year, he met Kay (their first date was a golfing date), a freshman French major who first needed to spend a year at the University of Geneva in Switzerland, before they could marry, 48 years ago.



After college, he joined the National Guard, trained at Ford Leonard Wood in Missouri, and then was assigned to the Nike missile base on Squirrel Road in Auburn Hills, where the OCC campus now sits. Professionally, he joined Pontiac State Bank, working there from 1959 to 1974, rising to the level of vice-president and branch manager. During this time, he received his graduate certificate in banking from the University of Michigan.

Dar's father was a real estate broker. Dar had gotten his real estate salesman license as an 18 year old, but hadn't practiced. As his father aged, Dar decided to get his broker's license, and he joined his father in 1974, eventually taking over the business, Johnson Realty, on Telegraph Rd, across from present-day Anderson Honda.

When the building burned down, Dar opened an office on Dixie highway. He also began to buy old homes as a HUD agent, fix them up, and resell them. At one time he owned fourteen houses. But he managed to sell all but one of

them just as the market peaked a couple years ago. Now he maintains an office in his home.

Kay worked as a French teacher in the Waterford school system, and also as a librarian, having gotten her Masters degree in Library Science.

Dar and Kay raised three daughters, Lisa, Joan, and Carol, a hydrogeologist, a nurse, and an EDS employee. They have nine grandchildren, of whom Dar speaks proudly.

Nowadays Kay is busier than ever; there is Tuesday Musicale, Town Hall, and bridge club. It was at a barbershop performance at Tuesday Musicale three years ago that Dar looked up at us and said to himself "I'd rather be up there than down here in the audience." (He remembers how happy singers looked, mentioning Dick Johnson in particular.) He hadn't sung since school days, but Bruce Brede helped him acclimate to the chorus.

Dar and Kay have a second home on Torch Lake which they get away to. Dar also enjoys golf (but says he is not good enough to establish a handicap) and bicycling. He rides in Kensington Park and on the Paint Creek Trail from Rochester to Lake Orion.

Dar and Kay have done twenty or so trips with Elder Hostel. One recent trip involved cycling across Denmark, giving Dar a chance to meet his many Danish relatives. They have also been members of Nomads, the Detroit-based air touring company. They have been to Australia, Alaska, all over Europe, Russia, China (where he walked on the Great Wall), and last winter went by bus down the Baja peninsula in Mexico.

Dar is also a long-time member of the Optimists.

Dar loves all kinds of music – including Country/Western and opera. Dar can plunk out a tune on the piano to help him learn new songs. They have season tickets to the D.S.O. and Meadowbrook Theater.

Dar is not yet ready to do quartetting – he freezes at the thought of singing by himself – but he has gained the ability to sing shotgun next to other voice parts on those songs that he knows well. "There's something special about the sounds that come out of a barbershop chorus."

Mike Keith honored by "Honor Flight"

"Honor Flight is a non profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. We fly our heroes to Washington, DC to visit and reflect at **their** memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans – WW II survivors along with those other veterans that may be terminally ill." (From the Honor Flight Network web site.)

Mike Keith was one of the honorees in the Honor Flight program this past month. There were fifty veterans in Mike's flight. They convened at Royal Oak's American Legion Post 253 at 3 a.m., and were bussed to the airport, where they were served breakfast at National Coney Island. Then they boarded a plane for Ronald Reagan Airport. At the airport they were cheered by those who recognized the nature of their group.

First they visited the World War II memorial. Mike says it is absolutely unbelievable. Mike walked all the way around it, looking at the depictions of different stages of the war. (See: <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/> for photos.) A field of 4000 stars honors the 400,000 soldiers who died.

Although the group was confined, Mike bolted from the group to walk past the moat to the Lincoln Memorial. He also saw the Vietnam and Korean War memorials from a distance, then hurried back just in time to board the bus for the Arlington cemetery. The number of graves is "unbelievable, and emphasizes how awful war is."

They were back at the airport by 2 p.m. and back to Detroit by 7:30.

Mike added that two guys from the American Legion Post dressed up in their old uniforms and got most of the attention of the young women in the audience.

BHS INTERNATIONAL IN NASHVILLE in FIVE WEEKS

Have you been to an International? Everyone should go, at least once in their lifetime. Here's some data to help you decide.

This year's International is in Nashville, nearby to the new home of the Barbershop Harmony Society headquarters since its move from Kenosha last year.

Nashville is about 550 miles away, a 9 hour drive, a 4 ½ hour flight by General Aviation, two hours by Commercial air.

Although the full convention goes on for a week, one could do well to go just from Thursday, through Saturday night, that is for three days. In those three days, one could see:

Thursday, July 3 – Quartet SemiFinals 12-4

AIC Show (Assoc. of Int'l Champions) 7:30-10:30

Friday, July 4 – Music class with last year's champion, MaxQ 10-11

Chorus contest – 11-3 and 6:30-10:30

Saturday, July 5 – Quartet Finals 7:30 – 10:30

In between, one can visit open chorus rehearsals of the great choruses in the barbershop world, and also our new BHS home.

The cost (per person, based on double occupancy and shared fuel)

Fuel \$80- 125 (or airline ticket for \$200)

Contest ticket \$150

AIC ticket \$20 - \$80

Room for three nights in \$70 room (\$100)

TOTAL = ~\$400

If that's not possible, consider being part of a **WEBCAST party** for the quartet finals on Saturday night, July 5. Last year about twenty of us gathered at Cory Flatoff's house for about \$5 per and enjoyed the competition immensely. If Cory is in town, he's offering that option for 2008 also.

As to the Pioneer district entries, Wildcard sings 18th of 54. Unfortunately their qualifying score of 72.3 is 52nd highest, which means they probably won't make it out of the quarter-finals on Wednesday.

Our chorus rep, Mountaintown Singers, sings early in the second session Saturday (16th out of 28).

Vocal Techniques Micro-HEP

Matt Tipton organized a "micro-HEP" on Vocal Techniques May 10, at Sacred Heart Byzantine Catholic Church. **Jim DeBusman**, from our Nashville Society headquarters was the instructor. Here are my notes:

Seven of us BCCers made up almost half of the attendance, plus CHORDIOLOGY and SINGING WITH DAD, both of whom served as experimental quartets for Jim DeBusman's teaching.

What was impressive was that Jim truly did make each quartet better in just a few minutes. He added that he was really impressed with MOXIE whom he worked with the previous evening and had raised, he guessed, from a mid 70's to a high 70's. He said that we have the talent here in Pioneer, we just have to practice what we learn and believe that we can do it.

His main point was to sing head voice down through the register, rather than chest voice up through the register. A chorus should invest in the 2-DVD set from BHS on *Choral Methods* featuring Chris Peterson, Bill Rashleigh, and Jim DeBusman (\$69).

Jim was a classically trained singer who was a Metropolitan Opera Finalist in 1977. It was in the late 1980's that he learned to keep the head voice down thru the range.

Everyone needs to take voice lessons. And spend 10-15 minutes a day on practicing it.

The "Music Leadership Team Manual" gives the basics.

One needs two things: good vocal quality, and intonation. (Tuning is a vocal production issue, not an ear issue.)

Twenty years ago, we sang Wagner in barbershop. Successful quartets and choruses no longer do.

Most of the best quartets and choruses in the 1960's would not be in the top thirty nowadays. We've improved so much, especially choruses.

In the 1960's, the barbershop goal was blending sound

In the 1970's, the barbershop goal became sparkling sound. Barbershop aims for a "lock and ring." A pop. A sparkle.

You can say, "Hi, Jim!" in a conversational voice, or in a "Holy, Moley" voice. He often tells singers, I wish you sang as well as you talk. Use the conversational voice. Use speaking voice for singing.

There was discussion at Barbershop headquarters whether to call it Head Voice or Falsetto, and Head Voice won out.

"Less is More." If you sing with (a) resonance, (b) proper placement, and (c) warm air, it may seem like less to you, but it will sound like "more" to the

audience. Muscle is out. With a heavy sound, assuredly, the group will go flat and lack intonation.

Baritones used to be told, "Go high, stay out of the way, and don't be heard." Now, the guidance is: sing like a Lead, and with more sparkle.

The goal of vocal production is: a freely produced, well-supported, resonant sound.

(Especially for quartetting) duetting is so important. But some pairs more than others. Tenor – Bass, because they're often an octave apart and need to be in tune. Lead – Bari, cuz the Bari needs to learn to have "presence" and to learn that he is both above and below the Lead.

When I sent these notes to participants, **Austin Quinn** pointed out that many of these points are to be found on our BHS website:

http://www.barbershop.org/web/groups/public/documents/pages/pub_id_044334.hcsp#p-7_0

The secrets of in-tune singing. Why can't I sing in tune?

Singing out of tune is a recurring problem that we hear from performers. An important element of the barbershop "lock and ring" sound is in-tune singing. We need to sing quality musical tones that are specifically in pitch to the anticipated melodic line. To make this happen, we must sing in tune both horizontally and vertically.

Do we sing out of tune because we can not hear the pitch we are trying to sing, or because we just can not support the pitch in good quality in which we are trying to sing?

The answer is support. Chest breathing or shallow breathing causes the pitch to sag at the middle or end of every phrase. A freely produced, well supported, resonant quality tone with a good head voice will solve many tuning issues. Poor posture, mental and/or physical fatigue can also have significant influence on horizontal and vertical tuning. Spend time on good diaphragmatic breathing exercises every day to help develop better support and, therefore, better tuning.

Singing with a heavy vocal production throughout your range can also cause flattening, especially as you carry the weight of your chest voice up into your head voice. **Learn to keep your head voice in your voice throughout your range. Furthermore, the use of warm air to support every pitch of every phrase will open up all the spaces needed for quality singing.**

Some other more obvious reasons: singing wrong intervals, or taking too small of a step in an ascending line, or too large of a step in a descending line. Spend time singing major, minor and chromatic scales, both ascending and descending, with accuracy. Relaxing support when you're singing descending lines can also allow you to flat. Reaching for high note without lightening up and using your head voice can also cause flattening.

Scooping is another cause of tuning problems for your quartet, especially for the lead. Spend rehearsal time duetting in your quartet practice. It will make a difference in the overall sound and tuning of your quartet.

Lastly, it is important to pick songs appropriate for your quartet's vocal range and to sing them in the right key for your group. Avoid songs written too low for the quartet to sing comfortably. Be warned that if the melody has too many thirds or sevenths, there is a good chance the quartet will go flat.

Austin sent one other interesting site on vocal technique:
<http://texassings.music.utexas.edu/>
including a 20-page bibliography on vocal pedagogy!

Soundscapes

As singers, we are interested in all dimensions of sound. During a visit to Muir Woods, in Marin County, CA this past month, home of the giant Redwoods, I met Dan Dugan, a technical adviser to the Nature Sounds Society and listened to a soundscape thru his earphones. He makes extremely sensitive audio recordings of undisturbed natural habitats. To hear an interview, click on <http://www.wildebeat.net/index.cgi/2007/06/14#E090>, then on Show #90, then go to about 4:50.

(From Mo Trudel, MVP of the Englewood FL Chapter, via Jon Wagner)

The (E.E.A.) Employment Enjoyment Agency has openings for these positions:

LEAD, Personality ~ A leader who takes control of a song, delivers a message from the heart. Must be accurate, consistent and believable, have expressive face and hands. Must not forget lyrics!

BASS, Personality ~ Willing and able to support a lead, keeping him grounded. Must not punch phrases but flow with the lead. Once in a great while he may solo with "bm, bm, bm, bm."

TENOR, Personality ~ Soft, shining characteristics which help brighten the lead. Must add a feminine touch to the sound of the ensemble. (Without overdoing it!)

BARI, Personality ~ Usually bi-polar! His dual nature serves to enhance the bass with his low notes, to complement lead and tenor in his high notes and round out the overall sound. Must be resilient enough to stomach disparaging comments about his demanding role. These remarks usually stem from jealousy among the other three parts.

REMUNERATION ~ The priceless reward is the ecstasy of singing barbershop harmony! And the joy of pleasing an audience. On the job training available.

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlshaw

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: Wayne Cheyne

VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm

VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber

Secretary: Bob Butcher

Interim Treasurer: Dick 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, Cowlshaw, and Brede

CALENDAR (Times are Performance Times)

Jun 3, T, 7pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Jun 8, Su, 2 pm	Music Committee, Holm's
Jun 10, T, 7pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Jun 13, F	Send-Off Show, Windsor
Jun 17, T, 7pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Jun 24, T, 6pm	Frankenmuth Bratfest
Jun 28, Sa, 3pm	Log Cabin Days, ~4490 Hatchery Rd, Waterford
Jun 29 - July 6	International Convention, Nashville
Jul 1, T, 7pm	Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks
Jul 15, T, 7pm	Gig, Lockwood of Waterford
July 29- Aug 5	Harmony University, St. Joseph, MO
Aug 2, Sa, 3pm	Amy Jamison Benefit, Church of Christ, Rochester
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
May 10, 2009	Lk Orion HS gig with the North Oakland Concert Band