



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



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

**Vol. 8, No. 3, (#87)**

**July 1, 2008**

**Dead Creek Barbershop Singout (aka Frankenmuth Bratfest)**



The Big Chief Chorus was well-represented June 24 as always, as 32 chorus members and three chapter quartets sang – B NATURAL, ON TAP, and NORTHBOUND SOUND. Hosted by the Flint Arrowhead chorus, we heard some good singing, ate some good brats and beans and sauerkraut, talked to old friends, and tiddled a few brewski's. (For Ross Ensign's recent connection of music to beer, go to: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRZiARIdo74> )

**From our Director:**

Men of the BCC,

“Good to see so many of you at rehearsal...

“Thanks for the tuned piano and the cool facility!

“If every person who has come to rehearsal would come on the same evening (guess what?), we would have nearly 50+ men at rehearsal! WOW! That would be a good size chorus and just think how much easier it would be to sing with that many people who all share the same musical interest. We have come close to 50 several times but could we maintain a near 50 men in attendance for the summer? Just a thought.” (Oops, make that 49; Tom just left. ☺ )

**AROUND THE PATCH**

**Tom has left** for Europe with his family (4 weeks) and Blue Lake Music Camp (2 weeks)! He'll return to us for our meeting on August 5. So - we'll have six Tuesday's without Tom's direction. For some of those, we are involved in other activities, such as the Bratfest in Frankenmuth on June 24 and a short sing-out at Lockwood on July 22nd! Perhaps we can even hold our annual picnic on one of those Tuesday nights. (From the Music Committee)

If you're looking for a preview of our fall show's guests, **Chordiology** and **elmo THUMM** will be performing July 19 at The Village Theater, in Canton.

**Howard Lynn** was a Grand Marshall of the Walled Lake Memorial Day Parade on May 26, 2008

**Ron Clarke** has our convention photos. If you ordered one, see him with \$11.

**Gil Schreiner** is gathering orange cards from **quartet singers**, on the value of quartetting to chorus.

The BCC and its three quartets (John Northey subbing) sang at **Log Cabin Days**, Fish Hatchery Park on Saturday, June 28. We're invited for next year too.

Welcome **Bob Greenwood, Ed Lilly, and Bob Klemann**. Also, **Gayle Mohler** has rejoined us.

I talked to **Mel** and Rosalie **Parrish** June 9. Mel's hearing is poor, though by my speaking loudly and slowly, we were able to talk on the phone. He is not getting out much any more. He still has his car, but can't drive. Rosalie says he is pretty feeble, though he's not in any pain. I asked him if he is receiving our bulletins, and he said yes, but he can't read them. Someone must read them to him. I think he might appreciate a foursome stopping by. He lives in Lake Orion.

### **Fireworks Celebration July 3<sup>rd</sup>**

Once again, Bob and Eileen Marshall have invited everyone to view the Sylvan Lake fireworks from their lake-side lawn. The date is Thursday, July 3.

“The Oakland County Boat Club shoots them off just across the lake from our house. We ask people to bring their own chairs or blankets, Deet, and whatever snacks or beverages they want. We just furnish the view. Parking is always a problem so come over after dinner and enjoy our park.”

Address: 969 James K, Pontiac, MI 48341 - home: 248-681-2578 or cell: 248-227-3831.

### **Webcast Party**

Jim Owens has offered to host a webcast party for the International Quartet Finals, Sat, July 5. The webcast starts at 7 pm, competition at 7:30. Depending on number attending, cost should be about \$5 a piece. Jim is at 4575 Motorway, Waterford, MI 48328. Let him know you are coming with an email

([cathole@ameritech.net](mailto:cathole@ameritech.net)) or phone call (248-682-4311).

### **Jeff Spires Re-Marries**

Jeff and Susan Gleason were married on May 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008. The small wedding was held at the home of Bruce and Dodie LaMarte. The music was provided by FRIENDSHIP RINGS, a quartet made up of several ladies Susan has sung with or known for years.

Jeff writes, “Susan has been singing in Sweet Ade Choruses for over thirty years. She currently is the lead singer in the Sweet Ade comedy quartet, NOVELTY SHOP. She does a lot of coaching and show staging for many Sweet Ade choruses, as well as DOC.

“Our first love is our music. We are planning to attend the Mid-winter Barbershop Convention in California in January. We want to be there when Bruce's seniors quartet wins! (As you know they finished second this past winter.)”

The Big Chief Chorus will sing at the **Amy Jamison Benefit Concert** August 2 at the Rochester Church of Christ. 250 W. Avon Rd, Rochester Hills, Michigan, 48307

Amy Jamison is the teenage daughter of Terry and Patty Jamison. Amy had to leave the Metropolitan Detroit Youth Chorus in October 2007 due to medical issues. Terry lost his position with an automotive supplier during corporate down-sizing in early December 2007, and subsequently the family lost their health insurance. Since early 2008, Amy had been in and out of numerous hospitals with an undiagnosed illness. (It is now believed she had Hepatitis-A.) Today she is on her way back to health; however the medical bills have been piling up, and remain unpaid.

Otisville Church of Christ is establishing a ministry to help pay Amy's unpaid medical expenses. This Church is producing the barbershop show to support this ministry. Your check, made out to the Otisville Church in any amount may be tax-deductible, and monies donated in excess of actual expenses will be used by the Church to establish a similar ministry for others who happen to find themselves in similar situations.

The Lineup of barbershop performers includes:

Choruses: The Pontiac-Waterford Big Chief Chorus, and the current Pioneer District Champions, Macomb County's Guardians of Harmony Chorus.

Quartets: SINGING WITH DAD, NORTHBOUND SOUND, FOUR WHEEL DRIVE, B-NATURAL, CODA HONOR, and the Sweet Adeline's Quartet Reign 2 Champions INVOICE!

### **QUARTETS**

“At Columbiere on May 29, B-NATURAL sang for about 40 minutes for an audience of 50 to 60 during their dinner hour. At Central United Methodist on June 7, we sang for a congregation of about 50 during a memorial service and then six or seven songs for the same folks during lunch.

“Also on the June 7, we sang for a stroll-around hour for perhaps 75 total people at Pierce Middle School for the cancer walk event. A good time was had by all!”

(Roger Holm)

### **MEMBERSHIP** (at 62)

**Renewals:** Pete Mazzara (9), Zaven Melkonian (9), Tom Jackson (10), John Northey (20), Ross Ensign (26), Dick Johnson (39)

**Pending:** Art Carinci, Mel Parrish

**Birthdays:** Tom Jackson (1), Chuck Murray (6), Dave Shantz (7), Doug Metzger (14), David Allen (28), Dar Johnson (31)

### **AROUND THE DISTRICT**

#### **From Matt Tipton**

Mark your calendars! The 9th annual **Harmony Hideaway Happening** (you probably know it as "**Slamkafest**") will be on Saturday, July 19th.

You can get more information including directions from the Guardians of Harmony website: [http://www.guardiansofharmony.org/media/main\\_current.pdf](http://www.guardiansofharmony.org/media/main_current.pdf)

#### **Would-be quartetters, COMPETE this Fall!**

CHORDIOLOGY, that wild and crazy foursome who will guest on our show this Fall, has come up with another great idea: they are offering to sing on the contest stage this October with ANY man that would like to, but doesn't have a quartet. Just learn two of four songs that they are preparing.

“Think about it! Think about what it would be like to enjoy the rush of being introduced in a quartet and walking out from behind the curtains, to live out all of

the fun that goes along with being on the stage with a true barbershop crowd behind you every moment of the way and enjoying all of their supportive applause, to hear the music you are making being amplified throughout the auditorium, to see your face up on the big screen (and don't forget that you can even get the video of it), and to enjoy the camaraderie that takes place between the quartets behind the scenes both beforehand and afterward! --- This could be and should be YOU! – a contest Chordologist! We're not aware of this ever having been done in Pioneer before.”

### **Trophies vs Pins, Medals, Badges**

There was great interest, at least 15 responses, to an email from Sally Burns, (the wife of FERMATA NOWHERE bass, Pete Burns) who wrote:

“Over the years FERMATA NOWHERE was very successful in placing second and third in both District Contests and International Prelims. In addition Pete sang with Resolution and Anything Goes. They also won trophies. Sitting in a box in our basement are over ten trophies collecting dust. The coveted first place trophy is displayed in our family room! Although we are proud of all of their accomplishments, we don't own a trophy case! My thought is this: Maybe it would be better to award pins to second and third place winners. Pins could be proudly worn on a jacket, shirt or lanyard. It would also free up some valuable space in basements! Thanks for listening.”

I wouldn't have guessed it was such a big issue, but there it is. Most of the responses were positive. Gee, I wish I had that problem!

### **BUSH LEAGUE 2008**

This year's Bush League is once again in Gaylord, August 22-23.

“Two generous donors have provided a total of \$700.00 in gas cards to pass on to the first seven Quartets to register for and participate in Bush League 2008! That is \$100.00 to each of the first seven Quartets eager to come north and experience a remarkable weekend of fellowship, contesting and coaching.

“Quartet and housing registration forms are included in the current online Troubadour.

The judges are Society-Certified. They are Al Fisk, Roger Lewis, Ken Fisher and Ron Eubank. The coaches are the judges plus our International Seniors Silver Medalist Quartet, RESISTING-A-REST.”

**Russ Seeley** is hospitalized with serious breathing issues.

### **AROUND THE WORLD**

#### **BHS INTERNATIONAL IN NASHVILLE**

International Convention is in Nashville from June 29 to July 6. The Chorus Finals are Saturday afternoon and the Quartet Finals are Saturday evening. If

you aren't going, you can still participate via the Webcast, with just the audio, or audio and video.

(BHS Webcast home page: <http://www.bhs-live.com/> )

As to the Pioneer district entries, WILDCARD sings 18<sup>th</sup> of 54. Unfortunately their qualifying score of 72.3 is 52<sup>nd</sup> 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 (16<sup>th</sup> out of 28).

Two of our international champion quartets, MAX Q (2007 champs) and REALTIME (2005 champs), will debut on the Grand Ole Opry during the convention. REALTIME will appear on the world-famous radio show on Tuesday, July 1, and MAX Q appears on Friday, July 4. The Opry began as a simple radio broadcast in 1925 and is one of the world's longest-running shows.

**The Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association ( BQPA )** is a subsidiary of the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS) which focuses on quartet development. It has been active for over a quarter century, formerly as “the Pioneers.”

The Fall gathering of BQPA will be held in Chicago, IL, September 4-6, 2008 at the Chicago West Hotel.

Jack Martin, BQPA Steering Committee Chairman, writes: “All quartet singers are welcome and organized quartets (registered or not) are especially encouraged to attend.

“The weekend consists of continual informal quartet singing with singers from coast to coast. A light hearted 'contest' is a Friday night tradition with quartets made up by drawing names from a hat. Medals are awarded for the first three places. Lots of laughs and the judges are open to bribes. The Saturday night show will be made up of those organized quartets in attendance and the 'winner' of the Friday sing off.

“If a fun filled weekend of quartet singing with lots of camaraderie in a relaxed atmosphere appeals to you and/or your quartet, make your reservations and join in the good times. There is also a golfing outing scheduled!

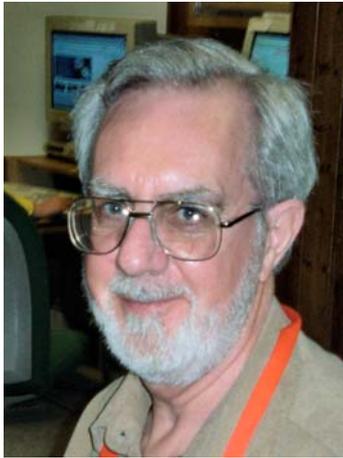
“Get the details of the hotel and contact info. at the revised BQPA website: [www.bqpa.com](http://www.bqpa.com) ”

### **MEET LANCE SHEW**

Lance Shew was born into an Indiana farming family in 1940. His dad raised grain and livestock in Rockville, and then in Clinton, on the banks of the Wabash. (The Clinton farm has remained in the family.) His mom taught domestic science (now known as Family Consumer Science) until leaving her school job to raise their four children.

Lance is very happy that he was raised as a farm boy, because he developed a lot of competencies. Farm chores did keep him from most high school

activities, but he participated in 4-H, raising calves and hogs and building some electrical projects. But those airplanes flying over their farm framed his future professional direction.



Lance graduated from high school in 1958 (and will attend his 50<sup>th</sup> class reunion this summer). He progressed to Purdue University, married his high school sweetheart, Nola, and graduated with a B.S. in Aeronautical Engineering in 1963.

For the next two years, he worked at the Rocketdyne branch of North American Aviation in the San Fernando Valley section of Los Angeles, working on space engines, especially the fuel tanks for the Gemini spacecraft. Then, for thirteen years, he worked for Pratt & Whitney Aircraft, in East Hartford, CT on their jet engines. While there, he also conducted vibration testing of the fuel cells for the Apollo mission and the space shuttle. His expertise developed in vibration analysis and instrumentation. In 1978, he moved to Michigan and to a position at Williams International in Walled Lake, where he continued in general instrumentation, vibration testing, and strain gauges. He retired in 2004, but still works there a few days a month on a consultant basis.

Lance had done a little singing, in high school chorus and mixed ensemble, in the Methodist church choir, in the Purdue University choir, and then at Bethel United Church of Christ, on Elizabeth Lake Road (where he is currently President of the church council). At Williams, he knew Howard Lynn, but not about Howard's involvement in barbershop until a chat at a retirees' dinner led to purchasing tickets to our annual show in Clarkston. A year ago, he happened to meet Roger Holm who invited him to visit the Chorus, and he has been a regular Bass with us ever since.

Lance and Nola live in Commerce Township. They have three children, all of whom live locally, six grandchildren, and one great grandchild.

Lance's fascination with aviation led to his starting flight training in East Windsor CT, where he had 12.4 hours in an Ercoupe, including soloing. But the financial strain of raising a family aborted further training.

Lance's family has a history of heart problems, and Lance had open heart bypass surgery in 1985, so he has been diligent about exercising, walking their treadmill and swimming in the Walled Lake Community Education program. He has accumulated a total of 977 miles – as of June 12 (that's over 66,000 trips across a 25 yard pool).

He is also a beginning wood-worker. This was stimulated by taking a one-week course in woodturning, at the John C. Campbell Folk School in Brasstown, NC, a school that specializes in one-week courses, as diverse as building a mountain dulcimer to blacksmithing to jewelry making. Lance has taken a course there in 3 finger style banjo playing but has trouble finding time to practice.

He has always sung privately. Now he gets a kick out of learning new songs, and enjoys the camaraderie of the chorus. He is exploring the possibility of quartetting, which may be actualized if three chorus members can find a Tenor to join them.

Welcome, Lance!

#### **Big Chief Jeopardy, #19 (Try these.)**

1. **Answer:** Two members who have sung (though not at the same time) with the Dapper Dans at Walt Disney World.
2. **Answer:** This International Gold medalist baritone of "The Ritz" produces four-part training CDs under the name of "The D. J. Four." (The appropriate **Questions** can be found in back issues # 52 & 62.)

#### **THE INNER GAME OF MUSIC**

##### **By Barry Green, with W. Timothy Gallwey**

"I'm singing out of tune. What will they think? And I hit a wrong note there. Oh no, my voice is quavering. When will it stop? This is terrible. Now for the tricky part. Damn, if I could go over that measure again, I'm sure I could sing it more smoothly. Tom directed that slower last time. Why don't people follow him? The Leads are going flat. Chin level, breathe from the belly, soften my knees. Where was I? Oh, no I'm going to forget that measure. Ah, that was good, I hope that impressed everyone..."

Is that what you hear from that little voice in your head? That's "Self 1" talking. The interfering self. If you can shut him up, you'll sing better.

If you don't recognize "Self 1," try this little exercise. Sit comfortably with your eyes closed and be aware of your breathing for just one minute, just simply aware, not thinking about your breath but being aware of it. You'll probably find that your attention is all over the place, like a frisky puppy; no way will it stay focused on your breath for a minute. The thoughts come in, like squirrels chattering, like monkey business. This exercise, by the way, is the essence of

Vipassana Meditation, or mindfulness meditation, a technique for quieting the mind and learning about the nature of our being.

*The Inner Game of Music* is a book recommended to me years ago by erstwhile HIGH OCTANE Lead Ron Arnold, and finally read during the recent power outage.

Previous books were written about the “Inner Game principles of ‘natural learning’ applied to sports.”

People “play” sports and “play” music, yet both involve hard work and discipline.

Here’s a sampling of Green & Gallwey’s ideas:

If Self 1 will shut up, then Self 2 can carry on, that unique suspended moment when you actually become the emotional or sensory quality of the music. Mentally alert and aware, but too absorbed in the moment to be running any mental gossip. What Gallwey refers to as a state of “relaxed concentration,” and calls it the “master skill” of the Inner Game.

The primary discovery of the Inner Game is that ... human beings get in their own way. The point of the Inner Game of sports or music is always the same – to reduce mental interferences that inhibit the full expression of human potential.

The “outer” game is the one we all know we are playing ... in the outside world... the context is the hall ... the obstacle is throat tension ... the goal is to sing that difficult passage.

The “inner” game is subtler, less easily noticed and more quickly forgotten. It is played out in the arena of your mind. The obstacles are mental obstacles.

“Self-interference is the kind of mental static that interferes with our natural ability.

Performance = Potential minus interference.

Playing the Inner Game is a matter of developing three skills: awareness, will, and trust. These skills in turn help us to achieve relaxed concentration, the “master skill” that allows us to balance: Performance, Experience, and Learning.

- Awareness means simple awareness of what is happening, before the “rush to judgment” takes place.
- Will means both the direction and the intensity of your intention.
- Trusting means trusting the importance of awareness, the efficacy of Will, and one’s inner resources for us to tap into and so perform our best.

## MUSIC COMMITTEE

Your editor got a chance to see the workings of the Music Committee from the inside this past month. Roger Holm has asked section leaders to join the others, so that the committee now consists of: Holm, Blue, Brede, Cowlshaw, Doig, Ensign, D. Johnson, McFadyen, Moss, Murray, Prueter, and Teuber.

Whoey! That committee works hard. Just to give you a sample, here’s what was discussed June 8:

Update on the Fall show, and narrowing the song choice  
Chapter policies on auditioning in-house quartets  
Plans for dealing with Tom’s absence  
Song learning aids  
Updating a Welcome letter in guest songbooks  
Contest Philosophy



## ASK THE DIRECTOR

I’m sure we’ve all had questions from time to time that we would like to ask our director, Tom Blue, but the occasion hasn’t arisen. Now it has. Tom has agreed to answer a question each month in this very venue.

So imagine you’re relaxed, sitting at the bar with Tom, tossing one back, and there’s a lull in the conversation, and you say, “Tom, by the way, I’ve been meaning to ask you...” What question would you ask? Let me know your question and I’ll choose one each month to fire at Tom.

Ahh, Here comes a question, already... John, from Commerce Township, asks, “Tom, directing a high school mixed chorus and an adult male chorus must involve different kinds of challenges. What’s the biggest difference?”

John,

The obvious difference is that of voicing. The mixed chorus consists of SATB and the barbershop chorus is essentially a TTBB voicing with the second tenors as the lead part.

Another difference for me as the director is a set of paradigm shifts during the past two years. I have had to work with voices from sixth grade (mostly unchanged) through high school (changing voices) and onto voices in the BCC that are mature and voices that are in a state of change again because the vocal mechanism is getting older (some would say better with age and more wise).

With these shifts in my teaching, I have had to continue spending more time in the study of the ages of the voice. With that in mind, there are still certain things about singing that are consistent regardless of the voice such as...

Good body alignment (posture)

Breathing that is appropriate for singing (a low and fully expanded breath) relax and free muscles surrounding the jaw, neck and shoulders an energized sound clear enunciation and correct pronunciation a listening ear good intonation singing musically (more than just the correct notes and rhythms)

Some things that I have noticed that are similar, other than the basics of good sound production, among all of the groups that I have taught are...

The enjoyment of music

The feeling of community

The "humanity" that music brings into our lives the sense of belonging and caring the opportunity of "being centered" that music brings to some of us the willingness to learn and grow musically the fun, laughter and fellowship (there is always food involved) the performance of a variety of musical styles fostered by the groups many varied interests the sense of sharing with people through a medium that touches lives in ways that are often not known to the performers

It is interesting that the more I think about it...the fewer differences there are and the more the similarities there seem to be in the "big picture" of singing and performing. It is both a selfish and a self-less art.

"**An American Trilogy**" is a song arranged by country songwriter Mickey Newbury and made popular by Elvis Presley. Presley began performing the song in concert in 1972 and performed the song in the 1972 documentary, "Elvis On Tour", as well as his 1973 international satellite telecast "Elvis—Aloha from Hawaii". "An American Trilogy" is a medley of three 19th century songs— "Dixie", a blackface minstrel song that became the unofficial anthem of the Confederacy since the Civil War; "All My Trials", originally a Bahamian lullaby, but closely related to African American spirituals, and well-known through folk music revivalists; and "The Battle Hymn of the Republic", the marching song of the Union Army during the Civil War.

The original Mickey Newbury version reached #26 in 1972, and reached the top ten of Billboard's Easy Listening chart.

(Wikipedia)

### Online bulletins:

Teuber and Cowlshaw are members of PROBE, (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors). PROBE maintains a list of all online publications. Our *Smoke Signals* is one of about 60 that are available online at:

<http://www.harmonize.com/PROBE/online/distbull.htm>

**Pioneer District** is represented by our district publication:

Pioneer's [Troubadour](#)

And by these three chapter bulletins.

- Detroit-Oakland, MI [Hi-Notes](#)
- Lansing, MI [Woodshedder Weekly](#)
- Pontiac-Waterford, MI [Smoke Signals](#)

Check them out.

*Sing Better as You Age, A comprehensive Guide for Adult Choral Singers*, by Victoria Meredith. This is the book that Tom Blue has been referring to in his emails. It was recently named the #1 book by the Canadian Choral Directors Association. It is available for \$16.95 plus \$5 shipping from:

Santa Barbara Music Publishing Company, Inc.

PO BOX 41003,

Santa Barbara, CA 93140

You can order the book on-line at:

<http://sbmp.com/BookSingBetter/SingBetter1.html>

The book considers:

The Singer's Voice

What Happens to Bodies and Voices as We Age?

Guidelines for Vocal Conditioning and Re-Conditioning Tough stuff like Vibrato Creeping In, Breath Control, Dynamics, etc.

Familiar stuff, like Vowel Uniformity and Diphthongs.

Long-time BHS arranger **Burt Szabo** has a new \$2 barbershop **arrangement** offer. Two Dollar Arrangement #28 is a marvelous song, with a lilting, toe-tapping beat that you and your listeners will truly enjoy. It was written in 1917 by three giants of American popular music, Gus Kahn, Raymond Egan and Richard Whiting. It sounds a decade or two ahead of its time. No, it's not an "old fashioned" song. It has the sound of the 1930s in its rhythmic syncopations and harmonic design. Truly a gem - and it's a funny thing - I've never heard a barbershop group sing this song, yet. Other songs by one or more of the writers are "My Ideal", "Sleepytime Gal", "Little Street Where Old Friends Meet", "Yes, Sir, That's My Baby", "Toot, Toot, Tootsie", "Ain't We Got Fun?", "Carolina In The Morning", "Breezin' Along With The Breeze", "You Stepped Out Of A Dream" and many more.

Now you can be the first to introduce this charming, happy song to your barbershop friends. It's yours for a two dollar US banknote (or the equivalent), postpaid anywhere in the world and your copy will be on its way to you. Burt Szabo, 525 Conway Rd. #221, Azalea Park, FL 32807.

(Why haven't any of our quartets taken advantage of his offers?)

### American Harmony

"A new music documentary, *American Harmony*, will debut at the Barbershop Harmony Society's 70th Annual International Convention. The film is more than three years in the making and was edited by Kate Amend, the editor of two Oscar-winning documentaries.

(As I reported in previous *Smoke Signals* #65 and 73), "the 88-minute film is an in-depth look at the amazingly rich subculture of a true American art form, and some of the biggest names to emerge from international competition in the Society's illustrious 70-year history, as well as interviews with Joe

Barbershoppers. The camera follows four prominent Society quartets over a span of years, on stage and at home, in their quest to be the best. American Harmony received an enthusiastic reception from film distributors and other non-barbershop audiences.

“The film is a mixture of obsession, singing, zany comedy and nail-biting competition,” says director Aengus James. “This is the story of several dreamers who journey from their ‘ordinary’ lives to the world stage in the hopes of winning the gold.”

Filmed during the Society’s last three international conventions, the candid footage and other elements combine to tell a compelling and entertaining story.

For more information, go to: <http://www.americanharmonythemovie.com>”

**Young at Heart** has left the movie theaters, but hopefully it will be available soon on video. It’s a movie about singing in the face of mortality. My wife and I saw it and enjoyed it immensely.

It's based on a 2006 BBC documentary about a mixed chorus of retirees who for 25 years have performed rock and pop songs to adoring audiences here and abroad. One watches 53-year old director Bob Cilman bring a group of about 24 men and women in their 70's, 80's, and 90's thru the final seven-week process preparing for their annual show. The film has everything – music, relevance, fellowship, relationships, facial energy, remembering lines, aging, family, illness and death, directorial angst. The chorus is good enough to sell out the house (the Academy of Music Theater) every spring and to tour America and Europe.

Their average age is 80, and director Cilman chooses such rock classics as the Ramones' "I Wanna Be Sedated," James Brown's "I Feel Good," The Clash's "Should I Stay or Should I Go?," Sonic Youth's "Schizophrenia", and the Bee Gees' "Staying Alive." There is a remarkable scene of the group singing to a group of deeply moved prison inmates. And there are touching tributes to two members who die during the course of filming. Fred Knittle's singing of Coldplay's "Fix You" in honor of his friend, may leave you in tears.

<http://youngatheartchorus.com/about.php>

As the Young@Heart chorus says:

It is possible to age gracefully.

It is possible to grow old without growing boring.

**The July issue of American Scientist has this article: “The Psychoacoustics of Harmony Perception,”** by Norman Cook and Takefumi Hayashi.

“Centuries after three-part harmony entered Western music, research is starting to clarify why different chords sound tense or resolved, cheerful or melancholy.

“The perception of harmony and dissonance is universal to all cultures. Stable or unstable combinations of tones evoke the very same feelings in people who have never heard "western" music as they do for those of us who grew up on a diet of Mozart, Sondheim or The Beatles. The reason for this common

perception, according to Cook, is that the major or minor modality of musical chords is a direct consequence of the complex waveform of these pitch combinations.

The reason I am reporting on this, is that the whole theory doesn’t work if you treat just the pure sound of a pitch. You have to include the higher frequency overtones that we barbershoppers love to talk about. And, (get this), the authors say, “The perception of chords—whether they are 3-tone triads, 4-tone tetrads or more complex chords and cadences—is likewise influenced by upper partials. In a triadic chord, as in a 2-tone interval, the frequencies with the greatest amplitude are usually those of the fundamentals, the three distinct notes that are written in the musical score. The upper partials usually have smaller amplitudes, but give the chord a rich feeling that we might call its overall "sonority." On rare occasions—**such as in barbershop quartet singing**—the upper partials may reinforce each other to such an extent that they are almost as strong as the fundamentals, and this creates the much-coveted illusion of a "fifth voice.””

The article proposes a fundamental theory as to why 7<sup>th</sup> chords demand resolution, and why ringing chords are satisfying.

### **Musicophobia: When Your Favorite Song Gives You Seizures**

We like to celebrate the many advantages of music. But the June 9, 2008 online *Scientific American* reports a rare kind of epilepsy, that is triggered by music. How odd!

At first, Stacey Gayle’s seizures seemed to occur randomly. In the spring of 2006, however, she noticed a pattern. At the time, Sean Paul's "[Temperature](#)" was sitting at the top of the Billboard Hot 100 singles chart, continually being played on urban radio stations. It was playing at nearly every barbecue and party she went to. That was a problem: "Every time it would go on, I would pass out and go into a seizure," she recalls.

All it seemed to take was a few seconds of the song to send Gayle to the floor. "That's the last thing you would think," she explains, "but I did it at home one time and it happened again."

To Gayle, it was clear that the music was causing her seizures. But she had trouble convincing her doctors, until she showed them by getting out her I-Pod.

Macdonald Critchley first described musicogenic epilepsy—the technical term for seizures caused by music—in a 1937 paper, according to celebrated neurologist Oliver Sacks's latest book [Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain](#). Ashesh Mehta, a neurosurgeon at LIJ [Epilepsy](#) Center, calls the condition "exceedingly rare," noting that there are only 150 case studies ever reported, including the 11 Critchley wrote about. Patients have been known to react to everything from classical music to the Beatles and Pink Floyd to church bells played over a radio.

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlshaw

From Frankenmuth:



(This Photo by Herbert Judd)

### Some musical definitions (from Doug Pearson)

ALLREGRETTO Into the piece you realize you took too fast a tempo  
A PATELLA Accompanied by knee-slapping  
CACOPHANY A composition incorporating many people with chest colds  
CORAL SYMPHONY A work from Beethoven's Caribbean Period  
DILL PICCOLINI An small wind instrument that plays only sour notes  
FIDDLER CRABS Grumpy string players  
FLUTE FLIES Those tiny mosquitoes that bother musicians on outdoor gigs  
FRUGALHORN A sensible and inexpensive brass instrument  
GAUL BLATTER A French horn player  
GREGORIAN CHAMP The monk who can hold a note the longest  
PLACEBO DOMINGO A faux tenor

### 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 29 - July 6 International Convention, Nashville  
Jul 1, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jul 3, Th, dark Sylvan Lake Fireworks, Marshalls' yard  
Jul 6, Sa, 7pm Webcast, Jim Owens' home  
Jul 8, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jul 15, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jul 22, T, 7pm Gig, Lockwood of Waterford  
Jul 22, T, after gig Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Jul 29, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
July 29- Aug 5 Harmony University, St. Joseph, MO  
Aug 2, Sa, 3pm Amy Jamison Benefit, Church of Christ, Rochester  
Aug 5, T, 7pm Chorus rehearsal, Waterford Oaks  
Aug 10, Su, 4pm Detroit Princess Cruise, [detroitprincess.com](http://detroitprincess.com)  
October 17-19 District Convention - Battle Creek  
Nov 1, Sa 64th Annual Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show