



BIG CHIEF CHORUS

SMOKE SIGNALS



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

Vol. 8, No. 8, (#92)

December 1, 2008

From the Prez

Out with the old, in with the new! Yes, you have elected your new Board members for the 2009 Pontiac-Waterford Chapter.

But wait!!!! As I look around, only a couple new faces do appear. Well then, let's take a look at this past year.

Because I was surrounded with a great group of hardworking, dedicated, and ambitious board members, we were able to institute a couple new programs.

We developed an urgency phone communications contact group and not too soon either. Within the first few weeks it was tested. A few glitches were cleared up and the program was once again tested and worked very well.

We developed an emergency medical information file for those who wished to participate. We created a one page health information form that was made available to all active members. Two members are responsible for maintaining and carrying a copy of the file to all chorus functions; in case of an emergency occurring to a participating member their form can be made available (to emergency personnel).

We expanded our number of singout performances and our exposure to the general public. We sang to several thousand people. Our V.P. of Public Relations and Marketing received recognition from the District, receiving a first

place award, second year in a row, for his outstanding contribution and performance.

Our music committee, under the direction of V.P. of Music and Performance, handled several issues as well as choosing and keeping us supplied with music for the year.

Smoke Signals, our official chapter publication and its editor also received for the second year in a row, recognition and a first place award from our District and recognition by our National association. Our Editor was chosen to teach a class at the 2009 COTS seminar on publishing chapter bulletins.

Our Board worked on issues like insurance, copyright fees and much, much more.

We have a new committee in the process of developing a grant program to support local high school and possibly even college vocal music programs.

What about the very successful Valentines Day program and our Show this year. All the hard work of committees, quartets and You the chorus members, to make this all happen.

Our Director and assistant Directors, their time, talent, effort and dedication they put forth to help us make this wonderful hobby of ours even better.

And much, much more.

I thank you all and hope this year has been, for you as it has been for me, fun, good fellowship and good singing. And may We your elected Board and committee persons and all who contribute in their own way, make 2009 just as successful.

It has been an honor serving you--

Irwin "Doc" Mann

Chapter President

SHOW WRAP-UP

Jim Owens reports that 593 tickets were sold to our show, with heroic individual efforts by Mike Frye (49 tickets sold) and Roger Holm (44 tickets sold). Another 91 complementary tickets were distributed. That makes an estimated audience of 638. Bruce Brede reports that there were 88 tickets purchased for the AfterGlow Cast Party and another 13 comps.

Preliminary financial accounting from Dick Johnson:

Income: Tickets - \$9810	Expense: Talent - \$2200
Ads - \$5115	Venue - \$2693
Total - \$14,925	Programs - \$1237
	Miscellaneous - \$351
Net profit: \$8444	

Cast Party:

Expense: \$1350
Income \$830
Net Cost - \$520

Show videos are available for \$15 thru Bob and Eileen Marshall.

AROUND THE PATCH

(From Tom)

“Jana and I welcomed home **Emma Hope Elisabeth Blue** on Thursday, Nov. 13 (our 15th anniversary) at 2:25 am. She is 19.5 inches long, weighs 7 lbs 5oz. and has a good set of lungs. It must be that pre-disposed barbershop harmony. Everyone is doing fine.” Anna and Grace participated in her naming.

Christmas Singouts: Dec 1 thru Dec 23. NOTE: THE UNIFORM FOR ALL EVENTS IS WHITE LONG SLEEVE DRESS SHIRT WITH CHRISTMAS TIE, BLACK PANT, BLACK SHOES AND CHRISTMAS HEAD PIECE (OPTIONAL). RED, BLACK OR GREEN JACKET AND HAT IF POSSIBLE FOR BUS TOUR AND OTHER OUTSIDE EVENTS.

Dick Johnson is arranging our annual **Installation and Awards dinner**, Friday, December 12, 7 p.m.. It will be held at Coyote Grill, at the corner of Hiller and Greer. The cost for wives, girl friends, or other guests is \$15.95. NIGHT SHIFT, the same great quartet that judged the Woodshed Contest, will be there. Jim Kunz of that quartet is a District Officer and will do the installation.

Board replacements: Due to increased work load on Neil Braun, he has resigned the secretaryship, and Bill Auquier has agreed to President Doc's request to serve. Bill Holmes also replaces Dave Shantz as V.P. of Chapter Development.

Jeff Doig has updated the **web site**. Check it out at www.bigchiefchorus.org and look for the *Smoke Signals* interviews, and upcoming events.

It's not too early to think about the composition of **quartets** that are ready and competent to hit the road at **Valentines'** season.

Roger Holm announced that the Music Committee has decided on **next year's show theme** – **“Disney on Broadway.”** Music is now being corralled. The Broadway addition to the title reminds us of how many popular recent Disney musicals there have been.

Bob and Eileen Marshall report that they raised a little over \$1000 for the **Lyme Disease Association's fundraiser**, the Walk/Sit/Rock/Roll-a-thon that was held on September 6 in Garden City. The total amount raised was about \$10,000. The Marshalls' work will help fund a conference to bring in health professionals who can explain information on symptoms, use of antibiotics, and advances in treatment and research for this debilitating disease.

The **Spring retreat** at Ralph MacMullan Center, Higgins Lake, has been firmed up for April 3-5, 2009. This gibes nicely with the Pioneer district weekend, April 17, 18, and won't interfere with our scheduled Woodshed Friday, on March 27, 2009.

INVOICE placed 21st out of 52 at the November International competition in Honolulu, singing “Blackbird,” and “How Deep is the Ocean,” two songs we heard them sing at the Amy Jamison benefit concert

Detroit firefighter Walter Harris died in an arson-linked fire recently when the roof of the abandoned home collapsed on him. He was 38 and also an ordained minister in the Community Christian Fellowship. He will be one we honor when we sing again at the **Michigan Fallen Heroes Memorial** next September 11.

Bob Butcher's son, **Gene Butcher**, was featured on page A-3 of the Oakland Press Wednesday, November 12. Gene is a Waterford Fireman and a bagpiper who performs with two Pipes and Drums organizations.

Jeff Doig has secured a role in Lakeland Players' February productions of *Music Man*.

2008 Performances to date: 89 for 7075 people

QUARTETS

One of the consequences of 9/11 was a patriotic upwelling that led to more celebrations of Veterans Day. Oxford School Systems celebrated their 6th annual **Veterans' Day Tribute** on November 10, in the beautiful Oxford Performing Arts Center. And FOUR WHEEL DRIVE was there to help them. The quartet's contribution was so brief that they barely got warmed up; they sang a harmonic version of “The Navy Hymn” (“Eternal Father, Strong to Save”). In the lobby, post-show, they sang a few more songs, songs whose lyrics were easier to remember. ☺

On November 18, FOUR WHEEL DRIVE visited Ms. Julia Kohring's middle school music classroom, the very Crary aerie where the BCC practices every Tuesday night. Our hour-long visit might serve as a template. We started off singing two upbeat songs, including “Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah.” Then we asked the class's Crary Boys' Choir to sing two of their songs, which they did with much enthusiasm. Next we listened to their questions, trying to answer such items as how long we'd been together, whether we did this full-time, how to know what voice part to sing, and why Al's shoes stayed so shiny. Next we all joined in two tags – “When I leave the world behind,” “Mickey Mouse.” Jeff taught them the

Lead line, which they all sang together, while Al, Zaven and John harmonized. We ended with a few more upbeat numbers by the quartet.

MEMBERSHIP (at 60)

Renewals: Lance Shew (2), Ron Clarke (7), Bruce Brede (11), Dick Johnson (39)

Pending: David Allen

Bye-Bye: Art Carinci, Mel Parrish, Jim Troeger

BSOM: October – Mike Frye – for his many contributions



Birthdays: Stan Mersino (5th), Austin Quinn (7th), Jack Teuber (15th), Howard Lynn (18th), Mike Frye (23rd), Zaven Melkonian (26th), Jim Owens (28th)

Medical: Bob Butcher's wife, Mary, is undergoing chemotherapy. John Cowlshaw's wife, Corinne, got a double whammy this month, with lumbar fusion Nov 3, and word on Thanksgiving Day that her younger sister had had a brain aneurysm. Bob Legato is walking with difficulty.

In Memoriam: Dec 7, 2001, Bob Woodward, #8
Dec 18, 2005, Bob Wisdom, #57

AROUND THE DISTRICT

D.O.C. Bari **Pete Peters** lives on Garland Ave in Sylvan Lake, where a fire last week destroyed the neighbor's home and badly damaged Pete's. In Pete's absence, the firemen spread tarp over many of his valuables and preserved them.

The **economic depression** and its impact on our area and on the auto industry and thus on many of our members is sympathetically presented by the senior editor of *The New Republic* at <http://www.tnr.com/politics/story.html?id=a4893b49-36df-4784-9859-2dfa3a3211bf&k=18827>

AROUND THE WORLD

“**Joe Liles** had another heart attack on Sunday. His stents closed up and caused Joe and his family quite a scare. The good news is that Joe is recovering nicely. A former executive director and current music publications editor of the BHS,

Joe is beloved by barbershop singers, both men and women, all over the world.”
(from Harmonet)

It may be seven months to the next **International** (in Anaheim) but the order of chorus appearance is already chosen, and our Pioneer district reps, Mt Pleasant sing 6th out of 14 in Session 2.

Big Chief Jeopardy, # 23 (Try these.)

1. **Answer:** The great Height-Off.
2. **Answer:** Soccer goalie, coach, and ref, Navy Ops Sepcialist, Granada weapons inventorier, analysit for the U.S. Naval Institute, member of the Confederate Air Force, and movie “star.”
(Clues to the Questions in Issues # 56 and 66.)

ASK THE DIRECTOR(S BABY BLUE)



(Photo, T.B.)

Your editor asks: Tuh, tuh, puh, puh, Bub-b-b-b-ble, Bub-b-b-b-ble
Baby Blue: Waa-a-a-h, Waa-a-a-h, Waa-a-a-h, Waa-a-a-h, Coo-o-o, Coo-o-o.

MEET STAN MERSINO

Stan is a 23-year member of our chorus. He joined in 1985 and sang Lead. Our only more senior members are Barnes, Wilson, McFadyen, Johnson, Dabbs, LaMarte, Nevaux, Lynn, Keith, Quinn, and Ensign. He has had some recent contact with Len Barnes and Bill Dabbs, and Howard Lynn stopped by. He keeps faithfully renewing in our chorus, because he likes to keep in touch with the barbershop world. He went to the Lansing show a couple years ago.

When the kids moved north, Stan and Ruth Ann followed from Ortonville in 1997 and bought 20 acres near Kingston Michigan, about five miles NW of Marlette in the thumb. There they have a home and a gallery for Ruth Ann's oil paintings and other wildlife art. Their property has plenty of wildlife, and the 7-acre lake provides lots of fishing for walleyes, pike et al. They also have a couple hundred acres of land further north that they have put into the HeadWaters Land Conservancy.

Stan has been working as a Lapeer bus driver. This past summer, he got a serious spider bite, which eventually caused fainting, requiring a 6-month absence from all driving. Part of this time he has worked at an ethanol plant in Iowa with his son.

Stan stays active and finished the 10-mile Crim Road Race last year in the 70-74 age group in less than two hours.

(From Todd Wilson, Director of Marketing, Barbershop Harmony Society)

“The **Barbershop Harmony Society’s new video Public Service Announcements** can be used to present the benefits of singing to prospective singers in your area.” The Society’s e-portal contains a new 60-second video (PSA) promoting membership in the Barbershop Harmony Society. Go to www.barbershop.org or directly to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7iCZtFDY1Hc&eurl=http://www.barbershop.org/newshome.html>

The Society suggests we also “embed the YouTube code for this video on your chapter website, and you should also not overlook the opportunity to hand-deliver a DVD with a standard definition version of this PSA (and others available) to your local TV and cable broadcasters to attract more guests to your next meeting. Commercial broadcasters are required to allocate a certain portion of their schedule to airing Public Service Announcements from 501©3 non-profit organizations like your barbershop chapter. These PSAs are a great way to build awareness for barbershop in your community and are available for download on the Video PSA page of the new Society website. <http://www.barbershop.org/videopsa.aspx> With a computer and the right video editing software you can probably add some titling and perhaps a voice-over with your local contact information. A cool website that can present links to TV stations in our community, is at <http://www.mondotimes.com/index.html> Danielle Cole in our marketing department can help.”

We should also think about promoting *American Harmony* – “the best movie about barbershop ever made...honest!”

“How would you like to show this movie in your home town to all your friends as part of the grand opening nationwide? Well you can. It's easy. Please read about this project at <http://www.barbershop.org/americanharmony> about how to make this happen. Complete a short survey for us, and we'll get you started right away.”

Joel Rutherford, well-known bass of ACOUSTIX, writes of the quartet’s experience at a Grand Ol’ Opry filming of a new **Gaither** Homecoming Video.

“Anyways, so we sang them something, and they dug it. And then I asked them if I could sing something with them. Now, we all know this to be a very common practice in our world. But you’d think I just asked them to recite the periodic table or something. They seemed sincerely confused. I don’t think anyone had ever asked them that before. Anyways, we chatted for a second till we found something of theirs that I knew, (“Oh Love that will not let me go”) and then we let'er rip. And here it is.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1O6zt4sveQ>

Holiday performances

Shoreline Sound Chorus: Kick off the holiday season with the Shoreline Sound Chorus and join us again for pasta and pitch pipes! Music & Marinara II "The Leftovers"!
December 6, 2008
Dinner 5pm, Show 6:30pm
De Carlo Banquet & Convention Center
6015 East Ten Mile Warren, MI
For Ticket Info: 586.254.5546
www.shorelinesound.org

The **Clarkston Community Band** presents
“Christmas in Clarkston - A Celebration of holiday Music”
Special Guests: Bellissima Handbell Choir
Sunday, December 14, 2008, 2:00 PM
Clarkston Jr. High School
6595 Waldon Road, Clarkston
Free Admission

Make A Difference

Tom Blue writes: “Check out some of the short films on <http://makeadifference.com/> You will enjoy even if they are a little sentimental, especially the autumn and winter films.”

Lance Shew is the latest to circulate this YouTube video of five sisters between the ages of 5 and 9 singing the National Anthem:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fgqjUqRb_nk

Tom Metzger (tom@metzgers.ca), the Bass of International Gold Medalist Realtime, has introduced “**Virtual Coaching**” through their website, Owing The Stage <http://www.owningthestage.com/>

"Virtual Coaching" offers:

- High level coaching just about anywhere, even if there are no high level coaches where you live
- Save ALL the usual expenses - no travel, no lodging, no meals
- Get exactly as much coaching as you want
- Coaching available for groups at all levels, from brand new quartets to International Champs

We deliver effective, high-level coaching to quartets and individual performers live and in "real time" over the Internet, using inexpensive technology that you may already have. It's made painless and effective by our unique remote coaching methodology. All you need to join the revolution is a computer with a broadband connection, a web cam and a microphone.

And here is the **testimony** of a “coach-ee” Rob Sequeira” rob.sequeira@gmail.com writes:

I sing baritone in a relatively new quartet in the San Francisco Bay Area. We’re called Brewhouse <http://www.brewhousequartet.com/>

We recently did a coaching session with Tom Metzger from OwningTheStage. We were physically in San Jose, California and Tom was somewhere in Canada.

This essentially involved two computers (each with a webcam, microphone and speakers), internet connections (local connections were WiFi, remote were broadband), a quartet, a coach and 5 open minds. From a software perspective, both computers were running Mac OS X and we used Skype for the audio and video.

We could hear and see Tom very well. The audio and video sync’d up fine and there were really no issues there. We recorded the session.

From Tom’s side, he could hear and see the quartet quite well (the bandwidth remained high enough for 85% or more of the session). To give you an idea of how rich the experience was, we talked about a wide spectrum of elements including message of the song, overtones, voice matching, posture, breathing, synchronization, intent and effect of the song on the audience.

It was relatively easy to setup. We had a “sound/video check” prior to the session to make sure it was going to work and then we met up later for the real deal. It was bonza!

All in all, as long as you have relatively good up-to-date computers with a broadband connection between the two, I think you could get quite a lot out of these types of sessions.

I continue to enjoy the delightful **Pandora** web site which allows you to set up your own radio station using genres that have been populated by the folks of the Music Genome Project. Try it and let me know what you think, at <http://www.pandora.com/>

Another web site, one that specializes in **Broadway and Vocals**, from Ken Noble:

“The popular standards format that ran for seven months on KDDK-FM in Baton Rouge, Louisiana was recently replaced with youth oriented programming. However, a live stream of that standards show can now be heard at www.broadwayandvocals.com

In addition to our core artists like Frank Sinatra, Patsy Cline, Tony Bennett, Glen Campbell, Vikki Carr, Nat King Cole, Julie Andrews, Bobby Darin, Everly Brothers, and Elvis Presley, many of the significant instrumentals of the last 50 years are included in our playlist of 2,106 recordings by 660 different artists.

I’m the programmer for this show and would appreciate hearing barbershoppers’ suggestions on how to improve our delivery of the world’s best recorded music.”

Try it out. As soon as you click on the URL, the music stream should start.

Still looking for a Christmas present? How about some seasonal a cappella music from <http://www.a-cappella.com/category/christmas-bbshop> You could buy a CD by ACOUSTIX, or AMBASSADORS OF HARMONY, or GAS HOUSE GANG, or MASTERS OF HARMONY. Or, here is a 10-second clip of the Robert Shaw chorale singing *Angels*: http://acappella.colormaria.com/6227C/6227C%5EAngels_We_Have_Heard_on_High.mp3 Or this beauty, Boar’s Head, by the Swingle Singers: http://acappella.colormaria.com/6217C/6217C%5EThe_Boars_Head_Carol.mp3

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING: October 8, 2008. Excerpts from Secretary Bob Butcher’s minutes.

Members present: Cheyne, Shantz, Holm, Teuber, Mann, Butcher, Dick Johnson, Schreiner.

Dick Johnson’s Treasurers Report showed current balance of \$14,593, compared to last year’s balance of \$19,953, but show finances not yet completed.

Wayne Cheyne, Chapter Membership and Development. Discussion was made about how we, as a chorus, can generate further interest from our guest night visitors to return, and possibly join our chorus.

Jack Teuber’s Marketing and Public Relations presented tentative schedule of sing-outs.

President Mann suggested we not accept any performances for one month prior to our annual fall show, and one month prior to our annual spring contest to better prepare for show and contest.

Roger Holm presented his report on the music committee meeting of September 28. Discussion at the meeting concerned policy #8, maintaining an acceptable level of Quality. The Retreat for Spring has been confirmed for April 3, 4, and 5.

The music committee has narrowed their selection for the 2009 year to “Broadway” music. The final selections have not been made yet; many songs were given to our Director, Tom Blue for his perusal.

Dave Shantz has been in contact with the Barbershop Harmony Society about our insurance status. We currently, as a chorus, have umbrella coverage under the BHS as a third party policy. We need to contact Frank Santarelli at the BHS to initiate a policy for Chapter Accidental Coverage. A request for a motion by the chair to purchase additional insurance coverage, to include accidental coverage was made and passed unanimously.

A suggestion was made to move the date of guest night to the May- June time frame, instead of the established fall date. More discussion will take place.

Discussion was made about a possible Guest "Youth Night". Reference was made also to our participation with local High School programs with regards to our "Grant" program, a possible youth guest night would fit into our plans to develop an on-going contact with the youth groups.

Ross Ensign for his work with the ad program was chosen as BSOM for September.

Discussion was made about the possibility of doing the entire show flyer in color, available for the 2009 program.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING: October 28, 2008. Excerpts from Secretary Bob Butcher's minutes.

Members present: Melkonian, Dick Johnson, Shantz, Cheyne, Mann and Butcher.

There was discussion pertaining to the installation dinner was discussed and details settled.

It was moved and passed to "comp" the cost of the installation dinner for members of the Chorus only.

It was moved and passed to give Director Tom Blue's High School Chorus, and the Choral Students at Waterford Mott High School each 40 free tickets to the BCC Fall show.

2009 Pioneer District Dates

February 27-28 Detroit-Oakland Chapter Show

March 7 Lansing Chapter Show

April 17-19 (Note different weekend!) District Convention - Traverse City

August 21-22 Bush League Quartet Contest and coaching, Gaylord Chapter

September 12 Kalamazoo Chapter Show

October 16-18 District Convention - Kalamazoo

October 24 Rochester Chapter Show

November 7 Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show

LETTERS TO THE CHORUS

- Ted Prueter has some fine Pierre Cardin cufflinks he would like to sell.

- Hello Gentlemen:

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for allowing us to participate in your annual show. We consider it an honor. Everything was great - the food, the audience, the show.

Please feel free to add ELMOTHUMM to your "favorite links." (I see you've included "Three Men" and we hate feeling left out.)

So, we hope to see you all at our Spring concert at The Village Theater in May and until then keep on singing and let us know if there is anything we can help with.

Thanks again, Greg Vaden, ELMOTHUMM

All unattributed articles and photos by John Cowlshaw

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP (2009)

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: Bill Holmes

VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm

VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber

Secretary: Bill Auquier

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, Warmups 30' earlier)

Dec 1, M, 6:35	Waterford Tree Lighting, Civic Center, 5200 Civic Center Dr
Dec 2, T, 6:30	Independence Village (Union Lake) 935 Union Lk Rd
Dec 2, T, 7:30	Lockwood of Waterford, M-59 @ Crescent Lk Rd (behind Krogers)
Dec 4, Th, 1 pm	White Lake Oaks – Oak. Co. Retirees, 991 Williams Lk Rd
Dec 9, T, 5:45	Clausen Unit @ Our Lady of Lourdes, 2300 Watkins Lk Rd
Dec 9, T, 6:30	Mendelson @ Our Lady of Lourdes
Dec 9, T, 7:15	Fox Manor @ Our Lady of Lourdes
Dec 12, F, 7:00	Installation of Officers Dinner, Coyote Grille
Dec 13, Sa, 12:00	Big Chief Annual Bus Tour, Waterford Oaks Parking Lot (Elmhaven, Two VG's, Pine Tree Place, Sunrise of Clarkston, Holly Dickens Festival)
Dec 16, T, 6:30	Lakeland Place, 200 Elizabeth Lk Rd.
Dec 16, T, 7:30	Inn at Cass Lake, Cass Lk Rd @ Pontiac Lake Rd
Dec 19, F, 1:00	Oakland Co. Parks & Rec, Waterford Oaks Act'y Bldg,
Dec 23, T, 6:30	Canterbury on the Lake, 5601 Hatchery (& Awards)
Jan 3-4, 2009	COTS, Comfort Inn and Conference Center, Okemos, MI
Mar 27, 2009	Woodshed Contest
Apr 3-5, 2009	Spring Retreat, Ralph MacMullan Center, Higgins Lake
April 17-18	Pioneer District Convention