



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



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

Bulletin #33, January 6, 2004

**AROUND THE PATCH**  
**MEMBERSHIP (at 55)**

**Renewals:** Ted Prueter (3), Bruce Brede (7), Donald Carrier (21), Mike Keith (23), Bill Nevaux (29), Marv Wilson (48)

**Birthdays: January:** Bob Marshall (10<sup>th</sup>), **February:** Ross Ensign (7<sup>th</sup>)

**Illnesses** – John Smith. Smitty is at home under Hospice care for terminal cancer. As Lyle Howard reported via Pionet, he welcomes emails, cards, letters, and phone calls (after screening by Karen for how he is feeling at the moment). His email address is Jsmith2380@aol.com, and phone is 248-674-1539.

Dick Johnson reports that **Jeff Gougeon** of Macomb's chorus will be our **guest director** on January 13<sup>th</sup>. Other guest directors are being lined up. In addition, **Don Bazley** from the Sault Ste. Marie chapter has agreed to coach our retreat at MacMullen center this March.

Bruce Brede reports on **Valentines quartetting**: "On Tuesday Jan 6th, Bill Holmes will be distributing the music for "I Love You Truly", "Heart of My

Heart" and "Let me Call You Sweetheart" and we will have lotsa time for any and everyone to sing as much as we want that nite and the following week. But by Jan 20th we will have to advise Wayne how many total quartets will be available and what special constraints exist like special gigs and daytime commitments to work, etc."

Jeff Doig reports: "Nancy informed me that **both Chris's father and aunt** had passed away within the last month and she had attended both funerals. She said "this has not been a good year for the Millers." Nancy seems to be holding up quite well in spite of all that's happened."

**Doc Mann** will be traveling to California and Florida until April 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Congratulations to the BCC 2003:**

"Rawley Hallman Music Man" Award – Bruce Collins

"Barbershopper of The Year" – Pete Mazzara

**From the Prez:**

Many Thanks are in order for one of the Best Christmas Chorus programs the BCC has experienced. We averaged over 40 men for most of our sing outs. As I attempt to thank everyone, I apologize to anyone whose name I may have omitted.

Thank you to:

1. All of our guest singers whose singing and enthusiasm expanded our sound and performance. We invite you to stay with us and continue to enrich our chorus.
2. Music & Books: Bill & Barb Holmes.
3. Our Directors: Dick Johnson & Bruce Collins.
4. Christmas Signs: Doc Mann, Bill Holmes, Walt DeNio, & Jim Owens.
5. Awards & Certificates: Roger Holm, Dick Johnson, & Len Barnes.
6. Marketing & PR: Walt DeNio, Mel Parrish, Wayne Cheyne, & Ross Ensign.
7. Announcers: Jim Owens, Bruce Collins, & Dick Johnson.
8. Risers Set Up/Take Down: Mike Frye, Walt DeNio, Wayne Cheyne, Lew Mahacek, Dick Johnson, Roger Holm, Neil Braun, Greg Moss, Pete Mazzara, Howard Lynn, Jeff Doig, & Tom Ford.
9. Sound System: Jeff Doig & Howard Lynn.
10. Sing Out Schedule: Roger Holm, Tom Jackson, Bruce Brede, & Walt DeNio.
11. Bus Trip: Bruce Brede & Tom Jackson.
12. Soloist – Walt Bachmann.
13. Super Sub – Lyle Howard.
14. Quartets:

HOLIDAY SPIRIT – John Cowlshaw, Zaven Melkonian, Bill Nevaux, & Tom Ford.

SUNNYSIDE- Len Barnes, Mike Keith, Roger Holm, & Dick Johnson.

IMPRESARIO - Bruce Collins, Gayle Mohler, Jerry Howington, & Ron Arnold.

B NATURAL – John Smith, Lyle Howard, Roger Holm, & Dick Johnson.

15. Last But NOT LEAST: The BCC members. Chris would have been proud of your commitment and effort. Yes Chris, we had fun!

This Christmas Chorus season again proves that the BCC loves to sing before an audience. Therefore we need to plan for more sing outs in 2004. We are going to need even more members to assist in those efforts.

#### **Quartet news:**

SUNNYSIDE sang on Dec 18<sup>th</sup> for a couple of hours at St. Joseph Hospital for cancer patients. Dick Johnson reported: “The nurses took us to rooms where people were feeling down as well as some of the wards and those in chemo. Bottom line; it was success...made some sad folks and little kids smile.”

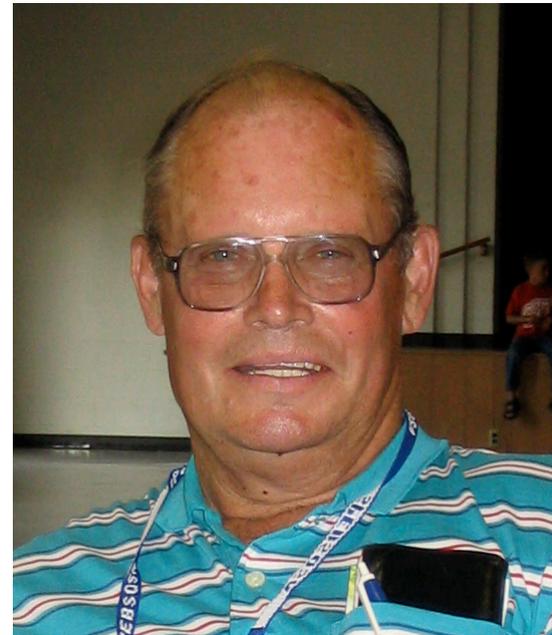
FOUR WHEEL DRIVE had one practice session over the holidays, Dec. 30. Practiced Smitty’s tag, “If the stars go out tomorrow, I will still have you my love” in hopes of singing it to Smitty some time soon.

#### **AROUND THE DISTRICT**

Louis Coviak for DOC says: “Put a big smile on your face and go see Disney's "**Haunted Mansion.**" The movie itself was funny and chilling, but the quartet of singing haunted busts was worth the price of admission. I admit they were only on less than ten minutes but what a joy to behold. They did a few clips of Barbershop favorites with the words changed to make them, ooooooo, scary. My lady, Linda, had to elbow me two or three times to stop singing along in the theatre. They even get an "encore" at the end...”

Bulletin editors share bulletins. Thanks to Bob **Rancilio**, editor of the Grosse Pointe **Pitch-Pipe** for using the December **Smoke Signals** for an article entitled “Pontiac Chapter Presses On.” Bob concludes: “Grosse Pointe will always consider Chris Miller a part of our chapter but he was really the heart of Pontiac Chapter, and it’s difficult to survive without your heart. But the Big Chief group are showing how resilient they are by pulling together to move on. I am sure they will have Grosse Pointe in the cross-hairs come next contest. WE had better not look over our shoulder to see who’s gaining on us, it’ll probably be Pontiac.” Thanks, Bob.

#### **MEET ART RIPLEY**



Art Ripley was raised in the northern Michigan town of Afton, just east of Indian River, where his ancestors had farmed and his dad had been a garage mechanic among other things. Art attended Onaway High School, where he sang in the glee club and participated in the three traditional sports, baseball (pitcher and infielder), football (fullback), and basketball. His baseball talents were sufficient to play a little American Legion ball during summers. Upon graduation in 1951, he spent a year and a half as an electrical lineman for the REA Coop out of Rogers City before being drafted. Within two months, the Korean armistice was signed, so after Texas training as a helicopter mechanic, he shipped off to Germany for 15 months with the 7<sup>th</sup> Army.

In the meantime, Art had married Patricia (who taught elementary school in Midland during his absence). Upon his return, they decided to try their fortunes downstate. After several false starts in sales (insurance, pots and pans, fences), he secured a salaried position in General Motors (Oakland Avenue) as a file clerk. By the time he retired 31 years later, he was a cost analyst, determining financial consequences of engineering changes. A highlight of his career was winning the first and maximum (\$6,000) award for employee suggestions in the early 60’s. That helped their move into a new house in Clarkston where they still live.

A gift of a chain saw in the 1960's led to a sideline as a tree surgeon, which capitalized on his youthful experience cutting wood by hand on the farm and scaling heights as a lineman. Upon his retirement from GM, this became a heavy involvement.

Art and Patricia have three children, daughters Karla and Wendy in Ohio, and son A.J., and one granddaughter.

Art has been into acoustic guitars since he was a lad playing outside his folks' soda fountain. He now has a Conn and some Martins, but restricts his playing to what he calls "chording" in the basement. Knowing Roger Holm at Pontiac Motors and having done a couple jobs for him, he finally accepted Roger's invitation to the Big Chief Chorus six years ago. Though his natural range is a baritone's, his inability to read music makes lead the right part for him. Many of us heard his fine voice last summer during Smitty's pickup quartetting, but for Art the experience was too stomach-wrenching to seek out more quartetting. Furthermore he likes his current level of involvement because he wants to keep singing on an even keel with his other interests in life – particularly family life, and hunting, in which he does some deer hunting with northern relatives, and a bit of pheasant hunting in Iowa and antelope in Wyoming.

Art is happy to say that last year's carcinoma of the liver was successfully treated and that his health is good. And we're happy to have him back in the lead section.

**Minor chords:** When we sing "The Old Songs," we all know that those "minor chords" are really 7<sup>th</sup>s. Minor chords have a darkness, a somberness that is rare in BBS (though note exceptions such as "Brother Can You Spare a Dime?") But why are minor chords different?

(In the midst of a comparison of Wagner's "Ring" operas and the movies of J.R.Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, in the Dec 22 New Yorker), critic Alex Ross has this interesting digression "for those who skipped grade-school music class or never had one."

Why does the minor chord make the heart hang heavy? First, you have to understand why the major triad, its fair-haired companion, sounds "bright." It is based on the spectrum of notes that arise naturally from a vibrating string. If you pluck a C and then divide the string in half, in thirds, in fourths, and so on, you will hear one by one the clean notes that spell C major. The C-minor triad, however, has a more obscure connection to "natural" sound. The middle note comes from much higher in the overtone series. It sets up grim vibrations in the mind.

So that's the major/minor difference.

From the **SPEBSQSA web site**: Learn to speak the arcane language of barbershop. Here's a glossary of **barbershop terms**:

**Afterglow:** Party after a chapter meeting or show.

**Barberpole cat songs:** The 12 songs every Barbershopper should know. See the Barberpole Cat songbook in your new member kit.

**Barbershop seventh:** The cornerstone chord of the barbershop style, consisting of the root, the Major third above, the perfect fifth above, and the minor seventh above, as in a chord consisting of F, A, C, E-flat.

**Bell chord:** A musical arranging device in which a chord is sung as a succession of notes by each voice in turn.

**BOTY/BOTM:** Barbershopper of the Year/Month—award presented by many chapters and districts recognizing outstanding efforts.

**C&J:** Contest & Judging program, which trains judges for singing competitions

**COTS:** Chapter Operations Training Seminar—a weekend administrative training session.

**District:** One of the 16 geographic and administrative regions of the Society.

**Fifth-wheeling:** Joining in without invitation when a quartet is singing; a breach of manners. Wait for the quartet to finish, then ask if you can sing along.

**Frank H. Thorne Chapter-at-Large:** An "international" chapter for men who are not active in a SPEBSQSA chapter.

**Harmony college:** Week-long summer educational program for Barbershoppers, held at Missouri Western State College.

**Overtones:** Tones of higher pitch that are present in every musical sound and whose presence determines the quality of the musical sound. Chords locked in tune and proper volume relationship "ring" with reinforced overtones

**Tag:** A coda; the ending of a song, often repeating the final words and designed to make a complete and satisfying arrangement.

**Woodshedding:** Impromptu quartet singing without arrangements; singing by ear.

**From Ross Ensign:** To the Electronically Challenged BBC Members

Ross Ensign is willing to spend a short afternoon with you giving you some pointers on computer use and tips & tricks.

For those more serious computer wanna bee's, he will also (for a fee) clean out the junk in your hard drive, mail boxes, download the latest windows updates and virus updates, upgrade your operating systems if'n you buy the upgrade, and try to get you more proficient at understanding emails, word programs, spreadsheets, and general computer use. The winter months are a great time to work on such items. Ross's email is [ensign2415@comcast.net](mailto:ensign2415@comcast.net) and phone # is (248) 391-3206

## Calendar

Jan 3-4 COTS, Lansing  
Jan 6 BCC Rehearsal, Crary  
Jan 8 (Th) Exec. Bd. Mtg., 7:30, Pete's  
Jan 13 BCC Rehearsal, Crary  
Jan 16 Fri Uncle Sam Night, Windsor Host, 7:30pm  
Jan 20 BCC Rehearsal, Crary  
Jan 25-Feb 1 Midwinter Convention, Biloxi  
Jan 27 BCC Rehearsal, Crary  
Feb 5 (Th) Exec. Bd. Mtg., 7:30,  
Feb 10 BCC Rehearsal & Bill Pascher's Birthday  
Feb 13-14 Fri-Sat Valentine's Day Sing Outs  
Feb 17 Pizza Night @ The Over Tyme Grill, BCC Buys!  
No Rehearsal  
Feb 24 BCC Rehearsal  
Mar 26-8, 2004 Spring Singing Retreat, MacMullan  
Apr 2 Fri 48th Annual Woodshed Contest @ 7:30pm,  
Pontiac CC, BCC Host  
Apr 23-25 District Spring Convention, Gaylord  
May 14-16 Fri-Sun Harmony Round Up, @ MSU  
June 27-July 4 International Convention, Louisville, KY

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## **Chapter Executive Board (Change)**

### **Officers: (2004)**

Assc Directors: Dick Johnson, Bruce Collins  
President: Pete Mazzara  
(313-563-4026)  
Immed. Past President: Gene Downie  
VP: Chapter Dev: Jim Owens  
VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm  
VP: Marketing & PR: Walt DeNio  
Secretary: Bill Holmes  
Treasurer: Dick Johnson  
Members at Large: Jack Teuber,  
Zaven Melkonian

### **Chairmen:**

Bulletin Editor: John Cowlshaw  
Chorus Manager: Art Carinci  
Grants: Dick Johnson  
Historian: (open) JC's bulletins  
Music Librarian: Bill Holmes  
Picnic: Gayle Mohler  
Pole Cats: Zaven Melkonian  
Quartet Activity: Bruce Brede  
Service (Charity): open  
Singing Valentines: Wayne Cheyne/  
Gene Downie  
Sunshine (Chaplain): Bill Dabbs  
Tagmeister: Mike Frye  
Uniform Manager: Ron Clarke  
Woodshedding: Len Barnes