Doc Mann has agreed to step in as Interim President while Pete Mazzara is taking a leave of absence.

Bill Pascher is finally out of the Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital; his stepdaughter brought him home, Friday, June 27th. Now he can go to Montreal and pick up his special 60th award. Earlier, I wrote: “I visited Bill Pascher this morning in the Geriatric Psych ward at Pontiac Osteopathic Hospital. He’s been hospitalized for about two weeks, though he’s been moved around, so that it has been a bit hard for folk to find him. Nevertheless, he has had visitors, including Chris, the old quartet guys – Lenny, Smitty, and Dick; and his step-daughter who lives locally has been to see him every day. He looks great and has the same old saucy smile and wit. He has convinced the psychiatrists that he doesn’t need to be there, and he will probably be released today or tomorrow. The staff will really miss him. Their eyes brightened as they talked about him, relating that he had sung for them last Friday. He admits the stay has been good for him, he has eaten better than at home. He is most excited that this means he will be able to go to Montreal and will receive his special 60-year award in person. He has arranged for a nurse to accompany him; they have tickets on a July 2 flight.”

Chris Miller points out that the Big Chief Chorus, though it finished 5th at Landing, got most of the hype in the June Troubadour.

The annual chapter picnic is scheduled for Tuesday, August 19, at Tom Ford’s Clarkston home. Tom needs volunteers to help him!

Chris and Nancy Miller threw a party June 27th to celebrate the high school graduation of Ryan Miller, who has visited our chorus several times, and who will be enrolling at Western Michigan University in the fall.

Chris has emailed out a sketch for our fall show, entitle “Ed Sullivan.” Give your input to the Music Committee.

Bruce Collins has won a District Scholarship to Directors College. The scholarships are made possible through a grant from the Michigan Counsel for the Arts and Cultural affairs (MCACA).

MEMBERSHIP (at 58)

July Birthdays: Tom Jackson (1st), Chuck Murray (6th), Bert Cederleaf (21st), Art Ripley (27th)

Renewals: Art Ripley (6), Neil Braun (14), Bill Dabbs (33), Don Sheridan (42).

Wally Plosky has moved on to DOC and Macomb.

Barbershopper of the Month –June - Bruce Collins, for his work as Assistant Director, and awarding of scholarship to attend Directors’ College.

Illnesses

Jeff Spires’ wife, Sharon, has been quite ill this past month. But it was good to see her at Chris Miller’s party June 27th. Sharon is waiting for a liver transplant. Bruce and Bonnie Brede have traveled to Boston to meet his sister-in-law and help her thru surgery for a brain tumor. Mike Frye’s mother-in-law died this month. Bill Dabbs’ sister is recovering from a broken hip.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Power Play officially announces the release of its third CD entitled, "Love at Home". You can order the new CD (along with the others) by sending $15 ea. Plus $1.50 s/h to: Power Play, 2259 Reeves Rd., Riley Township, MI 48041

Kelly Brummett’s death June 24, a long time member of Huron Valley, affected many people in the Pioneer district. Here is Keith Opal’s lovely memorial email:

“I write with a heavy heart to inform all of the singing world that the beautiful voice of Kelly Brummett was hushed early this morning, peacefully in his home
in Ypsilanti, Michigan.

"For those of you that knew Kelly probably feel the same as I. He had the love of; a passion for; and the ability to express; music like no one I have ever seen or heard before. Kelly was truly one of a kind. Although he had the ability to sing with the best (I saw him sing with many world class or championship quartets and he always raised the eyebrows of onlookers) he enjoyed sharing his love of music with as many people as he could. He was almost always the last guy hanging around at conventions singing tags and encouraging others to do the same.

"You may recall him as member of the following barbershop: multi-voice part member and assistant director of the HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS Chorus, Lead of Pioneer District Championship Quartet DETROIT SOUND COMPANY, Lead of SMORGASCHORD, Bass of LYRIC, Lead of International Sr. Quartet Qualifiers NEW WRINKLE, and baritone and tenor of CHORDIOLOGY. He also sang with his brother Joe and two of their friends (also brothers) for many years in the gospel group, the CHERRY HILL BROTHERS."

QUARTET ACTIVITY
From Ross Ensign: The Harmony Knights quartet has been together for nearly two years now and usually rehearses every Thursday night as well as attending most of the chapter's Tuesday meetings. We've printed up a cool business card and all four members pass them out at every opportunity which is paying off. We've done several birthday gigs since the valentine events, take opportunities from Walt DeNio whenever possible (thanks Walt) but get most of our gigs from word of mouth endorsements from previous jobs or from the business cards.

On the 27th of April we did a cool community gratis job for Light House Ministries in the Ortonville United Methodist Church for Pastor Susan Walls. They actually had 6 older fellas from the choir come up and sing a song with us and then the ladies of the choir got jealous and wanted their turn...and they did pretty well singing a couple of the old pole cats with us. Everyone got a real bang out of interacting with the audience so closely.

Recently we just completed a neat evening birthday gig on the 28th of May for a lovely lady from Holland (the country of) who was visiting son and her future daughter in-law that were slated to get married the following Saturday. We were warmly received by an entire household of American and European family members. The new groom from Holland was quite taken by the craft and may well show up one of these Tuesday evenings...so be on the look out for a young fella that speaks very good English but with an accent.

We just completed one of our most enjoyable gigs on Wed. June 5th which consisted of showing up about 4:15 p.m., munching on fancy hors d'oeuvres, liquid refreshments, and singing our entire repertoire several times in all the rooms of a new Pulte grand opening house over by Lake Orion. There are sure a lot of realtors that go thru these new home grand openings and we threw our business cards right in there with all the other folks...and have several more jobs pending. The Pulte realty gal that hired us liked the background music so much that we're slated to do another grand opening up in Holly next. The crowd also warmed up to the singing and again there may be another good lead singer showing up at a Tue. meeting shortly.

Strangely enough, the quartet has taken to going out to a couple of local restaurants after rehearsals on Thursday evening...ya know... for a soda pop or so and although we try to sing very quietly in the corner somewhere we always get coaxed and treated to sing a few songs for them and that's where we picked up the Pulte recommendation. So it pays to do your best...even when it's very quiet in some local eatery.

All in all we're enjoying the... heck out of this quartet stuff. The crowd seems to like the do-wappy type of recognizable numbers best. So if anyone asks...yes the Harmony Knights are willing to do most any type of gig and can hold our own for 35 - 45 minutes which is probably long enough for anyone unless your known as Power Play or equivalent. We're only limited by working hours of some of our members. Right now we're also slated to sing for the Waterford Civic Corvette show on Aug. 2nd and will be looking forward to seeing some of our other members there also. Keep a smile on your face, a twinkle in your eye, and a song in your heart and share it when ever possible.

From Zaven Melkonian: “On Wednesday June 4th, FOUR WHEEL DRIVE provided entertainment at the annual HomeTown Heroes Luncheon, held at the Marriott at Centerpointe in Pontiac. The occasion was the recognition and honoring of United Way Volunteers. The quartet selected a thirteen-song repertoire, nine of which were sung in the lobby as the attendees were being registered. They were then invited into the banquet facility and introduced by WOMC radio personality Dick Purtan, and sang the remaining four songs in the set. The audience was very appreciative and was generous with their applause.

“On Saturday, June 28th, 2003, FOUR WHEEL DRIVE performed at the American Cancer Society Relay For Life, which was sponsored by The Walled Lake Downtown Development Authority. The 24-hour event which began at 10 AM on Saturday June 28th was scheduled to end at 10 AM on Sunday June 29th. The venue was the Walled Lake City Hall Field. The quartet sang from the stage."
The quartet also sang June 21st at Wally Plosky’s daughter’s 34th birthday party, Lisa Whalen, at her home in West Bloomfield.

**Montreal International Convention** runs June 29th to July 6th. Jeff Spires and Wally Plosky will be participating as members of Pioneer District’s winning Macomb County Chorus, singing 10th in the chorus finals, Saturday afternoon, July 5th. Power Play will be in the finals that evening. The web site for the convention is on the SPEBSQSA home page, www.SPEBSQSA.org. PROBE’s web site will be chock-full of info at: http://www.swd.org/roundup/Montreal/Montreal_2003.html.

There you can expect to find: Order Of Appearances, Rankings, Schedules, Daily Convention Bulletins, Webcast Info, Scores, News, and Lots of Photos (Sights, Competition, Shows, Events).

DON’T MISS the opportunity to watch and listen via **Montreal Webcast** i.e., From Scott Hoge at Kenosha: “We are planning end-to-end coverage live from the Bell Centre in Montreal, Canada. Rich Taylor and Phil DeBar will be returning this year again as our on-air hosts. If you listened on the web last year from Portland, I know you enjoyed them, as I did. Look forward to expanded coverage and video from start to finish for those with 56k modems or broadband. You’ll be able to access it from www.spebsqsa.org/webcast.”

To make sure your system will be ready, go to www. SPEBSQSA.org, click on “Montreal,” then click on “Montreal Webcast Information,” then at the link just beneath “Start the webcast,” and then on “Test your system.”

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<td>7:15pm-10:30</td>
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<td><strong>Thursday</strong></td>
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<td>7pm-10</td>
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<td><strong>Friday</strong></td>
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<td>9am-Noon</td>
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**Frankenmuth picnic, by Chuck Murray**

John Voss is the Flint member who hosts this annual event. John is an educator who lives in Frankenmuth who loves to grill the Kern's Bratwursts and serve his special Bar-B-Q sauce. Buns cost $2.00, but the brats are free! This is John's way of expressing his love of barbershop!

Dave Lonsbury (Flint) makes the kapusta (sauerkraut) with pork roast in the roaster oven. This is great by itself, or on top of a hot brat! Jack Stevens (Flint) helps by setting up the condiment tables, chilling the beer and pop, slicing onions, and wiping off the picnic tables, etc.

I recall that Flint, Bay City, Macomb, and Pontiac-Waterford were there. Several chapter quartets and some pickup quartets sang. From Pontiac, I believe it was Chris Miller's "Best In Show" singing "Heart of a Clown." Len Barnes' quartet sang several numbers. Flint Chapter sang, then Pontiac sang. The large pavilion in Heritage Park, down by the Cass riverside, was quite full.

A special guest from Frankenmuth showed up. Eugene Fischer, owner of the Kite Shop and Toy Store uptown, and avid local barbershopper joined the group for food and song. Gene used to sing with Swan Valley, when they were active, and recalls singing with Paul Lehmkuhle, former member of Pontiac Chapter, who used to drive all the way north to sing with Swan Valley, just so they would have a tenor! Gene has recovered from recent quad bypass, and thoroughly enjoyed himself at the bratfest. We all helped "Keep the Whole World Singing".

Floyd McDaniel of the Macomb chapter writes that Barbershop will play an important role in the **2003 Michigan State Fair**.

"On Opening weekend: August 17, 6:00p.m., 100 to 200 Members will sing Michigan My Michigan and The Star Spangled Banner (sheet music will be provided in plenty of time before performance). We have been reasonably assured that we will make the FOX 2 News. Daily: Each Chapter that
participates will send one or more Quartets to spend a day at the Fair. This Quartet will divide its time between strolling the streets of the Fairgrounds and working the Pioneer District’s Booth.

“The Booth will be a 10 by 10ft. “BARBERSHOP” located within the Agricultural Building. One or two additional persons will man this location at all times. Videotapes will be running of Champion Choruses and Quartets any time a Quartet is not in the Booth. CD’s, tapes and “Barbershop Shop” items will be available for sale to the public.

“The BARBERSHOP BOOTH will be professionally designed and appointed. The Fair attracts visitors from virtually our entire District. We will display a map of the locations of all the Chapters in the Pioneer District. We will provide handouts, such as, for shows and events in your area from each Chapter that participates. We will provide information cards to anyone who is interested in getting on your Chapter’s mailing list.”

Emergency Executive Board Meeting
May 20, 2003
In attendance: Pete M., Chris M., Zaven M. Irwin M., Jeff D., Gene D., Dick J. Chuck M., John S.
Pete informed us that he must vacate his position as President of the chapter as of May 20, 2003. Because there is no policy for vacating a board position, Pete proposed one as follows. Presidential Vacancy Policy. In the case of removal of the president from office, or his death, resignation, or inability to discharge the powers and duties of the said office, the position shall be filled by the Executive Board. Gene Downie agreed to assume the Presidency until the June 19th Executive Board meeting. (At that meeting Doc Mann was appointed Interim President.) Pete said that he plans to remain with the chapter and plans to come back in the fall.

Jim Styer forwarded an email from Al Haller, who describes his journey from the Pontiac Merry Motormen, to the Rochester Heart of the Hills, to singing tenor in Vocal Majority. (“I love VM and Texas, but Lord how I miss the Great Lakes!”) Excerpts follow:

I will walk out on a limb and present my personal opinion on the subject of auditions, and it has nothing to do with my membership in the performing chorus of VM, and everything to do with how I got there and my personal goals and ambitions. I am a rookie with the chorus, having only been a member since 2000. My path to that spot (2nd row, stage left, end man, the weird looking guy with the ponytail) took a few years, and saw me through a series of choruses along the way.

My first chorus in Michigan, a very small one, was a thrill to join. There was no audition, and they were as happy to have me, as I was happy to join. In 1994, I had only just discovered our style of harmony, and guess how? A VM cassette tape! :-) I was amazed and transported by the sound of the recordings, and determined that I wanted to experience singing it first hand. I had a great time, fellowshipping with great guys, doing our annual show, promoting Woodshedding, but our efforts lacked a little something that I needed to feel.

Then I found out about the competition aspect of the society. My chorus's mission statement pretty much excluded competing. That was just not what they wanted to do, and they took supporting roles in other ways. After my first district convention as an attendee, I caught competition fever. I agonized over what to do about it, but in the end I concluded that being able to test to be the best would increase my joy in the brotherhood, and skills are honed on the whetstone of competition preparation.

With their blessing, I joined another local chapter whose mission statement included the intention to compete and win the district title. I know this sounds stupid, but right then I didn't know anything about what happens AFTER you win district. International wasn't something I found out about until a little later. My second chorus was about twice as large, there was a very brief audition, (mostly for voice placement but you did have to pass it), and they were as happy to have me, as I was happy to join too. More great times followed, along with my first district stage experience, and a 3rd place win. I was happy, I had some great friends, I became part of a quartet of guys that I still love and miss from a hole in my heart, and my competition fever was eased.

Then I took a job opportunity with a company in Dallas, as a consultant and educator. It meant travel. Lots of it. And while I continued to live in Michigan, 50 weeks of the year I was somewhere else, commuting home on Friday, and away again on Sunday. I missed my barbershop friends so much, and the harmony that we made together, that I made it a point to drop in on every local chapter I could for the next 4 years. I visited dozens of chapters, in dozens of states. Big ones, small ones, from Clark NJ to Phoenix AZ and north and south and beyond. Even down to Melbourne, Brisbane, and the Gold Coast of Aussyland. Some chapters I sang with for months at a time. What an eye-opening experience that was, as you can imagine. Every chapter was different; in its goals, in its means of achieving them, in its relative successes. I decided that one of the reasons that the Society succeeds in the measure that it does is because of its diversity; its broad approach to what might be called Chapters Rights. Each chapter has the right to set its aspirations, to establish its methods, to measure its success, to redesign same as needed, as long as it stays within the general framework Kenosha sets down….
In my travels, I was able to quantify my own needs better; I didn't fit the "lets sing a few, and have some beers and sing some more" kind of groups, even though I sang some good songs and drank some fine brews with many of them. I didn't fit the chapter that had the ambition to become the best that they could be, but hadn't yet discovered how to do that, or perhaps lacked the intestinal fortitude to make some hard decisions on how to attain their goals, even if they could clearly identify them to start with. And sadly my experience level couldn't help them much in that regard either, since I didn't and don't have the answers.

Where I felt most comfortable was in the groups where the work was fierce, the ambition was strong, the direction was clear, and the product was thrilling to create and to absorb because of that. We all know their names and reputations: The Phoenicians, The Big Chicken, Northbrook, Masters of Harmony, Banana Blenders, Northern Lights, VM, and so many others as well present and past.

Eventually, the company moved my family to the home office in Dallas, taking me off the road somewhat and bringing some stability back to life. Oddly enough, I had rarely ever been in Dallas, even though I had an official desk there, and had never attended a rehearsal. At once I began to scout the chapters for best fit. To be honest, I didn't consider joining VM because I fell into an acquired opinion that was formed by beliefs I had heard along the path. Things like "They're all professional musicians" (oops. that won't fit me), "They all have perfect pitch" (Lord, I'm in trouble), "They all have extensive musical training/backgrounds/families/genetics" (Oh, MAN! My grampa sang in the church choir. Does that count?) "They can all sight read music" (Gag! Why did I fight mom over those piano lessons and why did she give in?"They all direct/arrange/choreograph/compose/play instruments)" (ulp) "They are all stuck up and don't work and play well with others." (*sigh*) You get the idea.

But, I couldn't not go and listen to them rehearse, now could I? The men who turned my head towards 4-part harmony to start with? So I started attending rehearsals regularly. I began to realize immediately that all those things I had heard weren't true. Oh, there are some guys who fit one or more parts of the Pro/Pitch/Training/Reading/Directing stuff, but no one I met fit the stuck-up part. I had only been there for 4 weeks when several guys started asking, "When are you going to try out? You gotta give a try man. It's the greatest! Come on, don't wimp out. You know you want it! Nothing ventured nothing gained" etc. They made it clear that they WANTED everybody to at least try them out. They didn't even ask about my pedigree, and there wasn't a DNA test either! And why shouldn't they want to know if I fit them? I was very picky about whether a chorus fit me, after all. It took me many months to make up my mind to try it, and I was never for a moment sure I could succeed, but Oh Lord, how much I grew to want it! And why did I want it so badly? There were so many reasons. To begin with all my musical desires were potentially fulfilled, but beyond that, I saw the affect first hand that the organization had on the Dallas community. The sheer enjoyment that audiences and I experienced. The contributions, charitable and other wise, which the group made to the quality of life. But more selfishly, the utter superiority of the product that they produced. Something in me wanted more than anything to be a small part of that affect, of that contribution. To try to give something to other people that could make them feel good in the receiving.

So, taking nerves in hand, I tried out. It was too much. And it wasn't anything like what I anticipated or expected content wise. But, much to my excitement, I succeeded. Had I failed, I would have been given suggestions on what to try to improve on, and told to please come back and try again.

Now, I'm on the inside looking out so to speak (what a fantastic view it is) and sometimes I wonder what I have gotten myself into! If all those rumors I mentioned are not true, than how does the VM succeed like it does? If it isn't a natural byproduct of perfect pitch, yada yada, what makes it happen? Its work. Hard work. Unrelenting indefatigable perpetual motion. Rehearsal is just a once a week event. But that's nothing compared to hours of at home / in the car / in the plane / wherever extra time necessary to make the magic appear effortless. I have never worked so hard at anything in my life, and I mean anything (except being a good father and husband). Not school, not business, not the house, not the yard, not the gym. I still can't believe I can keep up. It's grueling. It's agonizing (risers need more padding). I sweat, therefore I smell. And some of these guys have been doing this for THIRTY YEARS?? Excuse ME???

AND, I am having the BEST time of my LIFE (except when I'm being a good father and husband<G>). In fact, it is the hard work that keeps me coming back. I am challenged. I am stretched. My self-confidence and abilities are tested. I am always worried that Jim and the music or the presentation committees are going to come up with some wild and crazy idea that I just won't be able to do. But they never will you see, because They Won't LET you fail. They do everything possible to make sure you succeed. And I think I work hard; unh uh. Man, my labors are as nothing by comparison. They provide the framework for success. All the tools and support are there. All you have to do is give the energy and heart to the design and out comes... Wonder. I LOVED being in the audience all those times. I needed to be wrapped in resonance, lifted by lyricism, borne by beauty, and torn by tragedy. Vicariously. And that's what music is for. Now I love trying to make the magic happen for whoever comes a seeking.

I'm very selfish. I admit it. I never want to loose that ability to make some kind of difference for someone. To try to give to them the same things I sought as an audience, and as a performer. For that reason, I want the standards kept high for all the guys on the riser team. The team is only as strong as its weakest player,
and we work hard (there's that phrase again) to keep every team member in peak condition. But believe me, if I, with no training and no background and no experience on stage, can succeed in becoming a small part of this, just about anyone can. The only prereq's are a good (notice, not classically trained, not great, not perfect, only good) voice, a good ear or two (THE most important part IMHO), love of hard work and occasional pain, and the happy fortune of living in north Texas or being able to get there regularly.

At the same time that I am selfish, I still want to share this experience with every guy that can come out and give it try. Just be sure your 'barbershop goodwill account' at home has a really big positive balance! Cause man, once you're in, VM sure makes you take some big withdrawals, and I don't mean money neither!

So I guess you can blame me for the auditions. They are nothing more than the reflection of my own selfishness in wanting to keep the quality of my product at the peak. ;-) And I see the mission of VM as more than a club for singers to enjoy each other. Its real calling is to share that enjoyment with everyone who seeks a share for whatever need and for whatever purpose.

If you enjoyed Al Haller’s account, why not enlist on Pionet, where it first appeared?

**How to get on Pionet**

Pionet is a wonderful community communication link within the Pioneer district. Participants receive emails from the other 300 or so members of the Pionet. It’s simple to join. Just go to the Pioneer District homepage, [http://www.harmonize.com/Pioneer/pio.htm](http://www.harmonize.com/Pioneer/pio.htm), and click on Pionet in the lower right corner.

John Cowlishaw gave a report on **SMOKE SIGNALS** to the June 19th Board Meeting. Among the highlights:

This issue is the 25th issue of the bulletin put out by JC, beginning May 2001.

It has been called Smoke Signals (Gerry Twomey’s suggestion) since bulletin #4.

The icon/masthead by Dodge Melkonian, has been used since #15.

All are still available on the chapter web site, [www.pontiacchapter.com](http://www.pontiacchapter.com).

Yong McDowell gets them on within a day or two of my emailing to him.

Publication is monthly with a circulation of about 80.

The cost is about $45 per issue, that is, about $30 for photocopying (or $.38 per copy) and about $15 for postage.

It takes about 10 hrs per issue, preparing, photocopying, and mailing it.

Material from **SMOKE SIGNALS** has been in all of the last eight Troubadours.

**SMOKE SIGNALS** has taken 3rd place in Pioneer District in both 2002 and 2003.

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**Calendar**

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<td>International Convention, Montreal</td>
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<td>Jul 1</td>
<td>Rehearsal, Central United Meth. Church</td>
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<td>Jul 8</td>
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<td>Jul 10, Th</td>
<td>Exec. Brd. Mtg., 7:30pm</td>
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<td>Jul 27-Aug 03</td>
<td>Harmony College, St. Joseph, MO</td>
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<td>Jul 29</td>
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<td>Aug 5</td>
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<td>Mar 26-8, 2004</td>
<td>Spring Singing Retreat, MacMullan</td>
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**Chapter Executive Board**

**Officers:**

- Chorus Director: Chris Miller
  - (248-960-5101)
- President: Pete Mazzara
  - (313-563-4026)
- Immed. Past President: Gene Downie
- Chapter Development: Doc Mann
- Music and Performance: John Smith
- Program: John Smith
- Secretary: Jeff Doig
- Treasurer: Dick Johnson
- Members at Large: Chuck Murray, Zaven Melkonian
- Interim Pres: Doc Mann

**Chairmen:**

- Associate Directors: Dick Johnson, Bruce Collins
- Bulletin Editor: John Cowlishaw
- 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