AROUND THE PATCH

UCanSingToo Night. Thanks to Wayne Chene and all the members of the BCC, we had eleven guests September 13, many of whom are considered potential new members. The Kenosha-sponsored radio and print media blitz was impressive, but did not increase our guest count.

Sep 20th rehearsal. We nearly broke fifty. (We DID break it by some counts.) Aided by the return of veterans Walt Bachman, Don Place, Tom Blackstone, and Tom Tailford, (allowing Harmony Knights to ride again), and out-of-the-region guests Glenn Wells from Covered Bridge Chorus in Princeton IL, and Andy from Traverse City, each of whom was in the area for a few days on business.

Looking ahead to the Christmas season, Roger Holm is in charge of the Tuesday and Thursday singouts and the Holly Dickens festival, Dec 17th. Bruce Brede is in charge of the bus trip on Dec 19th. Ted Prueter and Bill Holmes are in charge of the music books.

Prez Pete Mazzara is in contact with Mark Buchinger, Manager of the Ralph A. MacMullan Center in Roscommon, Michigan to reserve the facility for the Big Chief Chorus’s spring singing retreat, March 24-26, 2006. A change in policy, requiring a non-refundable deposit of $595, has made it impossible for us to reserve in advance. Stay tuned.

Jack Teuber writes:

Wednesday, September 14th was a good opportunity for the Big Chief Chorus to expand its boundaries. Twenty-six men (thank you, all) turned out as we sang for an audience of fifty-six residents, friends and staff at the Woodward Hills Nursing Center. We were very well received and treated to ice cream cones by Melissa Houston, our gracious host.

After forty-five minutes of singing some of the men stayed to serenade the receptionist (a former Sweet Adeline). We also left show flyers, as Doc Mann and Jack Teuber will follow up on a potential group outing for November 5th.

Special Thanks to Dick Johnson who makes these events possible.

October 11 is the date of our next sing-out: Tuesday Musicales of Greater Pontiac.

QUARTET/ENSEMBLE NEWS

Lyle Howard: B-Natural had the extreme pleasure of entertaining the 1936, 1938 and 1939 class reunions of Pontiac Central High School on Saturday, September 10. The event was held at the Santia Club on Cass Lake Rd. To put it in proper perspective, I was two years old when the 1936 class graduated. What a wonderful group to sing for.

B-NATURAL also sang September 16 at the Auburn Hills Senior Center for their Applefest, and on September 19 at the All Seasons Retirement Village of Rochester.

Bruce Brede: Our own men’s ensemble, Off-The-Reservation (OTR), had a Sept 7-8 overnite retreat and is now close to ready for the Show and Cast Party. The site was a modern condo on a bank high above Lake Huron near Lexington provided by Cheryl Holmes, daughter of our own premium bass, Bill Holmes. There were three actual rehearsals, two singouts at dinner (Forester Inn) and breakfast (Williams Inn) and a snoring symphony.

“Mood Indigo” is ready and “It Had To be You” is close with Basses Cheyne, Holmes, Carinci, Brain and Prueter, Leads Mazzara, Nevaux and Brede, Baris Dabbs and Johnson, and Tenors Keith and Teuber. Dick Johnson is our faithful music director … like he’s not very busy, huh?

The singouts were well-received by the diners, particularly “Honey Lil’ Waitress,” “Boardwalk,” “Do Lord Medley,” “Heart of My Heart,” “Irish Rose,” “Sweet Roses,” “St. Louis,” “Ain’t Misbehavin’” and, of course, “Kitty” (after Bob Brain innocently said he’d never heard it; wow, our new member committee must have slipped up.)
Many thanks to Cheryl and Bill Holmes, Dick and Ted our director and drivers, and all the guys for the fun, fellowship and fine singing. It's great to be a barbershopper!

MEMBERSHIP (at 59)

- New member: Gilbert Schreiner. Welcome, Gil!
- October Birthdays: Bruce Collins (1st), Art Carinci (18th), Walt DeNio (22nd), Bill Nevaux (27th), Roger Holm (29th).
- Barbershopper of the Month, September: Ross Ensign and Ted Prueter, Ross for his untiring work on the Show Flyer and mailing, and Ted for his fine work in preparing the special guest member books for Guest Night.
- Hospitalized: Al Monroe, with a bowel blockage, and Mel Parrish, from a slight stroke. Each is now back home.

AROUND THE DISTRICT

Bruce Smith, Pioneer District President announces the appointment of these individuals to the Pioneer District Management Team.
- Matt Tipton – Director of Music and Performance.
- Ralph LeRoy – Director of Marketing/Public Relations.
- Dan Bezaire – Director Chapter Support & Chorus Director Development.

Two-time quartet gold medalist from the Pioneer District, Glenn Van Tassell, died September 13, 2005 at the age of 69, following a long struggle with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease.) Glenn won gold as lead of THE AUTO TOWNERS (1966) and bari of GENTLEMEN’S AGREEMENT (1971).

AROUND THE WORLD

Where is the July/August issue of The Harmonizer? Kenosha writes: “Production upheaval over the past three months... staff changes and shortages... and subsequently, a desire to include our terrific convention coverage brought us to delivering a super-sized issue with a July/August cover date. That issue is on press now, and should be in your mailbox next week.”

Peter Jennings died a few weeks ago. Joel Rutherford of the ACoustix wrote to the Harmonet that they had sung for and with Peter on several occasions, the most recent being at a private party in the Hamptons last year on Memorial Day. Joel included a web site of photos of Jennings with his head back, mouth wide open, joining singing with the ACoustix. Check it out at: http://www.acoustix.com/photo_gallery/page31.htm

Our next-to-newest member is bass Bob Brain. Bob was born (1941) and raised in Detroit. His grandfather had moved here from St. Louis to become production manager at Burroughs Corporation and to help form Burroughs Farms in Brighton.

After graduating from Cooley High School, Bob entered General Motors Institute, sponsored by Cadillac Motor Car Division. During his co-op training, he found manufacturing engineering more down-to-earth and less elitist than product engineering and thus made it his career. He also has a M.S. in Manufacturing Management from GMI.

In 1966 he was drafted into the U.S. Navy. After attending O.C.S. in Newport, Rhode Island, he became communications officer on a destroyer (USS F.E. Evans DD 754) that immediately shipped out of Long Beach for Vietnam. This was at the time of the TET offensive. He served as electronics systems officer on his ship as it participated in shore bombardment and supported Swift Boat sampan interdiction in the Tonkin Gulf area.

Barbershop was featured on Garrison Keillor’s “Prairie Home Companion” show, September 10, direct from the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson, Kansas. A chorus of some 130 barbershoppers from thirteen chapters throughout Kansas sang. To this listener’s ears, the deficits of a hastily put-together group chorus were demonstrated all too well.

MEET BOB BRAIN
In 1969, his ship collided with an Australian carrier and seventy-eight men were lost. The thought that he could have been the 25-year-old deck officer in charge still sticks with him today.

After Vietnam, he was stationed at Pearl Harbor where he served as a Destroyer Escort Squadron Chief of Staff. Reporting to the Commodore, he was responsible for the operational readiness and deployment of six ships that were doing surveillance work of Russian intercontinental missile launches in the Indian Ocean.

Although he enjoyed the military, he decided to return to civilian life at Cadillac, where he worked until his retirement in 1995.

During that 37-year career, there were many highlights.

In 1987 he had just bought a 41-foot double cabin cruiser when he was offered a new position in Saltillo, Mexico – to manage the Manufacturing / Engineering activities of the Ramos Arizpie Automotive Complex – a high volume producer of engines and cars for export to North America, Japan and Puerto Rico. Bob was forced to store and later sell the boat but enjoyed studying the Spanish language and learning the culture. The town of Saltillo was rich in history (it was Santa Ana’s home base) and has become a major hub of Mexican automotive parts manufacturing. Bob is particularly proud of managing a project jointly with GM Research, to treat plant manufacturing and human wastewater. Using a NASA-inspired idea for microbiological treatment of plant waste, the project team received awards from the Mexican government for environmental clean-up.

In 1992, Bob became Manufacturing Engineering Director of the Corvette platform, with responsibilities for the Assembly Plant in Bowling Green, KY, and the Engineering Staff in Warren. That required his moving to Oxford. Under his leadership, unique features were added to the C-5 Corvette platform that marked improved product buildability and subsequent quality.

After retirement, he was retained as a consultant for GM, doing supplier development work with Tier 1 suppliers. He is presently serving as a Manufacturing / Quality systems consultant for the Pinnacle Consultant consortium (www.pinnacle-consultants.com) for a variety of litigation cases involving patent/trademark infringement, manufacturing liability etc.

Bob’s first marriage had resulted in two children whom he raised – Susan, who is now an architect, and Tom, who graduated from Oakland University, served as Captain in Marine aviation and now works for Honeywell Aerospace operations in Phoenix.

In 1995 Bob remarried. Kathy is a personal fitness trainer working in assisted living homes, and she has added her two grown children Rich and Denise to the family.

Musically, Bob goes way back. He played clarinet in school fraternity dance parties and again during his Navy years. He has also sung off and on in school and church choirs.

Partly in order to deal with a little boredom in church, he joined the choir while living in Northville in the 1980’s, and again in Oxford in the 1990’s. When he witnessed the strong music department at Christ the Redeemer in Lake Orion he joined their music ministry. There he met and sang with Jack Teuber who introduced him to the Big Chief Chorus.

To gain more experience singing in small groups he joined the Ensemble and had a great time getting to meet and know the members at their recent retreat.

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING September 14, 2005 Excerpts from Bill Melkonian, Bill Holmes, Secretary

At Little Daddy’s Restaurant. Present: Pete Mazzara, Gene Downie, Dick Johnson, Wayne Cheyne, Jack Teuber, Roger Holm, Ron Clarke, Zaven Melkonian, Bill Holmes and Bruce Brede.

Pete has sent the Board members a copy of the Show Script and the 2006 Calendar.

Treasurer’s report, Dick Johnson: current balance is $11,112.49. Show expenses are coming in for payment. The Board nudged Dick to take steps to get assistance with his many activities on behalf of the chapter/chorus.

Wayne Cheyne, Membership VP, reported that there were eleven visitors at Guest Night with some, perhaps eight, as membership candidates. Wayne stressed that all the guests were brought by chapter members and none present were from “U CAN SING TOO” program. Wayne suggested that we have such a guest night at least once a year. Pete added that it should probably be in the Spring. Bruce suggested that the first night of the Christmas Chorus rehearsal be considered a guest night. Wayne has prepared a follow-up letter to those guests attending last night’s rehearsal. The Board concluded that the participation in the “U Can Sing Too” program was not cost-effective for the chapter and therefore not worth its expenditure. There was unanimous approval by the Board to salute Wayne for his efforts in coordinating and planning guest-night. In addition, the Board commends the chorus membership for its attendance, its bringing guests and its cooperation in the chapter’s activities.

Roger Holm, Music VP, noted that with such a full agenda getting ready for the Fall Show, perhaps we should consider delay coaching until next Spring. Following discussion of this matter, the Board empowered Dick Johnson to seek coaching if he determines it is needed.

Although Roger, Ross, Gene and others did their best to secure a commitment from the Clarkston High School and appropriate authorities to schedule an assembly for the students with reasonable cost considerations, those powers have not given clear direction to achieve this goal but rather continue to delay action. ERGO: Wayne moved, supported by the Board that we drop all efforts to secure the assembly at Clarkston High. Roger will notify Ross of the Board’s determination.

Jack Teuber, PR VP, reported there were 26 singers at the Woodward Hills Nursing Home sing-out with about 56 attendees. Jack said the Woodward Hills
Home will provide a good chance to sell show tickets and the Home wants us to return at Christmas. Jack highlighted that sing-out-opportunities come from membership contacts, as this one did. Jack submitted a copy of the “Gig Sheet” listing all the musical activities of the chapter and its quartets/ensembles.

Fall Show: 1) Tickets were requested from persons in Caro, Mi.
2) Bruce said Shepherd’s Hollow will provide a two-sided line buffet this year.
3) 3M & T will be provided six cast party tickets.

Election of Officers: Zaven noted that although nominations for office are not closed, there is currently one person running for each office.

Officer Induction Dinner 11-18-05: The Board approved the location of the Pontiac Country Club at $25 per member or $50 per couple. Wayne noted that last year’s location was closed. The $25/person is a cap so the Board agreed the chapter will pick up any additional costs. Pete presented a written history of the member service and music awards stressing that such decision must be made and in place for the Dinner.

Christmas Chorus: Those involved in planning for this activity must begin such planning thus eliminating the need for this to be on the next agenda.

Web-site: Jeff Doig will work on this activity. Jeff is to submit a “Web Site Information Plan” to the Board.

Spring Singing Retreat: The Board approved March 24-26, 2006, @ Higgins Lake, with coaching. We must have at least 30 members attend to make it go.

Spring Contest: The Board approved going to Spring Contest.

BSOM: Ted Prueter and Ross Ensign have been chosen as co-recipients, Ross for his untiring work on the Show Flyer and mailing, and Ted for his fine work in preparing the special guest member books for Guest Night.

Next Meeting: Oct. 12, Wed. @ Dick Johnson; Nov. 09, Wed @ Roger Holm + music team, show team and John Cowlishaw (Pizza/Salad mtg.)

Note: All unattributed articles and photos are by John Cowlishaw

CHAPTER LEADERSHIP
Director: In-house Team, led by Dick Johnson
President: Pete Mazzara
(313-563-4026)
Past President: Gene Downie
VP: Chapter Dev: Wayne Chene
VP: Music and Performance: Roger Holm
VP: Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber
Secretary: Bill Holmes
Treasurer: Dick Johnson
Members at Large: Ron Clarke, Zaven Melkonian
Chorus Manager: Art Carinci
MusicTeam: Holm, Johnson, Doig, Ensign, Melkonian, Murray, Prueter, Troeger

Calendar
Oct 4, T  BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Oct 4-8  59th Sweet Adelines’ International, Cobo Hall
          (Spirit of Detroit to sing Oct 6, noon-ish)
Oct 11, T, 12:30 Singout, Pontiac Musicale, Central United Methodist Church,
          3882 Highland Rd, (M-59), Waterford, Class B Uniform
Oct 11, T  BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Oct 12, W  Exec. Bd. Meeting, Dick Johnson’s
Oct. 18, T  BCC Rehearsal, Crary, Election of Officers 2006
Oct 20, Th  Big Chief Chick Lunch (or tea) at the Fairlane Ford Mansion in
Oct 25, T  BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Nov 1, T  BCC Rehearsal, Crary
Nov. 4, F  Canada Night @ DOC
Nov 5, Sa, 7:30 Fall Show – Jukebox Classics – Clarkston High School
Nov 7, M  Canada Night hosted by D.O.C.
Nov 9, W  Exec. Bd. Meeting, Roger Holm’s
Nov 15, T  Christmas Chorus begins (Guest night)
Nov 18, F, 7pm Officer Induction & Awards Dinner, Pontiac Country Club
Dec 3, Sa 2:00 Christmas singout, Bordines
Dec 3, Sa 5:00 Christmas singout, Lake Orion Christmas parade
Dec 8, Th 12:30 Oakland County Retirees, Waterford Oaks Activity Cntr
Dec. 17, Sa  Bus Trip & Holly Festival, Christmas Sing Out
Jan 7,8, SaSu  COTS @ Okemos