Harmony Helping to Make the World a Better Place

Jim Owens put together a pickup quartet to bring some Christmas Cheer to many of the workers at the New Horizons Rehabilitation Facility in Rochester Hills. Jim sang lead and the rest of his quartet consisted of the current Chapter President; Eric Domke, who sang baritone; the former Chapter President, Jack Teuber, who sang tenor; and Chuck Murray who sang Bass. The quartet sang at the headquarters facility on Wednesday morning, Dec. 20th, 2017, and brought many smiles to the employees’ faces! Many folks sang right along with the quartet! (Jim has one of his company’s products assembled by New Horizon’s personnel at this location!)

New Horizons (NH) is a nationally recognized, private, not-for-profit rehabilitation agency providing quality vocational training and job placement in Michigan since 1964. The headquarters is located in Auburn Hills, Michigan. NH provides services to six branches in several counties in Michigan. NH’s primary goals focus on preparing people with disabilities for competitive employment, and providing the necessary skills for our consumers to assume responsibility for their own long-term success. New Horizons works diligently with referral and funding sources to help make employment services more readily available and accessible to persons with disabilities.

~~ Submitted by Chuck Murray ~~

Thank You Men!
By Tom Blue

Just a note to say thank you for another year of singing in the barbershop harmony style! Thank you all for your extra time and commitment this holiday season and for the many extra time commitments and hours driving to and fro to spread holiday greetings, warm cheer and the gospel of barbershop. I wish you much health and good will in the coming year and I look forward to being your director once again in the coming year!

On Friday evening, December 8th Fred Pioch’s quintet, “The Armchair Chord-erbacks” performed for Dick Smith’s Christmas Party at the Highland House. Fred sang lead at his first public gig and was joined by Pat Hefner, Tenor; Chuck Murray, Bass; Jon Knapp, Baritone; and Walt Bachman, German Baritone. It was a valuable experience for this new quartetter. Keep it up Fred!

OverTime performed at various events during the holidays. This picture was taken in Wixom. Other tour stops included Milford’s downtown celebration.

Austin Souther formed “Austin City Limits” with three members of Over-Time, and sang six songs at his company Christmas party on Sat. Dec. 16, 2017.

Our holiday sing-outs featured “What a Wonderful World” by 4GVN, and a delightful holiday rendition of “Chopsticks” by Bidin’ Our Time. OverTime sang “Little St. Nick” & “When There’s Love at Home” at several of the stops on our tour. And after singing, chorus members were seen spreading holiday cheer to residents and staff alike at each of the facilities who hosted our singing.
On Saturday, December 16, 2017 the Big Chief Chorus went on a mission to deliver care packages of harmony to residents at several care facilities in the area. This year’s bus tour was a rousing success, and a very enjoyable time for brothers in harmony to reach out together to spread Christmas cheer to those who needed it most. We also showed up at Wal-Mart to encourage the seasonal shoppers. It was well received and an offer was made for a second gig this season, but unfortunately, schedules could not be worked out. Maybe next Christmas we will be able to send a quartet or two to regale the patrons.

The Joy of the Afterglow
The barbershop tradition of the afterglow has been a favorite activity of many chorus members. Some rehearsals can be long and grueling, and those who wish to stop off for a pizza & a pitcher at Overtyme grill always find new opportunities to relax and sing and cultivate friendships. Everyone is welcome!

The science of happy chords
You can probably tell happy and sad songs apart just by listening to a few bars—but what is it, musically, that makes the difference? In Western music, major and minor chords have long been linked to joy and sorrow. So a group of scientists decided to examine how other chords might affect emotion. First, they compiled their data: nearly 90,000 popular English-language guitar songs recorded from the 1950s to the 2010s across five regions of the world. Then, they looked at how the chords matched the song lyrics. Each song got a happiness score, based on a popular crowdsourced data set that ranks 10,000 of the most common English words for positive and negative emotions. They found—as expected—that minor chords were linked with unhappy words and major chords were linked with happy ones. But the most positive emotions were conveyed by seventh chords, a triad of notes with an extra note on top that changes the sound. Major and minor sevenths were both more prevalent in happier songs, the researchers report today in Royal Society Open Science.

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Way Down Near Suwannee Greetings
I dreamt last night that I was singing a harmony line to the melody of some simple ditty. When I awoke, I remembered what I had sung, and, by golly, it worked, I had actually woodshedded in my sleep. Shows how thoroughly barbershop is embedded in my brain, even though I’ve left Michigan and have no local chapter. I have taken tentative steps to create some local entity. But so far, I am just singing in the small, local Unitarian-Universalist Church. Last week, the pianist/director decided to re-locate, and I have volunteered to direct the fledgling choir.

We have now lived in Brunswick for three months as snowbirds, and four months as residents. The 55+ community of Peppertree Crossing is perfect for us. We've met most of the other hundred-some residents, and the thirty-some dogs. We are on the outskirts of the historic town of Brunswick, linked by causeway to the Golden Isles of St. Simons Island and Jekyll Island. The sunshine drew us here and it continues, even as Oakland County is being dumped on by snow.

Corinne has completed turning our house into a home. We have a third bedroom to welcome guests. Hope to see you soon, John Cowlishaw

~~ January Birthdays ~~
3rd Len Barnes
7th Tom Blue
18th Ray Sturdy

~~ BCC Calendar~~
January Rehearsals, Tuesdays at 7:30 PM, WOAC Canterbury on the Lake, March 15, 2018, at 6:30 PM
Auburn Hills Senior Center, March 16, at 12:30 PM
Spring Convention, April 20-22, 2018, Grand Rapids