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www.bigchiefchous.org



We Will Gladly Sing for Green Beer



They say that green vegetables are good for you. The same principle may or may not apply to beer, however such a conclusion could be reached by observing the festivities after the Big Chief Chorus' Annual St. Patty's sing-outs. On Thursday

evening, March 14, the chorus performed under the direction of Tom Blue at Waterford's Canterbury on the Lake Independ Living Community and mingled with the residents at a reception after the event. Chief Eric, pictured here, led the way with our merry making, and a pick-up quartet favored two residents named Mary-Lou with a rendition of "Hello Mary-Lou, Goodbye Heart."

On Friday a somewhat smaller ensemble sang at an afternoon event in the Auburn Hills Community Center at the direction of three assistant directors who were all on hand to fill in for Tom. Mike Frye introduced the chorus and led us in singing "My Wild Irish Rose, Jeff Doig took over for a couple of songs, and Fred McFadyen, got the crowd laughing with some of his Irish humor and directed our performance of "MacNamara's Band."

After the concert, the braves and a couple wives who came along for the fun gathered for lunch at Buddy's Pizza and sang to the applause of staff and patrons alike.

Remembering Bob Legato

By Art Carinci



"Roberto, Buon Giorno!" was my greeting. "Ciao, come stai paisano? (heh, heh, heh) that's the only Italian I know" was his response. The jovial "heh, heh, heh" came to symbolize who Bob was. He was a very positive, happy go lucky kind of guy who loved people, and who loved being around people.

I first met Bob around the turn of the century when we both started enjoying a new hobby which was singing

barbershop music with the Big Chief Chorus. Bob sang lead voice, and I sang bass. Occasionally during rehearsals, when our director, Chris Miller, would throw random quartets together, I would get the opportunity to sing in a quartet for the coveted Twinkie award which was awarded to the best quartet of the evening. I don't think we ever won the award, but what I do remember vividly was the gusto the passion and the glow on Bob's face as he put his entire being into the effort to sing his best.

This is who Bob was. He was ever present in everything he did. If he was talking with you, he would be with YOU, focusing on your conversation. If he was singing, he would give it everything he had. If he was socializing, he made sure everyone around him was enjoying themselves.

His love for people had him stepping up to do whatever he could for others. When we needed a venue for our annual chorus summer picnics, Bob volunteered to host it at his house for several years. When our chorus performed charitable sing-outs at nursing homes, assisted living facilities or hospitals, Bob was there. If one of the members of the chorus passed away, Bob was there comforting his mourners at the funeral. Even as his health was failing Bob took part in our chorus events whenever possible.

I know that today Bob is in a good place singing lead in God's heavenly chorus with all of his Big Chief Chorus brothers who have gone on before him. This is the Bob Legato I remember: a happy, fun loving guy with a twinkle in his eye and goodness and love in his heart. God bless you Bob, and you will always have a special spot in my heart forever.

"It's Great to Be a Barbershopper!"



delivered with sly grin.

The big chief of our weekly 50/50 raffle, Neil Braun, is our newest Barbershopper of the Month. Neil is our tribe's master of one liner jokes, and always has a kind word for his fellow baritones, even if

True to form, Neil is pictured here attempting to cover chief Eric's face with his certificate as he accepts the honor. Thanks to the amazing reflexes of the photographer (actually a delayed shutter click), that noble effort failed. Neil, you make our rehearsals fun... and Charlie's impossible winning streak in the raffle quite discouraging for the rest of us. You are a brave brave, and the Big Chief Chorus wouldn't be the same without you.

What Pitch Should I Blow?

Whatever you do, don't blow the pitch...sing on pitch. If you have ever had trouble finding the key of a song from its key signature, there is a simple way to determine the key that



works for all major keys except the keys of C major and F major. For C major and F major you will just have to remember that C major has no sharps (#) or flats (b), and that F major has only one flat.

To find any other major key just look at the key signature, which is the pattern of sharps or flats on the staff to the right of the treble  and bass  clef symbols. From bottom to top the lines of the treble staff represent notes EGBDF and the spaces between the lines represent the notes FACE. The bass staff lines represent the notes GBDFA and the spaces ACEG.

When the key signature has more than one flat, the key is flat and the second flat from the right (not the virticle line, but the "belly bump" of the flat symbol) fills the space or is divided by the line that symbolizes the natural note of which its flat is the root note of the song. For example if the "belly bump" of the second flat from the right is divided by the line that represents the note "B" blow a Bb to tune up your song.

When the key signature has sharps the farthest sharp to the right in the key signature is one half tone below the root pitch of the song. So if for example the horizontal lines of the farthest sharp to the right straddle the "G" the G note will be sharped and the half tone above G# is A natural, which is the pitch to blow for your tune-up chord. But after you blow the pitch and start singing be very careful not to blow the pitch.

Health Benefits of Singing

Submitted by Tom Blue, BCC Director
from www.singup.org

There are many different benefits that arise from engaging in singing activities. These apply to all ages, from childhood into adolescence and through retirement age and beyond. With appropriately nurturing experiences, singing competency will develop. Almost without exception, everyone has the potential to sing competently and enjoy singing across the lifespan. Childhood provides a crucial opportunity to lay the foundations of a positive lifelong singing (and musical) identity.

The physical benefits of singing relate to: 1. Respiratory and cardiac function; 2. The development of fine and gross motor control in the vocal system; 3. Neuro-logical functioning.

The psychological benefits of singing relate to: 1. Intra-personal communication and the development of individual identity, both in music and through music; 2.

Singing is a cathartic activity; 3. Inter-personal communication; 4. An enhanced sense of social inclusion

The musical and educational benefits of singing relate to: 1. The realization of our musical potential; 2. The creation of an individual musical repertoire; 3. Increasing knowledge, understanding and skills about the world around us, both in music and through music.

Overall, these combined benefits suggest that singing is one of the most positive forms of human activity, supporting physical, mental, emotional and social health, as well as individual development in the same areas. Successful singing is important because it builds self-confidence, promotes self-esteem, always engages the emotions, promotes social inclusion, supports social skill development, and enables young people of different ages and abilities to come together successfully to create something special in the arts.

Upcoming Chorus Events

Rehearsals are 7:30 PM every Tuesday at Canterbury on the Lake, 5601 Hatchery Rd. Waterford, MI 48329. Sing outs are listed by performance times. Warm-ups are 30 mins. prior.

Apr. 26-28 Pioneer District Spring Convention

Grand Traverse Resort, Traverse City, MI.

May 10 (Fri) American House Elmwood, 12:30 p.m.

2251 W. Auburn Rd., Rochester Hills

June 8 (Sat) Ice Cream & Harmony Benefit Concert, 4 p.m.

Central United Methodist Church

3882 Highland Rd. Waterford

June 18 (Tu) Flint's Dead Creek Picnic, Frankenmuth, 6pm

Bus leaves from Scott Lake Baptist Church at 4:45

811 Scott Lake Road, Waterford

Aug. 20 (tentative) Big Chief Chorus Annual Picnic TBA

Oct. 18-20 Pioneer District Fall Convention, Muskegon

Holiday Inn: OverTime plans to compete.

Nov. 2 (Sat) BCC 75th Annual Show at Mott PAC

Nov. 5 (Tue) Christmas Chorus

Chapter Leadership

Director: Thomas Blue (248) 814-9627

Assistant Directors: Mike Frye; Jeff Doig

Section leaders: G. Moss, R. Sturdy, J. Doig, P. Hefner

President: Eric Domke (248) 674-2323

VP-Chapter Development: Fred Pioch (248) 330-2050

VP-Marketing & PR: Jack Teuber (248) 334-3686

VP-Music & Performance, Austin Suthers (248) 722-4464

Secretary: Art Carinci (248) 494-0884

Treasurer: Jim Owens (248) 682-4311

At large: J. Knapp, B. Maxfield, E. Reed, R. Sturdy,

Please email articles, photos, chorus news items etc. to

Bulletin Editor: Jon Knapp - jknappSLBC@att.net

A Grand Tribal Tradition



Experienced quartetter and tenor of "Harmonic Progression," Mike Keith, receives his renewal certificate honoring 38 years of service in the Barbershop Harmony Society. Not bad for a mere lad who this August 5th will be celebrating his 95th birthday.

Thanks to the brave braves who have gone before, many younger quartetters in the BCC have the gumption to add their voices to this wonderful tribal tradition.



The Old Raised Eyebrow Trick

by Philo Sopher, (Submitted by Ray Sturdy)

Big Glen was rehearsing in a chorus a few weeks ago when he noticed that the guys were having trouble keeping "on pitch." He then proceeded to teach them the old "raised eyebrows" trick. A lot of guys, especially the old timers, know about this trick. However, not many John Q. Barbershoppers know why it works. This is why old Philo is going to "s'plain" to you how . . . it works. Listen carefully.

Whenever you sing a note, that note comes out of your mouth through a small tube in your throat called a "note tube." With proper singing technique, the notes will pop out of the end of the tube and on out of the mouth in a nice, straight trajectory, and will invariably be on pitch. However, if the tube is stressed, or if you are tired, or if you are not really concentrating, the tube becomes lax and the notes then will just dribble out the end sounding, you guessed it, very flat.

An interesting, and little known fact, is that the "note tube" is genetically designed to handle whole notes. The reason being that when music was first invented, it was written only in whole notes. Even today, a whole note fills

up the circumference of the "note tube" quite nicely and usually pops out of the end, on pitch, just like it should. Unfortunately, nowadays, most songs also contain half notes, quarter notes, eighth notes, etc. As you know, these kinds of notes are not as big as whole notes; thus they do not fill up the "note tube" and will dribble out the end, flat, if you are not careful. Here's where the old "raised eyebrow" trick comes in.

Attached behind each person's eyebrows is a pair of small tendons which run under the skin from the eyebrow down to an attachment on either side of the "note tube." These are called "note tube tendons." When the eyebrows are raised, it causes the "note tube" to also raise. When this happens, the notes coming out of the end will come out in a higher trajectory and will not be flat.

Some guys learning to use the old "raised eyebrow" trick may have a tendency to raise them too much, causing the notes to come out sharp. The guy standing next to me the night Big Glen was teaching the trick, raised his eyebrows so much that he sang notes a whole octave higher. Now that is really "sharping." However, with practice, you can learn how to adjust the eyebrows so that the note will come out just right. Practice in front of a mirror, using a neutral vowel sound and you will be able to hear the pitch raise when you raise the eyebrows.

Everyone, even non-barbershoppers, have these "note tendons." However, in most people, they are atrophied because they are never used. That is one neat thing about barbershopping . . . you get to learn a lot of interesting things about your body, and how to use these little-known body parts in becoming a better singer.

BASSES LOADED

Submitted by Ray Sturdy

Beethoven's 9th Symphony is a long one, and knowing basses, he wrote it using them only at the start and at the finish. This past Summer, one of the local city orchestras was performing it and the bass section decided to sneak out to a nearby bar during the middle of the performance and to return just in time for the grand finale.

The opening was finished and the basses had done their part, so they quietly slipped out the back of the stage. They had planned well, even to having tied a string around the last part of the director's score, to delay him if they misjudged the time. They watched the clock carefully, and came back just in time, a little loaded, of course! Wow..... can you imagine the thoughts in that director's mind? There he is up there in front of all those people.....last half of the 9th, the score tied, and the basses loaded! Oh well, ya' can't win 'em all.