



Happy Holidays!

Peace and Harmony

in the

Year of the Pioneer



December 1975



pioneer
TROUBADOUR

Pioneer's Chapter Officers Training School sets new high in participation and involvement

The 1975 Chapter Officers Training School (COTS) held in Lansing on November 16 and 17 set a new high in attendance and chapter participation.

With 30 of the 32 chapters in the district represented in the sessions at the Olds Plaza, and 139 chapter officers taking part in the administrative, musical and public relations classes, Tom Cogan, dean of the school, said Pioneer may have set a new record in the percentage of district chapters involved.

There were three members enrolled from our Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario chapter who did not make it, however, which would have given us an even greater percentage score.

The response to this year's school was a matter of obvious pride to Pioneer President Don Funk and to the faculty and members of the district board. With the high note of enthusiasm displayed by all those in attendance, this should be a great step forward to help make this truly the Year of the Pioneer.

Keith Axline keyed his class of presidents to the duties that await them in the coming year, and John Gillespie, president-elect of Pioneer, was on hand to explain the REX committee, to be chaired by Bill Warner, to the new administrators. REX is the name for the committee on Retention and Extension.

Administrative vice presidents were instructed by Don Miller, program VPs by Bob Arnold, Jim Warner worked with the secretaries, and Roland LeClerc taught the treasurers class.

Jim Miller, of the Louisville Thoroughbreds, shared his talents with the chorus directors, and the Troubadour editor, Roger Morris, held the workshop for public relations officers and bulletin editors.

"Arnold's Army", representing the PVP class, captured the quartet competition at the Saturday night show, edging "Miller's Hi-Lites" and the "Bulletones" for the honors.



THE PATCHCHORDS entertain at COTS



THE SECRETARIATS sing it good!

Pioneer TROUBADOUR



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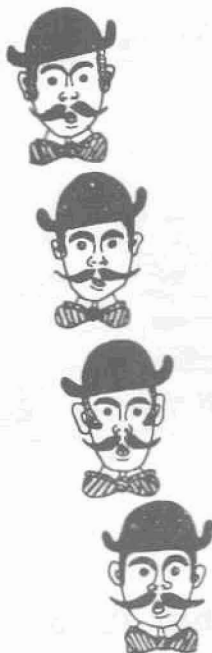


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Bill Butler is named Director of Musical Education

William D. "Bill" Butler has been named as Pioneer District's new Director of Musical Education in the Society's latest effort to improve the quality of Barbershop harmony at the chapter level.

Each district will have a similar officer heading up this program designed to improve our singing ability and to get our members more involved in singing.

The directors met in Kenosha in November with the music staff at headquarters to discuss and plan the implementation of the plan and came away with a lot of ideas to get the program moving.

Bill a member of Detroit #1 is a former chorus director and long-time Barbershopper who has coached both quartets and choruses. He is well qualified to head up this endeavor and Pioneer should gain in stature from his experience.

Notes from the Musical Education Director

By **BILL BUTLER**

After a great deal of input and suggestions from members throughout the entire Society, the International Board has decided to institute a grass roots educational program in music singing Barbershop style.

The program was inaugurated by having each of the 15 districts appoint a director of musical education. In the case of Pioneer, for better or worse you got me, Bill Butler.

A meeting was held in Kenosha, November 6-9, 1975, which I attended and in which I participated. This was a great four days, and a large amount of input from the 15 DME's and four music staff men certainly gave us a lot of fine ideas with which to start working.

With your support and cooperation, along with the District Board, divisional vice presidents and area counselors, Pioneer District can have one of the finest Music Education programs in the Society. No one man can do it alone.

I hope you will agree with a few goals I have set for Pioneer District.

- Improve the singing ability of every member in the district (not necessarily for competition) so each member can enjoy a better musical experience in singing. We are supposed to be a SINGING SOCIETY.
- Stimulate more quartet activity with emphasis on participation at the chapter level. Develop at least one coach in each chapter.
- Develop a staff of key people for music education at the district and divisional level. This will require a great deal of cooperation and assistance from the divisional VP's and counselors.
- Place a great amount of emphasis on the development and education of chorus directors, assistant chorus directors, and section leaders.
- Encourage woodshedding (creative harmonization) and teach those who don't know how.
- Keep it Barbershop!!

We in Pioneer have available to us each of the three staff



W. D. "Bill" Butler, District Director of Music Education, is shown above as he shared his thoughts concerning the district's music education program with others attending a special forum held in Kenosha, Wisconsin during the Nov. 7-9 weekend.

men from the International Music department a maximum of two weeks each year, under the direction of Robert Johnson, a great asset to all Barbershoppers.

Each one can only be scheduled for one weekend school or clinic. With the exception of Dave Stevens' second week still being negotiated, the schedule will be as follows. Weekend clinics tentatively are set for the Olds Hotel in Lansing, Michigan (not confirmed as of this writing). Everyone will be notified as to the starting time and place of all clinics and schools.

Mac Huff:

Monday, Feb. 23, 1976 thru March 21.

Monday, April 26, thru 30th.

Quartets and quartet coaches clinic, Friday evening, 8 p.m. thru Sunday noon, 27-29.

Joe Liles:

Monday, March 15 thru 21st.

Monday, December 6 thru 10th.

Chorus directors, assistant chorus directors and section leaders clinic March 19-21, starting at 8 p.m. Fri., 19th, thru Sunday noon.

Dave Stevens:

Monday November 29, 1976 thru Dec. 5th noon.

Arrangers school December 3-5.

Coming in the near future will be a manual of quartet information which will be available to all registered quartets. Also four quartet training tapes and an expanded coaching manual with an update.

A parting thought: I would like to see every chapter and quartet discontinue using the term "Singout". It has a bad connotation. I strongly suggest the use of the term "Performance". Don't you think that's better?

Please feel free to contact me anytime in regard to our Music Education Program.

W. D. "Bill" Butler, *Director Music Education*

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Selecting a contest song

By MERLE CLAYTON

Pioneer District Contest and Judging Chairman

A contestant recently asked me what he generally should look for in a contest song. It is difficult to tell what to look for in a song for a quartet or chorus without knowing a lot about the group that is going to SING the song, but generally one should check it for several elements.

Is it in the easy singing range of the group? Will the lead and baritone have to strain for the high notes? How about the bass on the lows? Does the lead line flow well, or is it skippy and hard to sing? Are there awkward leaps in other parts that are going to be hard to tune?

Are the chord voicings natural or are they contrived? Does the song contain at least 35% Barbershop seventh chords? If not, the song will likely sound "glee clubby". Are there mostly four-part chords, or are there a number of three-part chords? Are there forbidden chords, such as major sixths, major sevenths and other non-Barbershop chords? Does it generally lie in the "sol to sol" range (best) rather than in the "doh to doh" range? Are there a lot of low thirds and low sevenths in the lead part? Is the bass on the third of a major chord too frequently?

Does the song have an easily identified message—or is it a "so-what" song? Is there excessive melody in voices other than the lead? Are there nonsense syllables in the support parts? We do not sing doo-wahs and loos and dit-dahs nor dooby-doo-by-doo!

Do the voicings bring out the luscious round Barbershop sound, or are they so low as to result in a muddy sound, or so high that stridency will result?

Does the song have acceptable form? Are the introduction and tag in keeping with the rest of the song? If it is a medley, are the two (or more) songs related, or does one have to be "dragged in by the hair"? Are there too many solo, duet or three-part pick-ups? Is it over embellished or under embellished. Is it in good taste?

Sometimes a competitor will say, "Gee, we thought if we sang it right off the paper we'd really get a high score. What do we have to do?"

Well, did you really "sing it right off the paper"? Did you really SELL the song? Did you really check those diminished sevenths so they sounded like diminished sevenths, or did you let someone sing a tone sharp or flat so it sounded like any one of seven other chords when this happens? Did you sing according to your interpretation plan, or did you have a plan that wasn't accomplished? Did the song flow; did you get inside the song and project the lyrical message and real emotion of the song? Did it sound natural and musical? Was it unnatural and "hokey" and gimmicked? Do your singers enjoy it? Did you sing lyrical phrases, or simply words and notes? Mr. Director, are you musically directing the song, or are you beating it to an early death by punching out every note in the melody? Think about it.

To summarize, look for an arrangement that 1) has a message; 2) is arranged to sing easily; 3) is in the Barbershop format; 4) has 35% or more Barbershop seventh chords; 5) has no forbidden chords, and 6) is easy to believe.

This is Barbershop!

Motor City's 36th Parade was a classic

The 36th annual Parade of Harmony presented by Detroit No. 1 at the Ford Auditorium Saturday, November 1, featured a theme titled "This is Barbershop".

With the Gentlemen's Agreement, Kidder & Sons, the 4 Fits and the Motor City Chorus performing in great style, Barbershop was never in better hands.

Bob Whitlege led the chorus through a set of favorites including Barbershop Style and Ma, She's Making Eyes At Me; and Mike Arnone thrilled the crowd with his great bass solo on Old Man River.

Judie Cochill, in a tender and beautiful manner, blended her splendid voice with the chorus as she sang the counter melody to Lida Rose, and Amazing Grace.

Kidder & Sons, the California-based father and son act that has created quite a stir in Barbershop circles in the last few years, made their first appearance in Detroit a memorable one. As always, youth ruled the day, and proved a rough act to follow.

But with our champs, the GA, giving their usual sound performance, and the always-personable 4 Fits playing to the audience, Pop Kidder had a bit of support in maintaining a certain amount of respect and dignity for the older folks.

As usual, this show came across with a great touch of class. The able work of Bill Wickstrom as MC, the excellent

staging and beautiful multi-media presentation of Gary Peck that enhanced the backdrop in a subtle but stunning fashion, all added so much to the success of the production.

Drayton Justus directed the half-time sing-a-long with his own personal touch, keeping the crowd busy with antics and song.

One of the highlights of the evening was the presentation of the Marshall Wells "Nice Guy" award to WJR's Ted Strasser. Rene LeBlanc, chapter president, called young Marshall Wells III, grandson of the late broadcaster and Barbershop booster, to the stage to present the honors to Mr. Strasser.

Ted, familiar to most of us for his excellent Sunday program, "Patterns in Music", was a long-time friend and colleague of the first recipient of the Nice Guy award and the man for whom it was named.

He has continued to promote Barbershopping from his studios when possible, and it was only fitting that the second annual award should honor both Marshall Wells and Ted Strasser.

With another great show gone by the boards, Motor City can now turn its attention to preparation for even greater heights in San Francisco next July.

See related pictures on page 10

Happiness Emporium joins Jackson in Silver Salute to For-Tune Tellers

It's not every Barbershop chapter that is fortunate enough to schedule an International Quartet Champion before they acquire the crown, but some far-sighted members of the Jackson Chapter who attended HEP school prior to Indianapolis thought the Happiness Emporium had a great sound and would make a welcome contribution to their annual show.

How's that for foresight?

However, when a chapter has kept a foursome of resident For-Tune Tellers around for 25 years or so, those crystal balls are bound to come up with something sooner or later.

The Happiness Emporium came to town on Saturday, October 18, and the comfortable auditorium in Jackson High School vibrated with harmony and mirth as the full house warmed to a great show.

The Society Champs gave them their money's worth in a versatile display of solid Barbershop and tasteful comedy that set the theme for the evening.

For this was an evening of tribute to Pioneer's clown princes of comedy — always a tough act to follow — the For-Tune Tellers, celebrating a quarter century of Barbershop singing, and a living legend on their own stage.

You don't upstage an International Champion, naturally, but the four gentlemen who wear the current gold medals joined in the spirit of the evening to the extent that it became difficult to know just who was entertaining who.

When it came time for the afterglow, there was little doubt as the Happiness Emporium preceded the honored quartet on stage and then relaxed to enjoy the great repertoire of songs and entertainment that followed.

Doran McTaggart came from Windsor to serve as master of ceremonies for the evening and to lend his special touch to the "Silver Salute".

The Jacksonaires, directed by Jim Stephens, thrilled the big crowd with their splendid selection of chorus numbers, and the host chapter's "Evil Companions" added their blend to the quartet portion of the show with Bob Simmons, tenor; Bob Folk, lead; Harold Macklin, baritone, and John Czarnecki, bass.

Bob Dowma sings tenor for the Happiness Emporium, Rod Johnson is the lead, with Bob Spong, bari, and Jim Foy, bass. Rod bruised more than a few ribs with his tremendous impersonation of Crazy Guggenheim, the loveable character made famous by Frank Fontaine on the Jackie Gleason show.

One of the highlights of the evening was a surprise visit on stage by Everett Queen, the original baritone, and later lead, of the For-Tune Tellers, who came from Arizona to add a touch of nostalgia to the occasion and join in the celebration. Everett switched parts with Tom Cushman and took over as lead, where he was replaced by Red Shaw upon moving to Royal Oak.

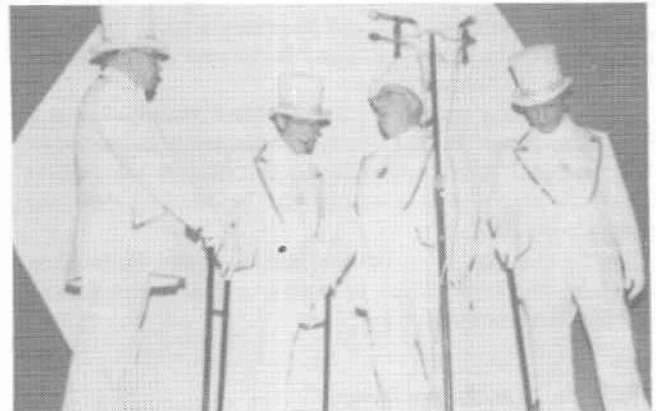
Tom still sings the bari, with brother Sam singing tenor and Bud Knorpp holding the bass. Red, of course, remains as lead.

It was an unforgettable evening in Jackson, for sure!

The Troubadour will review 25 years with the For-Tune Tellers in the February issue.



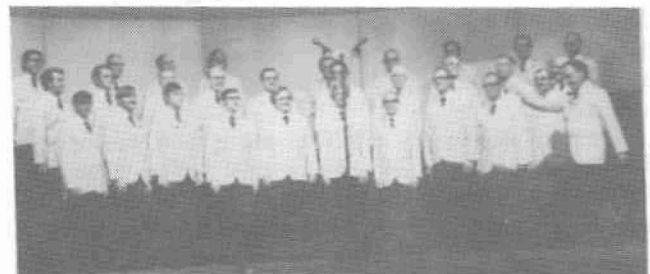
THE HAPPINESS EMPORIUM—International Champs



THE FOR-TUNE TELLERS donned classy new uniforms for Jackson show



THE EVIL COMPANIONS



THE JACKSONAIRES take a bow

It's onward and upward for President Don Funk

By MERLE D. BRAZELLE

"You can't make the changes if you aren't there", said Pioneer's outgoing President Don Funk in a recent interview. "Maybe you can't make any changes anyway, but you've got two years to try".

So saying, Don, who is finishing his second year as District President, will move on to the International Board Member's position effective the first of the year.

"I could spout off on a lot of things", Don said, "but that would be like a freshman senator going to Washington and then not being able to accomplish anything. I have my own ideas, I think, and I've tried to implement them in the District administration. I believe a relatively successful program at the District level can be paralleled at the International level".

As for changes in International policy, Don said, "Pioneer District has always been on record as being opposed to associate status for chapters. We've felt that sixteen men singing together are still a chapter. Without associate status, many chapters would be with us yet.

"On the other hand, licensing under present rules, with twenty members, and fifteen more men still needed to charter leaves an awfully long road to travel. A strong nucleus is necessary to bring a new chapter to life, and licensing with a minimum of thirty members would greatly enhance the probability of success."

Don has seen many changes in his years with the Society. He first joined the Ypsilanti Chapter in 1948, dropped out from 1952 until 1958, then rejoined the Lansing Chapter, where he is still a member.

Don's appointment to the International post caps some eight years of Society service in various Chapter and District capacities. He has served as chapter president (twice), chapter secretary, convention co-chairman, division V.P., executive V.P., and of course, District President (two years). In addition he has served as area counselor in the days when "they didn't know what the area counselor was doing out there, and the counselor didn't know either".

President Funk's stated goals at the start of his first year were the addition of new chapters and a sharp increase in membership. Membership at that time stood at a little over 1,300. At the present time, membership exceeds 1,500 and three new chapters have been chartered in the two-year period.

Although this must be considered to be a creditable accomplishment, Don mourns those members that dropped by the wayside, even though they were replaced by other new members. "There are a lot of ex-barbershoppers out there. The guys that dropped out — it would be good to have them with us yet, but a chapter can't spin its wheels trying to get the old ones back. Vitality comes with new life.

"Barbershopping could be much better for everyone," Don said, "if more of our members gave more effort to their organization instead of just taking. Barbershop is my hobby. It has been very time consuming. I've been a little selfish, and, I suppose, my family has sacrificed as a result, but I feel you must 'do' to the best of your ability. Things aren't just run accidentally, nor do they just happen to grow. There has to be give and take all around."



DON FUNK

Although Don doesn't classify COT School as one of his "pet" projects, he is justifiably proud of the attendance at the latest one, held in Lansing recently, in which 95% of Pioneer's chapters participated. "I feel the attendance at COTS was the result of a lot of pounding and a lot of talking to people over the last five years in Pioneer District. COTS is just part of the overall preparation of a man to assume responsibility, and should be part of his dedication of himself to the hobby of his choice".

President Funk isn't ready to set back and rest on his laurels yet. Even with the responsibility of his new position at International, he has agreed to serve in '76 as Lansing's Chapter Show Chairman and as District Convention Chairman.

To the question, "after your term on the Board expires, would you be willing to accept further and perhaps even greater responsibility at the International level?", Don answered without a moment's hesitation, "Of course".

With this man's obvious ability, his history of service, and his indefatigable dedication, this could well be the man who, following in the illustrious footsteps of Ed Smith and Clarence Jalving, brings the honor of the International Presidency back to Pioneer District.

Pioneer District salutes you, Don Funk. Thank you for a job "well done, and then some".

Good luck to you in your newest position of responsibility. Pioneer has every faith in your ability to, indeed, proceed "Onward and Upward". We're with you all the way!

Merle Brazelle is a veteran Barbershopper and member of the new Clinton Valley Chapter. The accompanying article is the result of an assignment given to him during the PROBE sessions at the Lansing COTS in November. His in-depth cameo of President Funk was prepared from his taping of an hour-long interview with Don at that time and is an eloquent tribute to the man who has given so much to Pioneer Barbershoppers.

BULLETIN EDITORS:

It's time to get your entry ready for judging

Pioneer District will be entering two chapter bulletins in the international competition to pick the Society's Chapter Bulletin of the Year, and it is time to get those entries submitted for the coming year's competition.

Our editors have fared rather well in this contest in recent years, though we haven't walked off with the top prize yet. But this situation can be changed with a little effort and attention to details.

Robert McDermott of the Oakland County chapter, and the Troubadour editor are members of the district committee. However, we hope to attain the services of judges from other districts to pick our entries for this year.

The annual bulletin contest is a great device to help us improve our chapter media and promote Barbershopping in a better showcase. If your chapter has published a bulletin for the 12 months preceding the December issue deadline, how about entering it in the competition? You may not win, but you will be given a lot of pointers by the judges on how to improve your publication for the next year. From that standpoint you are a certain winner and you just might be named Bulletin Editor of the Year for Pioneer District.

At the suggestion of the Troubadour editor during the PROBE meeting in Indianapolis this year, the Probemoter has been publishing the judges' scoring sheets so that editors everywhere will know what the judges are looking for in a bulletin. If your chapter hasn't enrolled its editor in the PROBE organization, now is the time to do so. There is no charge for editors and PR men.

And if you haven't got a chapter bulletin, get crackin' on your officers to establish one. The Troubadour editor will be holding classes for bulletin editors and public relations men at the COTS sessions in Lansing again this year. You can send your editor as a legitimate chapter expense.

To enter the contest you will need copies of three consecutive issues during the year — four if you have a weekly bulletin. There are four different categories to be judged, so send at least eight copies of each issue to Robert McDermott, 1859 Maryland, Birmingham, Michigan 48009; or to Roger O. Morris, sr., 325 East Wardlow, Highland, Michigan 48031.

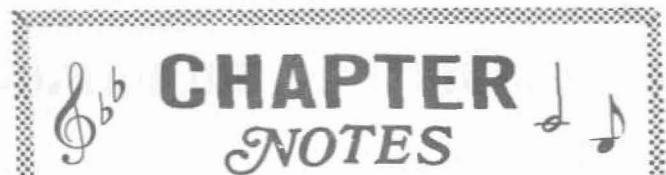
Deadline for entries is January 31.

Stateliners

Tom, Norm, Chan, Bob

"Just Plain Barbershop"

Contact: Tom Granata
6103 Dixon Ave.
Toledo, Ohio 43613
(419) 474-9731



Boyerne City

In a weak moment, I offered to our new president to take on the Troubadour reporter job, so I will try to have Boyne City News in every issue, so that Pioneer will know we do other things besides the Bush League.

Speaking of the Bush League, I am sure you all read Roger's account of the 29th one held on May 3rd of this year. We think it was one of our best, with the Pointe Four of Grosse Pointe crowned the new Champs. The Northern Hi-Lites outdid themselves to entertain the crowd, not only at the show, but also at the afterglow at the hotel. Don't forget May 1st, 1976 is the date of our 30th with the Soundtracks from the Illinois District, 6th place at Indianapolis, being featured.

Other activities of our Chapter since the B.L.: A very successful Ladies Nite at the Anthony Inn on May 23. A singout at the Shelter House in Veterans Memorial Park on Independence Day. We were happy and surprised that Herb Benjamin and Bob Deming, both of the Saginaw-Bay Chapter, were in the crowd, and we induced them to come up and sing with us.

On July 14th we sang for the Social Services Convention, at Boyne Mountain, and the following night we sang at the Top-O-Michigan Rural Electric annual meeting in the school auditorium at Boyne.

On Sept. 1st we sang for the Charlevoix County Senior's picnic at Whiting Park, as we have done the past several years. Oct. 6th we sang for the Boyne Falls Methodist Church dinner.

You can see we keep busy. On Nov. 1st we will have a Ladies Nite at Anthony's Inn and have invited the Soo, Canada, Les Cheneaux, and Au Sable Chapters to join us. Slat's Ramer's quartet from South Bend, Indiana, has indicated it will be here to sing for us. Three of the quartet are members of the Boyne City Chapter.

Our president elect, Jerry Staublin of Charlevoix has already laid out wonderful plans and I predict he will be a super president. He is a real go-getter. See you next issue.

—Loton Willson

Detroit

Well here it is at the end of the year and since the last Troubadour article was submitted Detroit has been busy. Two major events have occurred, Detroit's "Motor City Chorus" was fortunate enough to win the International Preliminaries at Grand Rapids on October 11 and on November 1 Detroit put on what might be billed as their most successful Fall show ever.

The show featured the Gentlemen's Agreement, Kidder and Sons, the Four-Fits and the Motor City Chorus with guest soloist Judie Cochill to do the counter melody to Lida Rose and Amazing Grace.

Speaking of soloists, there was one other solo in the show worthy of mention; a bass solo to Old Man River performed

by the former bass of the Frankenmuth Quartet, Mike Arnone.

The show presented some interesting multi-media concepts built around the masterful photography of Gary Peck, a relatively new member of Detroit #1. All in all the show was a rousing success.

One more item should be mentioned in this issue. That item is the slate of officers that will be guiding Detroit's organization through what we hope will be the "Year of the Pioneer": President Thom Hine, Admin. V.P. Don Smith, Program V.P. Harold Kendall, Corresponding Secy. Earl Berry, Recording Secy. Chuck Mills, Treasurer Ken Ledford, and Board Members at Large Bill Butler, Terry Grimme and Bob Rock.

As this article is submitted, these new officers are anxiously awaiting COT School and the assumption of their duties, hoping to make 1976 as successful for Detroit as 1975 has been. —Don Smith

Holly-Fenton

The Holly-Fenton Chapter has resumed regular rehearsals and these are now being held at the Fenton House, Tuesdays at 8:30. An arrangement was made with the Fenton House, which was formerly a hotel, but is now a gourmet restaurant, that the rehearsal room will be available every week and will be heated. Rules against drinking at meetings will be strictly enforced.

On September 30, an informal farewell was held at the Fenton House for Jay Welch. After twenty five years in the Society Jay is being forced by health reasons to retire to Arizona. The highlight of the evening was when the original Fentonians sang. In addition to Jay with his twenty five years as tenor, there was Lee Kelley, lead, Grant Wright, baritone, and Ryan Strom, bass. The Fentonians were very active during the early years of the Holly-Fenton Chapter and continued to sing until about 1964. —George Darrah

Wayne

Wayne members, first of all, would like to express their gratitude to President Jim Swisher for his fine leadership during the past two years. He and his team of officers have worked long and hard to get us into the Century Club membership category and keep us there. Thanks, Jim, to you and all those who worked so cooperatively with you.

Our new slate of officers is as follows:

President George Fitzgerald; AVP Larry Shahinian, PVP Jim McLane, Rec. Secy. Barry Wallace, Corr. Secy. Todd Bredin, Treas. Bob Vanderford, and Sgts.-at-arms Frank Maton and Bill Dennison.

Wonderland Chorus now has officially named its new director. He is Dave "Doc" Caldwell of the Northern Hi-Lites. The status of our own Steve Sutherland has been changed from assistant director to associate director. As it stands now, Dave will concentrate primarily on songs for contest, while Steve whips us into shape for our big two-night show in March.

Also, under Steve's direction, the Wonderland Chorus has performed at three singouts recently which were very warmly received.

Tom Pollard, who procures the talent for our annual "Pitchpipe Parade" has announced that in addition to the O.K. Four, our 1976 show will also feature the Sweet Adelines International champions, The Sounds of Music. I have not had the pleasure of hearing these gals, but those who have claim that their "Sounds" combined with their pounds are enough to tear up any audience.

Wayne's "Old Timers and Past Presidents Night" is scheduled for the third Friday in November, which of course has already gone by the time this gets printed.

This is an annual affair which usually fills our meeting hall to capacity. Invitations are sent out to members and former members dating back to the inception of the Wayne Chapter. Old timers from several other chapters are usually present, too, including now defunct chapters such as Redford, Northwest Detroit, Dearborn, etc., plus Detroit #1, Oakland County and Pontiac.

Our congratulations to the newly formed Clinton Valley Chapter, and we strongly urge that they consider entering their chorus in the Spring Contest.

It was difficult to pick up the October Troubadour and go through it without noticing the decided drop in the number of chapter reports. There were only three. What ever happened to the four or five pages of reports we used to have? Has the task of writing a report become too great? Takes only about an hour 6 times a year. Perhaps there is something else to consider: the "news" ceases to be news when the copy deadline and the actual printing date are approximately a month and a half apart. Or could it be that our reports need a shot in the arm to make them more interesting? Why don't some of you readers write in your views?!

Remember, come visit us any 3rd Friday at Rosedale Gardens Civic Association clubhouse, 9611 Hubbard, in Livonia. —Morrie Giles

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1451 Harvard
East Lansing, Mich. 48823

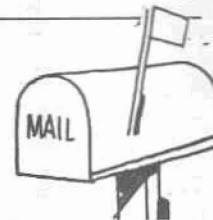
Dear Don:

May I extend my most sincere thanks to you and the members of the entire Pioneer District Board for the kindness shown to Nell and myself at the Grand Rapids Convention.

The gift of the Salute to America package will long be cherished to continue to remind me of my fond association with the Pioneer Board. You know, you reach the end of your term of most any office with mixed emotions — Happy, in a way, to be relieved of the many time consuming responsibilities yet saddened by the thought of losing the close association with such a fine group of dedicated Barbershoppers. I only hope that in some small way I was able to help promote the growth and success of Barbershopping in Pioneer.

My thoughts and best wishes will be with you and the Board always. Good luck — Make Pioneer the best in the Society!

Chordially,
Bill Warner
Pioneer IBM



Schmitt Brothers entertain Monroe couple on anniversary

When Mr. and Mrs. Frank Klaes of Monroe celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary on November 2, their Barbershopper son Jerry wanted the occasion to be something special.

Something special it was!

Jerry, along with his two brothers and two sisters, called on the Schmitt Brothers, International Champions from Two Rivers, Wisconsin, their parents' favorite quartet, to join in the festivities.

The Schmitt Brothers, not being strangers to the Monroe Chapter, were surprise guests at a 2 p.m. Mass at St. Stephens Church in New Boston, honoring Mr. and Mrs. Klaes. The liturgy was planned by the Klaes family, who took part in the service. Jerry wrote the music for "Glory to God" and "The Lamb of God" which was sung by the choir. The Schmitt Brothers sang two songs at the service, and the secret was out.

The Champs attended the party following the service where they gave a full-scale performance and Joe Schmitt made some appropriate remarks in remembrance of the occasion.

Jerry Klaes said his only regrets were the limitations of attendance due to the size of the hall, which made it impossible to invite the entire Monroe Chapter.

The Troubadour extends its congratulations to the Klaes family on reaching this milestone and celebrating it in such grand style.



MARSHALL WELLS III presents the Marshall Wells "Nice Guy" Award to WJR's TED STRASSER as Detroit President Rene LeBlanc approves



BOB WHITLEDGE escorts soloist JUDY COCHILL from stage as Motor City Chorus looks on

Down Our Way

with the Editor



"Around and around she goes, and where she stops . . . nobody knows!"

Thus did the immortal Major Bowes describe the wheel of fortune as he intoned those words at the beginning of each session of his "Original Amateur Hour".

The good Major could have also been describing the hands of time as the clock of life keeps ticking away toward oblivion.

Life rushes by like the swift current of a raging flood, and we are all caught up in the swirling, restless race to the sea. Time and tide . . .

Another holiday season, another year gone by, another opportunity to start a new year on the right foot. The Year of the Pioneer is just around the next bend and the greatest District in the entire Barbershop fraternity awaits the challenge with great anxiety and immense capability.

While we are looking to the future, we do not want to forget the past. We here in Pioneer have a lot to be proud of, even though we know we cannot live on our history alone. We must add to that history, embellish old glories with new victories, and move on to greater things.

1975, despite the existing conditions in our world, wasn't all that bad to us. It brought a medal to the incomparable Vagabonds, spotlighted our wonderful 4 Fits on an international stage, and gave a valiant Wonderland Chorus its first look at top-drawer competition in Indianapolis.

It brought us a new charter at Clinton Valley, some 50 strong, and raring for action. It saw the district grow in numbers, ever so slowly, but growing, at least.



KIDDER & SONS at Motor City Show

Two magnificent conventions hosted by Saginaw-Bay and Grand Rapids proved to us that we are a healthy, active, and involved association. The competition in both contests was keen, and the accomplishments of our district board and House of Delegates will pave the way for even greater years to come.

The great attendance at COTS in Lansing just has to be a big plus for Pioneer. How anyone can set in one of those classrooms, rub elbows with some of the Society's most knowledgeable personnel, woodshed 'til the wee hours, sing under the direction of a Jim Miller, join in the camaraderie around the dining tables, and come away without the feeling they have been on one big ego trip . . . this editor would be hard put to explain.

All we can say is that if your chapter didn't send its officers to Lansing, you have been short changed. And if those officers who did attend are not sharing that experience with your chapter, something is wrong!

So, we bid goodbye to 1975, a bit misty-eyed, a bit apprehensive, but hopefully expectant for a great 1976.

Barbershopping continues to be the greatest of hobbies. 36,000 singing members can't be wrong! True, we have our shortcomings here and there, and we still get lost at the drop of a ringing chord, thereby shutting out all the rest of the world as we revel in golden harmony.

But there is a lot of work to be done in the vineyards, and that work is the charge of every member. There's the burr in our saddle of chapters on associate status. There's another one labeled retention. And the job of recruitment is an ongoing responsibility that falls heavily on our shoulders. Do you realize the number of people out there who have been deprived of the opportunity to hear Barbershop harmony? Underprivileged, you might say. There's a lot of good voices waiting for someone to invite them to sing!

Perhaps the most sobering reflection that troubles this feeble mind is that of retention. The number of good trained Barbershop voices dropping by the wayside each year is pathetic.

We do not have the current figures for Pioneer, but recently we heard one district president state that over 1,600 members have been removed from his rolls in one year! Think of that! 1,600 men who found a love for the Old Songs at some time in their life have become disenchanting. Why?

It takes a lot of AFA's to replace those men, if you want to look at it in that respect. How many new members has your chapter recruited this year? How many has it let fall from the roster, often without anyone bothering to find out the reason.

Those of us who wear Man of Note awards for these members should be searching our souls and getting on the telephone, or paying a personal visit to these forgotten members. It's reunion time! It's time to get back together, so weed out the flaws, mend the fences, and get the chapter on a solid, entertaining basis. Let's make it fun to be a Barbershopper, as well as great.

1976 is the time to start. Bring back those old members, make the time spent in rehearsal count — every minute of it — and make chapter meetings an enjoyable experience for everyone. And don't forget to make those guests as welcome as the flowers in May — or December, or any other month — but WELCOME!

The Troub joins the Pioneer membership in congratulating former members Clint Bostick and Bud Carpenter and their Knights of Gold quartet the new Sunshine District champions.

We would also be remiss if we failed to applaud Lansing's Front Office Four the new Queens of Harmony for their great win in Seattle recently. When the Front Office Four finished fifth last year, Vicki Gibson, who sings bass, brought home a medal to inspire husband Ken, tenor of the Vagabonds. We all know what followed at Indianapolis in July. As a gold medalist this year, we hope Mrs. Gibson's quartet will once again serve as a good omen for the Vagabonds.

Our thanks to Bill Butler for taking the tremendous responsibility of heading up the new Musical Education program. Give him a hand whenever you can. This guy deserves it, and you will benefit from it.

And a special thanks to all you wonderful people and to the many fine chapters who have been so kind to the editor and his wife, Alice. We have enjoyed being with you, appreciate the great shows and warm hospitality wherever we have been. You are too numerous to mention, but you are all members of this big, friendly family and we love you.

It is our wish that the spirit of this warmest and most joyous of holiday seasons be with you and fill your hearts with peace, happiness and love throughout the days of your lives.

Swipes

from our Chapter Bulletins

Monroe lays on some rules about poor attendance

from the FLORAL CITY CHATS, Monroe, Michigan

Since becoming temporary chairman of the music committee, it has been brought to my attention that some of our chorus members' attendance has been painfully poor. In fact, a national disgrace! Therefore, the Music Committee has decided on some additional requirements:

1. Sickness is no excuse to miss chorus practice. If you are able to go to a doctor, you are able to attend rehearsal. You might not be able to sing, but we want to see how your sickness is progressing.

2. We no longer will accept operations as a valid excuse for being absent. We suggest that operations not be considered, because we accepted your membership as you are, and we feel that while singing Barbershop with us, you will need everything of what it is you've got, especially lung power. And finally,

3. Death. What a lousy way of getting out of chorus practice! If you insist on this, though, we would like a 3-week notice so we can train someone else to sing your part.

We hope these measures will ensure your good attendance from now henceforth.

Don Schroeder,
Administrative Vice President

Keep America Singing

Coming Events

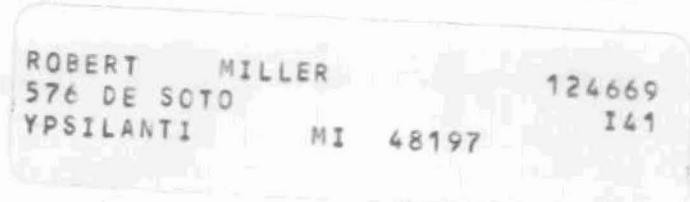
Send requests for
Parade Clearance to:
John McClinchey
606 Woodcrest
Royal Oak, Michigan 48067

—1976—

- JANUARY—
 - 17 Lansing Chapter Show
 - 31 Niles-Buchanan Show
- FEBRUARY—
 - 6-7 Monroe Floral City Show
 - 14 Pontiac Chapter Show
 - 20-21 Oakland County
- APRIL—
 - 10 Great Lakes Invitational, Grand Rapids
 - 10 St. Joseph Valley Show
 - 10 Flint Chapter Show
 - 23-25 District Convention, Lansing
- MAY—
 - 1 Boyne City Bush League
 - 15 Alpena Chapter Show
 - 1 Kalamazoo Chapter Show
- JULY—
 - 5-10 International Convention, San Francisco
 - 18 Detroit No. 1 Moonlight Cruise
- OCTOBER—
 - 8-10 District Convention, Grosse Pointe
- NOVEMBER—
 - 6 Detroit No. 1 Parade



Chapters are requested to get Parade Clearances and dates approved for all public events your chapter expects to hold in your area. Do it well in advance each year, or even up to five years in advance. This will help avoid conflicts with talent and audience pull.



Second Class Mail



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