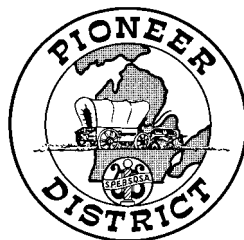


Pioneer Troubadour

Official publication of the Pioneer District
Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of
Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.



June/July 2000

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Great Lakes Chorus, Power Play win at Battle Creek



By Staff Writer Jim Styer

Balanced sound brought the GREAT LAKES CHORUS another district championship at the spring convention in Battle Creek. The Grand Rapids chorus succeeds Lansing as district champ, and also will represent the district at International competition this summer. The 39 men were led by Jamie Carey, who answered the call for "Help!" and stepped in temporarily after the recent resignation of Ann Jarchow. Carey had been Lansing's director until last year. Grand Rapids scored 869 points, the same number of points as in last fall's contest.

Contest highlights also included

two other choruses directed by women and two non-competing choruses.

With a solid sound from the first note, the HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS, directed by Lynne Peirce, continued its strong march upward in music and membership to place second, just 57 points behind Grand Rapids.

The next major duty for the chorus will be to represent the district in the first small-chorus competition at the Buckeye Invitational in August in Columbus, Ohio. Huron Valley placed seventh last spring with 22 men, fourth in the fall with 23 men, and second this

(Continued on page 13)

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

POWER PLAY again reached into the hearts of the audience and pulled out another loving send-off to International competition. The Slamka family quartet earned 2,046 points in the Pioneer District spring contest, their highest-yet qualifying score yet on the way to still-more stardom this summer in Kansas City.

In a contest studded with quartet stars and starry-eyed quartets, POWER PLAY stayed down to earth with songs of basic feeling. Lead Mike Slamka made listeners feel he was really hurting in "For Sale, One Broken Heart." The link with the audience continued throughout the remaining three competition songs. "They grab your heart," said an on looking chorus director, "and tear it out." Their moves aren't just moves: put a hand out, now bring it back in.

Their moves are part of their entire presence on stage, feeling and selling the songs, so much a part of their presentation that the audience really never notices them. The audience experiences not the motions, but the emotions.

For their acceptance song,

(Continued on page 20)



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There are four methods of submitting information for the *Troubadour*:

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2. Mail file(s) on floppy disk.
3. Fax typed copy.
4. Mail typed article and scanner-ready artwork.

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TROUBADOUR PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Published bimonthly in February, April, June, August, October, and December. Copy deadline: 5th of the month prior to the month of publication. The *Troubadour* is published by the authority of the Pioneer District Association of the Chapters of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc. All articles not by-lined are by the editor and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the members or officers of the district. Space will be made available for opposing views relevant to the issue. Nothing will be published that is in violation of the Society's Code of Ethics.

Subscription rate for non-members: \$6.00 annually, \$1.50 for single copy. Remit to editor.

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District PR, bulletin awards

The Pioneer District has honored three Barbershoppers for their work in chapter public relations and marketing in 1999.

First-place Public Relations Officer of the Year (PROTY) awards went to:

- Jack W. Oonk of Holland for a single effort, a fund-raising campaign to expand usage of the chapter's theater building as a community arts facility.
- Paul Smith of Flint for various activities in promoting the chapter throughout the year.

Darrell Richmond of Huron Valley earned second place in the year-around category.

The awards were presented at the district spring convention in Battle Creek. All three award winners will be entered in the International PR contest.

The entrants did excellent jobs and were well qualified as entrants, according to judges Joyce Ryan, long-time editor/publisher of the *Battle Creek Shopper-News*, a community news weekly; Doug Pearson, district VP for marketing who works in the PR field; and Roger Lewis, Society Executive VP, whose Barbershop and professional careers have included writing and marketing.

Jack W. Oonk, Holland

Oonk, 70, a newspaper and marketing retiree who also is part of an extended Barbershop family, was nominated by Art Lane, last year's winner of a district and international PR award. "It is more than public relations," Lane wrote about Oonk. "It is the actual leadership of having a good idea, working out the details,

getting other people to help and seeing it through. We are fortunate to have a man like Jack who can inspire the chapter to work and make it fun, and he has been doing it on projects big and small for 50 years."

Oonk, a 50-year Society member, conceived and supervised a multi-faceted "Preservation Through Performance" program to raise funds to develop the Park Theatre



Jack W. Oonk

downtown — which the chapter had purchased — as a performance center for the whole community.

The chapter had refurbished the theatre — vacant for 14 years — for meetings and rehearsals, but didn't know how to carry its dream further. Oonk developed a seven-page "manifesto" to make the theater a center where "great music of the past will be preserved through performance ... from opera to vaudeville to Barbershop."

He organized a committee, devised events at the theater to show members and the community the potential, spurred enthusiasm with

challenges and parties, held auditions and talent nights, and designed and produced posters, letters, tickets, pledge cards, and a color brochure on the theater's history. Wives also were involved. The media took notice. The chapter invited possible donors to a major community dinner show at the theater, featuring varied types of talent from throughout the community. Two-hundred persons attended. By the end of 1999, more than \$40,000 had been raised.

Now, with part of that as seed money, a professional fund-raiser has been hired to help reach a goal that has been doubled to \$1 million. The chapter is continuing to refurbish the theater and plan more shows.

Oonk "is at his best when he finds the seed of an idea, then runs with it, coming up with sometimes amazing, sometimes unreachable, but often brilliant ideas on how to promote events and change them from ho-hum to 'Oh, Wow,'" wrote James Hall, chapter development vice president. Oonk "promoted and chaired an effort that was and still is the talk of our town," chapter member Dale Bekker added.

Paul Smith, Flint

A recently retired General Motors engineer, Smith has been a Barbershopper for 10 years, has 15 Men of Note awards, was Flint Chapter president for two years, and has been PR chairman for more than a year.

His nomination for the PR award was submitted by Ed Wracan, chapter president, and John Noteware, musical director. His activities

(Continued on page 12)

Todd Wilson's Barbershopper's Wish List

By Todd Wilson, 27-year member of SPEBSQSA, International quartet (Acoustix) and chorus (Vocal Majority) champions, and SPEBSQSA COTS-Certified Instructor of Marketing & PR.

Recently I served on the faculty of the Ontario District COTS school, where I taught Marketing & PR classes. I was also asked to present the annual "keynote address" to the entire student body and faculty on Friday night. Much to my surprise, the presentation went over very well. This is the conclusion of that address.

Part II

SHOWS

27. I envision a time when more Society chapters realize that producing a top notch annual show can become the single best marketing tool to attract new members and other outside bookings throughout the year.

28. I envision a day when more barbershop choruses understand that you really can charge more than \$8.00 for a ticket to their show and still fill seats. In my travels as a member of a show quartet (CLASS OF THE '80S and ACOUSTIX), I have sung on all kinds of shows in all kinds of venues. The ticket prices have ranged anywhere from \$5.00 to \$50.00 for special patron seating. I have seen shows where at \$5.00 a ticket, the chapter sold half the house and the chapters with a \$20.00 ticket price (with usually a better production) sold every seat in the house.

29. I see a time when more Barbershop choruses actually advertise their shows to the general public instead of relying on friends and family members to fill the seats.

30. I envision a day when more chapters discover the potential "gold mine" that comes with selling ad space in their show program. Case in point: Several years ago (the first time we did their show), the Wooster (Ohio) Chapter hired two international champion quartets — ACOUSTIX and the BLUEGRASS STUDENT UNION on the same show at \$5.00 per ticket. They packed the house and covered all the expenses with program ad revenues. The ticket sales were all profit. This proved to be so successful that they hired ACOUSTIX again, this time with MARQUIS sharing the stage. It can be done.

31. Don't we all hope for a day when more than 80 percent of our ticket sales come from more than 20 per-

cent of the members?

32. I envision a day when more Barbershop chapters join forces with other non-Barbershop musical organizations in the community to produce a concert that exposes Barbershop to other segments of the population that otherwise would have never heard our music.

33. I envision a day when more choruses put a greater emphasis on having a quality sound system and professional sound engineer at public performances instead of relying on the system that was installed in the days of O. C. Cash and run by a kid from the local high school.

34. I envision a time when more Society chapters consider hiring top-notch Sweet Adelines International or Harmony, Inc., quartets or choruses to participate in their annual show or, better yet, assist each other in the production of the event.

35. I envision a time when more Society chapters seek out a professional emcee to act as the "glue" that holds the production together.

36. I envision a time when more Society choruses realize that, from a PR point of view, more is not always better. If learning a bunch of songs and getting them to an acceptable level is beyond the capabilities of your chorus, you are better off preparing a strong opening, polishing a closing, and sharing the performance duties with other, more proficient groups and your headliner act. There is no law that says the host chorus is required to sing 30 minutes to an hour on the show! Ten minutes of quality is better than 30 minutes of mediocrity.

OTHER BOOKINGS

37. I envision a time when more Society choruses ask themselves the following question: If our annual overhead to run the chapter operation without any "out of pocket" expense by the members is (for example) \$25,000 a year, and we only average ten paid bookings a year, how much would we have to charge our clients just to break even? On the other hand, enjoying success in competition doesn't mean you no longer accept freebie or "expenses only" gigs. Actually, your invitations to participate in these gratis events will probably increase as you climb the competition ladder. There are situations where these are a good idea. My present quartet has done over 250 gratis gigs in the last 10 years, repre-

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A View From The Top

Don Bazely, President

Thoughts on spring convention, outlook for year



Don Bazely

This column will be somewhat disjointed because there is so much I want to share with you. There will undoubtedly be more than a few references to the just-completed Pioneer District convention in this issue of the *Troub.* But I have to say that it was one of the most exciting conventions in recent history. Some of the highlights were: Huron Valley's phenomenal second-place finish behind our new district champs, Grand Rapids.

Another nice surprise was seeing Saginaw Bay on stage. We have not seen that chapter compete in something like 10 years. They were directed by Nan Wardin, who, I hear, took over the reins only a few weeks ago. They acquitted themselves very well indeed. But scores are not everything. Just being there is of far greater significance. To Huron Valley and to Saginaw Bay, I offer my congratulations for achieving different, but nevertheless, important goals.

There were 15 choruses who participated in the chorus contest. That represents a little over 50 percent of the district chapters. That is a shame. The convention is for all Pioneer chapters. Well, let me ask

you missing chapters ... how about planning to participate in the fall convention? There really is more to a convention than just competing, but that is one excellent way to find out how to raise your musical performance standards.

Talking of performance standards, Pioneer as well as other districts have in place a wonderful tool to assist chapters in achieving a higher, more professional standard of public performance. It is called the Standing Ovation Program (SOP). It operates under the leadership of the vice-president of music & performance and is headed by our immediate past president, David Cole. Look up SOP in the district directory.

In my humble opinion, it is the single most effective method of improving our choruses' and quartets' public performance standards. One of the "evaluators" will respond to a request for assistance and will provide the following services to your chorus or quartet: the evaluator will attend one of your public performances and give you a confidential critique on how he perceived you. It is astonishing how he will pick up on little (or major) glitches that have never occurred to you. The evaluator is also available to help you PLAN your next show. How about that?

Give David or Russ Seely a call. They would love to hear from you.

Also, it is painless.

The quartet contest was unique in as much as we had four competing quartets from outside this district. The excitement got to fever pitch when we witnessed the battle of the giants. EXCALIBUR from LOL found themselves being pushed hard by our own pride and joy; POWER PLAY. It was obvious from the start that we were witnessing something we haven't seen in the longest time — a quartet challenging POWER PLAY on our turf. The scores between the combatants were within a couple of points during the semi-finals and the finals. Normally you would witness this sort of competition only at International. I can't wait for Kansas City.

Here's another delightful first. We had the first ever father/son/grandson chorus directed by Jack and Mike Slamka. We may never have another one. I could not help the thought of me singing in that chorus with at least one of my four sons who were Barbershoppers in the Sault Chapter at one time or other.

And get this: the JOE BARBERSHOP CHORUS was one of the largest we have ever staged. Someone counted 101 singers. Jeff Gougeon, director of the CAPITOL CITY CHORDSMEN, led the chorus. It was a distinct pleasure to sing under Jeff's direction. He epitomises the style of directing that I wish I could emulate.

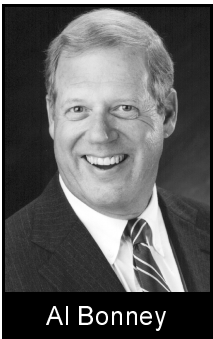
We will have another JBC in the fall and this time I am honoured to be appointed as director. All being well, there will be two pieces of music published in the *Troub.* Those are what we are going to sing. The "Story of the Rose" is the old-time favourite that we have sung in washrooms and stairwells all over

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Young Men in Harmony

Al Bonney, District Chairman

You only gotta look around!



Al Bonney

Few of us sitting in the audience Saturday night in Battle Creek at the Spring Convention could help but be moved by the awesome spectacle presented from the stage.

Taking nothing away from the wonderful chorus contest in the afternoon, let me comment only on Saturday night. No, I am not referring to Doran's humor — I am speaking of the spectrum of Barbershop interests arrayed before us.

When was the last time we watched three quartets qualify for International? The talent and dedication to our art form displayed by EXCALIBUR and SHARPER IMAGE, not to mention our beloved POWER PLAY, was truly inspirational. Watching the best of the best of our hobby is truly an inspiration to everyone I spoke with.

Following the three going to International came the finest array of finalists I can remember listening to at one of our contests. To a quartet, the seven represented significant growth from their performance last fall. Focus, dedication to their craft, hard work, and hours of practice all showed clearly, benefiting not only the performers, but the audience as well.

And the FATHER-SON-GRANDSON CHORUS ... what a spectacle! While the singers on stage

may have come from among the finest singing stock in the district, the performance transcended the music, representing, to me, all that is good and hopeful about Barbershop today.

Not one of the quartets on stage Saturday would have been there had the elements of the FATHER-SON-GRANDSON CHORUS not been at work in their lives in years past. The passing of a singing tradition, the enabling of some musical education, the exposure to singing as a lifelong joy didn't begin with the quartets singing on Saturday night — it began, for every man on stage, with an influence from some father-son-grandson chorus sometime in their past.

Our hobby and in fact our Society depends on this kind of influence and tradition continuing in the lives of hundreds and thousands of children around the world if Barbershop harmony — and vocal music in general — are to continue to influence our culture. SingAmerica/SingCanada was created just for this purpose — to provide a vehicle to focus resources.

The Young Men In Harmony program, too, clearly seeks to continue these traditions. The Harmony Foundation is another tool made available to us through our Society towards this end. Channeling funds from the endowment in the form of grants for SingAmerica/SingCanada projects allows chapters and districts to un-

dertake ambitious projects that continue this "Father/Son Chorus" tradition in communities around our nation.

Yes, Saturday night was a wonderful experience. I was glad to be reminded of the brilliant scope of work we all do as members of this vibrant and important Society we call SPEBSQSA. And thanks to all of the men on stage for showing me so vividly all that is right and good about what we do. Thanks, too, for reminding me that I have a role and a responsibility to continue the influence that brought me to this table.

While I may never sing at the top of the quartet ranks, I sure can help influence future singers by what I do today as a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society. My time, my resources, and my money — invested wisely through the opportunities provided by my chapter, my district, and my Society — will return fourfold.

And that's why I love this hobby — that, and the ringing chords! ■

Pioneer District directory update

Please note the following changes to the 2000 Pioneer District Directory:

- Don Bazely phone: 705-759-8958
- Holland Chapter President Jack C. Oonk email: JCOonk@wmol.com
- Holland Chapter VP of Chapter Development James Hall email: JamesRHall@hotmail.com
- Holland Chapter meets at the Park Theater, 248 S. River Ave.
- Holland Chapter Treasurer is Paul Bekker

Here's the Pitch

Raleigh Bloch, Executive & Member Services VP

What did Pat do?



Raleigh Bloch

Hey! I see you're going to write your Troubadour article. I hope you're going to tell us about what Patrick Tucker-Kelly did while he was in the Pioneer

District. Well, as a matter of fact, that's just what I was planning to do. I think you'll find it quite interesting.

As you will recall, Pat was to visit communities that don't have chapters. Prior to getting there, I had set up appointments with the local mayors, Chambers of Commerce, radio stations, etc. *That must have been tough.* Actually it wasn't too bad. A lot of phone calls, but it was surprising how cooperative they were. *You mean to tell me that they were interested in having a Barbershop chorus in their community?* You bet! Let me tell you how it went in just one town — Three Rivers. I happened to spend time with Pat on that day to get a feel of what happens.

Our first appointment was a radio interview on WKLM. We met with the station manager and then went into the studio and were interviewed "live." We told the community about the Society and that we were here to start a new chapter. We gave telephone numbers where we could be contacted. *This didn't cost anything?* No, and some of the interviews lasted close to an hour.

Next it was off to the Chamber of Commerce. We found that the head of the C of C was not in. So we talked to the assistant. She was very helpful. She rattled off a bunch of names of singers. She also had a name of a potential director and someone to contact about a rehearsal hall. *Wow, that was great!* Yes and it keeps getting better.

The next stop was the mayor of Three Rivers. Pat introduced himself and told him that he was there to evaluate the community to determine if it was the right kind of community to support a chapter. For a mayor, those were fighting words. The mayor immediately started telling about other groups in the community and festivities that go on throughout the year. Pat asked if he knew of anybody who liked to sing. The mayor listed off a few more names of singers. Pat asked for other musicians and music teachers and got some more names.

Why did he want other musicians or music teachers? Other musicians and music teachers know singers. *That's neat. I didn't think of that.* When asked about a potential director, the same name that was mentioned at the C of C came up. In fact, his business was just around the corner. When asked about rehearsal halls, he also had a few suggestions.

The next stop was at the business of the potential director. We went in and introduced ourselves and told him that we were there to start a Barbershop chapter in Three

Rivers. He invited us up to his office. He initially said he wasn't interested in starting a new chapter. We knew that he was currently directing a mixed group of 63 people called the GREAT AMERICAN PATRIOT CHORUS. We asked him about it and he told us that it meets only for a couple of months in the year to put on a show. Their show was on the same weekend as our convention. We talked for about 45 minutes.

After learning that he was a Barbershopper at one time and noticing the picture of his quartet called THE FOUR DOORSMEN, he said he would be willing to direct, but did not want to be the organizational guy. Bingo! He also said he would share the names from his GREAT AMERICAN PATRIOT CHORUS for potential members.

Great! What did you do then? The next stop was to a church suggested by the C of C for a rehearsal hall. We talked to the pastor for about 30 minutes and got a few more names of singers, but he felt his church schedule was too full to accommodate another night for a new chorus. He did, however, add to the list of potential sites where we might meet. *So he just didn't say no and show you the door?* No, in fact every place we went they were very helpful and willing to spend the time. This was all accomplished on the morning of April 5.

Then it was on to South Haven to do it all over again. *Is this what Pat did in every town?* Basically. But in Big Rapids, I set up for Pat to do a demonstration of Barbershop with the men's choir at Ferris State University. I also arranged for the Director of Michigan Schools Vocal Music Association to be at this demo. It generated a lot of interest.

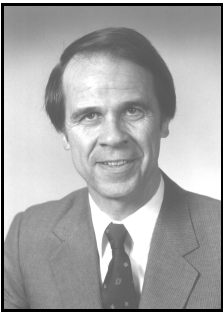
At a meeting later that day, the

(Continued on page 22)

Public Relating

Doug Pearson, Marketing & Public Relations VP

Marketing a key ingredient for successful chapter show



Doug Pearson

If you were at our recent and successful district convention in Battle Creek, I know you saw a lot of marketing and PR in action. These two ingredients are hard to avoid because both of them intertwine with just about every aspect of any Barbershop activity. Performance ... singing ... media treatment ... chapter attendance ... Barbershop shop ... community response. They all rise and fall on the different levels of marketing and PR skills.

In talking about marketing and PR to our members at the convention, I detected a concern about filling the house for chapter shows — empty-seat phobia as some call it. Although show attendance was considered good in many cases, there seemed to be the challenge that “we can do better” in reaching the goal of standing room only.

Along these lines, I thought Mid-Atlantic District’s Dan Dekowski had some absolutely sterling ideas on show marketing in his district’s recent newsletter. They’re worth repeating: Make the guys in your chapter work for their complimentary tickets by giving them a freebie for every nine that they sell. They need to sell only nine tickets

to bring their wives for free. Another 18 and they can bring two friends or other family members, etc.

It also rewards the guys who do the most work selling. I (Dekowski) was once able to have the team sell 1,700 tickets for a chapter show that had never sold more than 600 tickets by using this device and other incentives. The guy who sold the most got a prize and anyone selling 30 or more also got a gift.

If you still feel that you will have some empty seats, don’t let them stay empty. Although you can give them away to senior centers, you can also sell them at wholesale to groups looking for fundraising programs. Churches always have need for money and can sell 10 or 20 tickets if there is something in it for them. Half price is a reasonable wholesale profit for the chapter compared to empty seats (don’t be greedy).

Get the local high school to participate in your show, preferably with an a cappella group. You can also use tickets to introduce all of the high school music teachers in your area to our art form. It will be necessary to telephone them, one on one, and offer them tickets. Prepare a script before you call so you have a smooth sales pitch ready to convince them that they should experience this authentic American musical art form for themselves.

Use your imagination; it is better to give seats away than to let them go empty.

Dekowski concludes: If there are any empty seats in the house, shame on your chapter. It is a matter of hard work! Good luck in selling out all of your future shows.

A lot of good ideas there, Dan. Now here are a few other thoughts regarding show marketing: One of the best marketing tools is your show itself. The quality of your chorus singing, the excitement your show package generates and how it’s executed, the quality performance of your chapter quartets, and the quality performance of your guest quartets. If you achieve a good show with good flow, those in attendance will want to return next year — and they’ll tell others about it.

Do you promote your show with your local media or is it a well-kept secret? A few simple things like newspaper ads, articles in your local papers, and interviews on radio and TV can go along way toward heightening the interest that will lead to a sell-out crowd. As the old show tune goes, “There’s No Business Like Show Business,” especially if that chapter show of yours is performed in front of an appreciative, capacity audience. When that happens, your Standing Room Only achievements will rightfully deserve a Standing Ovation. ■

Chapter Coaching

Doran McTaggart, Chapter Support/Leadership VP

Wanted: Chapter coach applicants



Doran McTaggart

As of April 11, 2000, our Society's 62nd birthday, the Chapter Support and Leadership Training Program (CSLT)

will receive some major modifications that will benefit our Pioneer District and its Association of Chapters. CSLT Chapter Coach Applicant training will be conducted in each district during the fall COTS school by the trained CSLT COTS faculty instructors.

The advantage to our district is that we are no longer limited to a predetermined number of chapter coach applicants to be trained. A member of the Society CSLT committee and/or I will evaluate the training, share the responsibility of applicants to candidate status and provide feed back to the CSLT committee for future training improvements. Our district now has the major responsibility for making certain we have the necessary number of qualified, self-starting applicants at our 2000 COTS school ready to be trained. Since the change in format is so new, I will discuss it with our district officers at the convention and share its contents with them.

How can you become a chapter coach applicant? What things are

we looking for? An applicant should have been an active member in his chapter. He should have held a chapter office. A past president would be an asset. Someone who has moved on to the district level and has proven himself there would be a positive attribute. A person with a positive attitude, a willingness to assist a chapter to become the best it can be, and an eagerness to become trained and qualified would all be desirable traits.

Of our current seven chapter coaches, all have held chapter offices and four have been district officers. I'm looking for SIX self-starters who would like to make a difference and are willing to be trained at COTS on December 1-3, 2000.

If you feel this program is for you, call me immediately at (519) 948-0637. The drive to license and charter more chapters across the Society means that we will need more chapter coaches to provide the support that these chapters will need. We have three licensed chapters currently in Pioneer, with more on the drawing board.

We need CC applicants from all geographic areas of our district, so don't hesitate to call. All current chapter coach candidates and certified chapter coaches are urged to attend the 2000 COTS school to sharpen their skills and improve their knowledge of the program. ■

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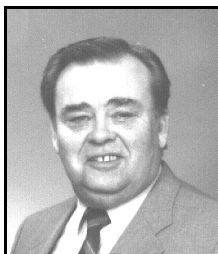
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Sing ...

Take Note

Fred Kienitz, Chorus Director Development VP

It seems strange that I have set up the next few reports to the *Troubadour* so as to hopefully help you directors (both old and new) receive some useful and current information to assist you in your planning for further growth within your respective chapters.



Fred Kienitz

So, what do you do to me? You come up with two brand new faces who are directing two of the top five choruses. Please allow me to compliment all of the top five in that it has been almost like eons since we had that quality of singing at this level and from five different choruses. However, it might do well to continue on to the second five ensembles and add a few kudos here also.

Gentlemen, this has been the most exciting contest I've witnessed in several years. Could be that Hector was just a pup the last time we had so many chapters producing this level of performing quality at a Pioneer contest.

We are still a long way from being able to blow our own horn and challenge other districts with an across-the-board statement that, percentage-wise, we are as good as most districts.

BUT, I will tell you that every member and every director of this district who competed this past contest are winners in my book. This district's choruses are growing at a fairly rapid rate and I am proud to be part of this overall effort. Every chapter needs to know that

my team and I are prepared to provide help to all of you. All you need do is to call.

Now, after such an exciting weekend I just know that you want a very brief rest so that you can get back into the harness and prepare for the next performance.

How about giving your director a small gift of your appreciation and one that he or she will find invaluable in preparing for future rehearsals for upcoming shows, public performances, and competition. Our Society has published a wonderful textbook entitled "Directing a Barbershop Chorus." This book details methods, techniques, and philosophies involved in directing. There are 27 areas of study, all of which refer directly to the teaching and directing of Barbershop ensembles.

I highly recommend that your chapter board order this outstanding text. The price is only \$19.95.

Many contributors to the book are members and/or renowned musicians in the field of Barbershop or vocal music, including the late, great Fred Waring.

I was privileged to hear Mr. Waring's comment when he stood in the wings of an international convention ready to receive an award of appreciation. A Society member had just told him that we use a great deal of his teaching methodology, but he must understand that we are just amateurs. Mr. Waring smiled and, as he began to enter the stage, he turned slightly and said, "Amateurs my a--!"

Now, blow an F# and let's sing a tag! ■

What is director certification and why do we need it?

By Ron Knickerbocker
for the Chorus Director
Development Committee

Submitted by Fred Kienitz

It has long been acknowledged by the leaders of the Barbershop Harmony Society that the most important difficulty we face, when it comes to recruitment and retention of members, is the shortage of qualified chorus directors.

Certainly almost every chapter has someone who stands in front of them every week and waves his or her arms while the rest of us sing. Unfortunately, all too many of us got that position, not because of our vast wealth of musical knowledge or our consummate hand skills, but because we were *willing to do it*.

A few years ago a group of very knowledgeable chorus directors was appointed to discuss ways of solving this difficult problem. They came up with ideas to help chorus directors in several different areas, and some of those ideas have been implemented over the last few years.

One of those ideas was to prepare a list of things every good chorus director should know and be able to do. This led to a development of classes to aid the director in his quest to improve his qualifications. These classes are taught at the annual Harmony College/Directors College.

The plan is that directors will

(Continued on page 23)

You want to sing in a quartet — right!

By Glenn Van Tassell,
International Quartet Champion
1966 – Auto Towners
1971 – Gentlemen's Agreement

For some of us, it may seem that it is the easiest thing in the world to start up a quartet. I mean ... well, you know, we just call some people and suggest a get-together and a quartet is born.

Some of us have done exactly that, but clearly it is not always that easy. If it were easy, every person who would like to sing in a quartet would be joyfully engaged in bouncing those chords around the room.

Why is it that some find it so easy to be quartet involved and others don't seem able to make it happen? The reasons are as many and varied as each of us is different from everyone else. Let's try to understand some of them.

Think about the capable, but rather new Barbershopper who has not yet established the credentials and who is not quite sure about the wisdom of blurting out to someone, "Hey, let's start a quartet." Many of us might hesitate to stick our necks out quite that far. Perhaps the best plan would be to wait for them to call you. Well, guess what? It is likely that they are waiting for the very same thing.

And what about the person who would like to sing in a quartet but is not sure about measuring up? Some of us might assume that potential quartet partners may be too busy, too old, too young, tied up with other singers, or in some other way unavailable.

Incidentally, let's not assume that all potential quartet mates must end up being the best of friends. That might be the case and it would be

great, but that is not necessarily what this is about. What then is an aspiring quartet singer to do?

First and foremost, it is an absolute must that anyone desiring to sing in a quartet needs to develop the necessary singing and performing skills to make it possible to do the work. Simply stated, though quartet singing is certainly a group activity, individual singers must bring their best to the quartet — **all of the time, every time.**

But now let us assume that you are prepared for all of that, yet you are facing one or more of the problems noted above. How do we make it happen?

Set up a meeting: Put out a bulletin — a letter of inquiry — a notice to be posted on bulletin boards of surrounding chapters or perhaps mailed to Barbershoppers within a reasonable driving distance (yes, you can travel a few miles to sing).

Tell the world that there will be a QUARTET FORMATION FESTIVAL. Get the word out to every possible participant. Specify in your bulletin that anyone, at any level of proficiency who has an interest in singing in a quartet, is welcome. Develop a questionnaire for each participant to complete at the beginning of each meeting.

Determine such things as experience levels, the part each person sings, the sort of quartet desired (show-only, competitive, comedy, local-only, whatever). Determine the amount of time each singer believes is available to develop a quartet (this element could change materially when a really good combination is found), and more.

Hold the meeting at the home of some very involved Barbershopper

or at any other suitable meeting place. Secure the services of qualified coaches, chorus directors, certified judges and experienced quartet people to be on hand to help with the process.

And what is the process? Just this. With the guidance of the coaches, set up several possible quartets, rotating people, matching vocal quality and areas of interest. Start with singing "Barber Pole Cat" arrangements until combinations with interesting potential are established.

Sit down together with the coaches/guides and talk about mutual interests. Share thoughts about the quartet experience and the challenges it offers. Arrange for future meetings with each quartet on its own or with the help of a coach and thus a quartet is born. With any luck, several quartets could be born.

Does this plan work? In 1960, the AUTO TOWNERS was formed in very much the same way. I had always sung baritone, but, under the guidance of respected coaches, I ended up singing lead. We became International Champions just six years later.

Think about it; how better to locate people who really want to be part of a quartet? Incidentally, it should be noted that I retreated back to my beloved baritone part when Al Rehkop and I had the opportunity to sing with a lead named Drayton Justus and a bass named Bob Whitledge. It doesn't get much better than that.

Folks, the whole point of this article is this. If you want to sing in a quartet, there is only one way to do it and that is **to do it!** ■

Bulletin, PR awards (Continued from page 3)

during 1999 included promotion of the annual show, an open house, a chicken dinner fund-raiser, and a series of Christmas appearances. In addition to promoting activities in 10 newspapers and the electronic media, he designed and produced ads, fliers, mailers, ticket mail-order forms, a show program cover and a media fax form.

Smith prepared a tour bus package for the annual show and worked with restaurants to coordinate bus meal packages. A pontoon boat party, during which members sang for shoreline residents, resulted in a half-page news story and picture.

In working with the media, Smith arranged for interviews and quartets on TV, produced a video of past shows for TV, wrote a fact sheet for use by radio and TV interviewers, and designed coffee mug TV give-aways promoting the annual show.

He prepared a media-contact database and a computerized show patron mailing list. Mailing lists were expanded by exchanges with the Sweet Adelines, Kiwanians, and show talent.

Smith began promoting Society service projects after he realized he needed to lose weight to become a better singer. In a "Win-Win Weight Loss Program," \$1 would be donated to Harmony Foundation for each pound lost by chapter members. Other Pioneer District chapters were challenged to do the same.

And looking toward the future, he compiled a three-page document to guide successor PR chairmen.

Darrell Richmond, Huron Valley
Richmond, a retiree who joined the chapter seven years ago, formalized

his interest in barbershop promotion upon volunteering two years ago as chapter development vice president.

He organized a team that has planned several shows and guest nights based on plans and timelines Richmond developed. Regular team meetings are held and team members make newspaper, radio and TV contacts. He urges the team "to seek out new and creative ways to promote the chapter's events and seek out new supporters in the community," wrote chapter music director Lynne Peirce, who submitted the nomination. Results have included several articles in five newspapers, a public-access TV show, a promotion in AAA's "Michigan Living" magazine, and increased ticket sales and public recognition.

Contacts throughout 1998 and 1999 with the editor of a county senior citizens' newspaper ultimately resulted in several interviews with chapter personnel, a private performance for the reporter, and a two-page article and color photo timed to promote the chapter's annual show. The reporter's experience also "created a passionate fan of Barbershop harmony," Peirce wrote.

Richmond's contacts with a weekly newspaper reporter led to an invitation to make a Barbershop harmony presentation to high school students who had formed a chorus with their fathers. The reporter is a member of that chorus. Peirce said it appears this will result in further presentations.

"Though quiet spoken and unobtrusive, Richmond has a patient and persistent soft sell that has proven to be the key," Peirce wrote, referring to his "unique ability to develop relationships and touch the

hearts of the seasoned and seemingly untouchable media."

The chapter elected Richmond as Barbershopper of the Year an unprecedented two consecutive times.

Members of his PR team include John Paglione, Tom Peirce, Hal Thompson, and Tom Skylis.

PROBE programs

Coordinator of the Pioneer District PROBE awards programs is Jim Styer of Battle Creek, a former PROBE vice president. PROBE (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors) is a self-supporting membership organization within the Society.

Begin preparing now to enter the PROTY contest for calendar year 2000. With the written nomination, you will want to submit biographical information on the nominee; commentary on planning, execution and follow-up; and copies of pertinent documents (news releases, newspaper clippings, correspondence, printed programs, thank you letters, etc.)

The PR effect does not necessarily depend on the success of the events themselves; rather, it is judged on the amount of actual PR (spreading the gospel) that was accomplished.

PROBE membership is not required to enter the contest, but it is encouraged. Membership includes a quarterly bulletin, *PROBE* *moter*, which has news and tips for PR officers and bulletin editors.

Your chapter secretary can sign you up by contacting Kenosha. Or you can sign yourself up by sending \$5 annual dues — a legitimate chapter expense — to Brian Lynch, PROBE Secretary-Treasurer, 6315 Harmony Lane, Kenosha, WI 53143. ■

A View from the Top (Continued from page 5)

the district. There is one change, however. I have attached the verse written and arranged by Pioneer great John Hill. I believe he hailed from Lansing. The tag is also his. I hope to have learning tapes available before the end of the month to assist you in learning the additions to "Story of a Rose." Watch the PioNet for that news. The verse and chorus lends an entirely new interest to this song. The 101 singers had such a great time (we sang shotgun) that I am asking you all to make an effort to repeat the experience in the fall.

There will be a few new faces on the Pioneer Board next year. Some of our stalwart board members have expressed a desire to step down and make way for new blood and, maybe, some different ideas. The elections will take place at the HOD meeting in the fall. I would really like to see EVERY chapter represented at the next House of Delegates meeting. You have to vote in the new board.

Three Pioneer Barbershoppers became eligible for their fifty-year pins: Gordon Kesterke, Jack Oonk, and Bob Wisdom. Sincere congratulations to you guys. Pioneer now has 23 50-year veterans.

Sing from the heart or don't bother (Mike Slamka). ■

Much of the material on the convention, along with complete scores, appeared immediately after the convention on the PioNet, the district's e-mail list.

To sign up for PioNet (no charge), send your name, chapter affiliation, and e-mail address to jimstyler@home.com.

Great Lakes Chorus (Continued from page 1)

time with 34 men. Its scores in these contests has risen from 704 to 758 to 812.

When a well-wisher congratulated Peirce, she hugged him. "I didn't have anything to do with it," he responded. "I know," she said; "I'm just happy."

Saginaw Bay Chapter

In its first competition in exactly 10 years, Saginaw-Bay's HARBOR SOUNDS CHORUS placed fifth with 20 men on stage. The chorus scored 740 points; that compares with 749 points in 1990, when it placed eighth with 26 men under the name of the TIMBERLAND CHORDSMEN. The chorus was led by Nan Wardin, who also directs the Sweet Adelines AUBURN CHORUS. She said the chapter decided to compete only about 10 weeks earlier and called on her.

Former director Bob Winters said: "She brought her enthusiasm into the chorus and got us all pumped up. The guys also pay a helluva lot closer attention to her than they ever did to me (I can't figure out why)!"

The chorus used a repertoire song and Wardin taught "Listen to that Dixie Band" in two-and-a-half months. Nearly half of the chorus members had never competed before, "But," Winters said, "we had some real veterans on the stage and most of those guys have been quartet men."

Other top placements this spring were Kalamazoo at third and Grosse Pointe at fourth. The second- through fifth-place choruses also were the champions in their respective plateaus, which are based on chapter membership.

Other chorus contestants, in order of their scoring, were Holland, Detroit-Oakland, Traverse City, Battle Creek, Monroe North, Windsor, Pontiac-Waterford, Rochester, Gratiot County, and Muskegon. Society Board Member Don Challman of the Land O' Lakes District told the convention committee that he was quite pleased with the performances of the small choruses.

Joe Barbershop Chorus

In what may be the largest chorus in the history of the Pioneer District stage, the JOE BARBERSHOPPER CHORUS opened the competition as mike-testers with 105 singers. The chorus, directed by Lansing's Jeff Gougeon, included some 50 men from Lansing and about 20 from Rochester. All competing and non-competing Barbershoppers were invited to join the chorus.

The chorus was announced as representing the Pioneer, Illinois, Land O' Lakes, Sunshine, and Dixie districts. Its renditions of "Wait Till the Sun Shines, Nellie" and "From the First Hello ..." received a standing from the judges.

Father-Son-Grandson Chorus

The first father-son-grandson chorus brought 27 men and boys to the stage ... and sentimental tears to the eyes of several of the singers and listeners. The chorus included three grandsons, ranging in age from 11 years to seven months.

Jack Slamka directed the first number. During much of the song, babe-in-arms Dylan Slamka was held by his dad, Mark, and entertained himself by pulling on his Uncle Mike's jacket lapel. When Mike Slamka took over directing for the second number, "Singing Here with Dad," Jack sang with the chorus and the youngster turned his attention to Grandpa's tie. ■

Election of District Officers

- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Executive Vice President
- Vice President of Member Services
- Vice President of Chapter Support and Leadership Training
- Vice President of Chorus Director Development
- Vice President of Contest and Judging
- Vice President of Events
- Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations
- Vice President of Music and Performance
- Vice President of Youth Outreach
- Society Board Member (three-year term)

Notice of nomination procedures

The election of the district officers listed above will take place at the fall district convention in the year 2000. The president is currently serving a two-year term. The Society board member elected will represent both Pioneer District and Land O' Lakes District for a three-year term.

The district by-laws, in effect since January 1, 1997, require that all nominations of persons for district office be reviewed by and be acceptable to the appropriate Society committee. This procedure must be followed for nominations anticipated to be made from the floor at the fall House of Delegates Meeting as well as for nominations

by the District Nominating Committee.

Persons nominated for district office must be active members of a district chapter. Persons who belong only to Frank Thorne Chapter are ineligible to run for a district office.

Therefore, nomination from the floor at the fall House of Delegates Meeting of any person to fill a district office must be preceded by submission of the potential nominee's written permission, resume, and credentials to the District Nominating Committee by June 1, 2000 (or as soon as possible after this notice is published) for forwarding to the appropriate Society Committee for review and acceptance. Nomination from the floor of any person for any district office will be disallowed if this procedure has not been followed.

Additionally, nomination from the floor of any individual whose name has been submitted to the appropriate Society committee and who has been found not qualified will not be disallowed, but the nomination from the floor must be accompanied by the Society committee's reasons for disapproval and its recommendations, if any, as to what steps can be taken to make the proposed candidate acceptable to the Society committee.

SPEBSQSA, Inc.
Pioneer District Laws and Regulations Committee - May 3, 2000

Editorial

My most unforgettable district convention

This past district convention was a most memorable one for me, unfortunately in a negative way. I had looked forward to it for several months. It promised to be a top-notch event with strong chorus competition, and quartet competition featuring four out-of-district quartets on top of a powerful line-up of district four-somes. And I had to miss it!

I injured my left knee at the McCamly Plaza Hotel on the Friday afternoon of the convention weekend. The hotel staff, along with many fellow Barbershoppers, were extremely helpful to see that I was well cared for.

I'm now able to walk unaided and it doesn't look like I'll require surgery.

My thanks to Earl Berry, Doug Pearson, Austin and Martha Quinn, Jim and Peg Styer, and Bob and Lucille Wolf for their assistance and prayers. I also thank the many Barbershoppers and their families for their kindnesses.

I hope to be able to attend many Barbershop conventions and competitions in my life and be able to remember most of them. But certainly none will be remembered as this one will be.

Gary

Barbershopping
The world's happiest hobby!



Quartet Champions Association

Al Fisk, Secretary

Greetings from the Quartet Champions Association. As the current scribe, I will be doing a regular column in the *Troub* to keep y'all hip regarding QCA doin's.

Our ensemble met during the Battle Creek gathering and promptly elected Mr. Russ Seely as our new president in lieu of the passing of our beloved brother, Mr. Bill Wickstrom.

We also discussed our upcoming fall show, district quartet promotion, coaching, roster updates, and membership pins/badges. Special kudos go to Russ, Kenny Gibson, Jamie Carey, Mike Slamka, and Denny Gore for their previous efforts on our behalf.

Former champs in attendance: Frank Bateson, Raleigh Bloch, Dean - Don - Dorn Burrill, Jamie

Carey, Al Fisk, Kenny Gibson, Gene Hanover, Wayne Kinde, Brian Kaufman, Bruce LaMarte, Joel Mills, Craig Pollard, Russ Seely, Johnny Wearing, Scott Whipple, Bob Winters, and Bob Wisdom (along with Bonnie Fisk, Shirley Seely, and Marge Wearing). Sending howdies and regrets via the internet/snail: Ron Du Montheir, Denny Gore, Lee Hanson, Bob Hartley, Thom Hine, Linda (Len) Johnson (get well soon, Lenny), Drayton Justus, and Glenn Van Tassell.

Wow! What a fantastic chorus this list of guys would make!

Future columns will include bios of past championship quartets as well as show updates. As Mike Slamka preaches, sing from the heart. God Bless y'all. ■

Former Pioneer champs in the news

By District PR VP Doug Pearson

A couple of well-known Pioneer District quartets — and quartet members — were part of a “Double-Gold Winners” article appearing in the recent “On the QT,” the Society newsletter for SPEB-SQSA-registered quartets.

The article said: “Quartet members to become double gold medal winners the quickest were Glenn Van Tassell and Al Rehkop. Glenn sang lead in the 1966 AUTO TOWNERS and baritone in the 1971 GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT. Al sang tenor in both of these quartets.”

Here are some other items from the article: The first Barbershopper to become a double-gold medal winner was Mo Rector. He sang bass in the 1958 GAY NOTES and 1969 MARK IV.

The first quartet to have all its members become double-medal winners singing the same voice parts was the 1987 champion INTERSTATE RIVALS. Joe Connelly went on to win a second time in 1992 with KEEPSAKE; Kipp Buckner repeated in 1993 with THE GAS HOUSE GANG; and Paul Gilman and Jay Hawkins got their second golds in 1995 with MARQUIS.

Bass Jeff Oxley snagged two in 1984 and 1990 with RAPSCALLIONS and ACOUSTIX, respectively. Brian Beck scored gold twice with 1973 DEALER'S CHOICE and 1983 SIDE STREET RAMBLERS, singing baritone and lead.

Don Barnick won his two as tenor in 1979 with GRANDMA'S BOYS and bass with KEEPSAKE in 1992. ■

“Brother, can you spare a dime?”

How is your chapter using the Harmony Foundation General Fund 2000 campaign slogan, “Brother, can you spare a dime?” Have your members made a commitment to support our important service projects by contributing a dime a day to the Harmony Foundation General Fund?

SingAmerica and SingCanada grants have encouraged thousands of children across North America to sing. Dozens of kids receive partial scholarships at Heartspring. The story of Barbershop harmony is carried far and wide through the Heritage Hall Museum. All of this

is possible because of Barbershoppers' contributions to the Harmony Foundation General Fund.

Every chapter donation, every quartet donation, and every member's donation will make a difference. A Harmony Foundation pin is sent to every individual who makes a \$25 or greater donation. Each chapter can win a Harmony Foundation award if its total annual giving equals \$25 or greater per member. But the real prize is the difference Barbershoppers are making in the world.

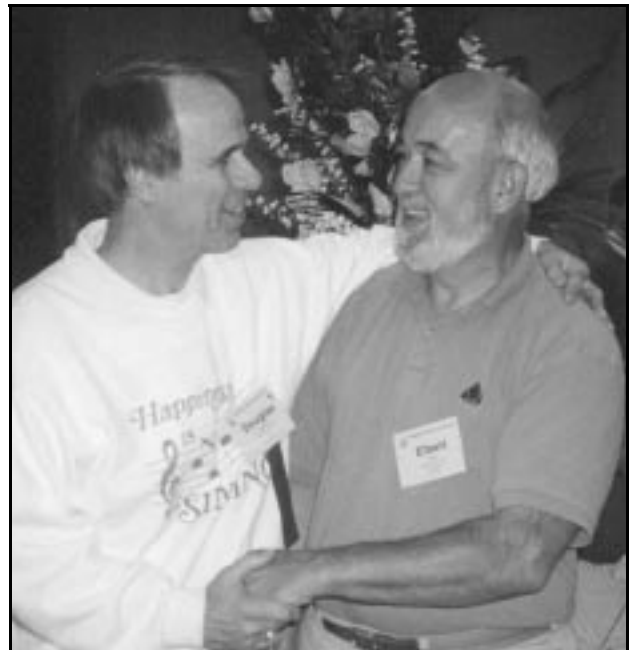
So, “Brother, can you spare a dime?”

Spring Convention 2000



How do you spell your last name? Host chapter DOC is kept busy registering the many Barbershoppers attending the convention.

(Right) Elbert Ford, editor of the Traverse City Chapter's "Chorister," is congratulated by District Public Relations VP Doug Pearson (left) for winning the district's 1999 Bulletin Editor of the Year.



"Mr. Bush League," Hank Hedges (right) explains the benefits of experiencing Bush League 2000 to convention attendees.

By scoring 2,049 points, EXCALIBUR earned the right to represent the Land O' Lakes District in Kansas City this July. (L to r) Tenor John Moksnes, lead Greg Dolphin, bass John Korby, and bari Brent Graham.



Comedy quartet FOOL'S GOLD: (From left) Bari Joel Mills, bass Mark Kettner, lead Dan Casamatta, and tenor Bill Mousel.

Fifth-place quartet GALLERY: (From left) Tenor Art Cardy, lead David Hundt, bass Larry Wise, and bari Larry Parker.



Convention photos
by Paul Howe and
Doug Pearson

Spring Convention 2000



Ryan Benedict (above), grandson of Kalamazoo's Stu Benedict, sings in the Father-Son-Grandson Chorus. (Right) Mark Slamka's son, Dylan, plays with Grandpa Jack Slamka's necktie during the Father-Son-Grandson Chorus performance.



Holland's Art Lane (above right) is congratulated by Jim Styer for finishing first in the district bulletin contest. Paul Smith of Flint (left) earned a first-place PR award. Awards story on page 3.

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Power Play

(Continued from page 1)

POWER PLAY chose an arrangement of "My Foolish Heart" with solos that showcased the musicality of the individual voices, most often heard only as part of a well-blended family unit. One wag commented, "No act should have to follow kids, pets, or



POWER PLAY: (from left) Bari Mark Slamka, lead Mike Slamka, bass Jack Slamka, and (seated) tenor Don Slamka.

POWER PLAY."

POWER PLAY'S score ranked it sixth — just three points out of fourth — among quartets from other districts also qualifying to compete internationally.

OTHER QUARTETS

District quartets placing second and third in scoring were WJBC and PHILATOGA TOWNSHIP. That continued a trend, as they had placed first and second in their first competition on the Pioneer stage last fall. Bells tinkled in the audience as WJBC came out in red sweatshirts and winter scarves, carrying a Christmas tree and a snowman figure. After their Christmassy numbers, the bells resumed, leading master of ceremonies Doran McTaggart to call out, "Oh, knock it off!"

Others placing in the finals, in order, were former district champ UPSTAGE SOUND, GALLERY, PRIZM, FOUR-MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR, and GRAND PRIX. As finals mike-tester, FOOL'S GOLD came out with a straw hat that had been battered in the semi-final set. The quartetters referred to a "barely awake" judge, yelled out at judge Roger Lewis, and sang that they would "make a fool of ourselves tonight." The judges broke and tossed their pencils.

The quartet, using large cue cards, then had the audience and judges singing and clapping along with them. FOUR-MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR showed it could go beyond the hunting and fishing theme it used in its competition debut last fall. Included were a few parodies and "Basin Street Blues."

NON-DISTRICT QUARTETS

The contest was further enlivened by four quartets from other districts. They were singing for the minimum 1,824 points needed to represent their districts in the Society competition. But their scoring didn't affect the scoring of the 15 Pioneer District quartets.

EXCALIBUR, from the Minneapolis area, scored 2,049 points to qualify to represent the Land O' Lakes District in competition this summer. That was only three points more than POWER PLAY.

Also going to Kansas City will be SHARPER IMAGE from the Illinois District. It scored 1,880 points, the third-highest number in the competition. Quartet baritone is Kirk Wood of Paw Paw, a member of 1994 Pioneer District champion GENUINE BLEND and former director of Battle Creek's CEREAL CITY CHORUS. Last summer in international competition, EXCALIBUR placed sixth, POWER PLAY seventh,

and SHARPER IMAGE twenty-second.

The other two out-of-district quartets singing in Pioneer didn't score high enough in the semifinals to make the cut. THE HIGHWAYMEN, from Barrie and Scarborough in the Ontario District, would have ranked it fourth in its own contest. Two of the quartetters hold dual memberships in Pioneer: lead Mark Phelps in the Macomb Chapter and bass Mike McClary in Grosse Pointe.

Quartet 2BAD4U from Columbus, Ohio, in the Johnny Appleseed District, would have placed 13th in its own district.

COLLEGE QUARTET

PRIVATELY FUNDED from Hillsdale College again won the right to represent the district in the International college quartet contest this summer. The quartet scored 693 points singing "Hello, Mary Lou" and "Mistakes." The score was significantly higher than the 604 points it earned last spring in its first district competition, at that time singing "Sweet Adeline" and "Love/Eyes Medley." In International competition last summer, the quartet placed 18th with those same songs.

NEW IMAGE?

A new image of Barbershopping may be developing. On the Pioneer District stage this spring, WJBC came out in light green pinstripe suits, white ties and shirts. Later, SHARPER IMAGE from the Illinois District sported double-breasted blue pinstripe suits, black and white shoes and long, gold pocket-watch chains. In the finals, PHILATOGA TOWNSHIP quartetters turned the clock back with black pinstripes. ■

Todd's tips

(Continued from page 4)

sending about 30 percent of our total appearances. After all, we are Barbershoppers, and this is just a hobby.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

38. I see a time when more Barbershop singers show up at rehearsal with more than just their music, but also include audio or video recorders and a pencil to capture comments or suggestions made at rehearsal and allow the time they spend between rehearsal to be more productive.

39. I see a time when more singers realize the importance of hydration (drinking lots of water). Joe Connelly is one of Barbershop's most gifted vocalists and coaches and there's a good reason why you rarely see him without a gallon of water in one hand.

OTHER MEMBERS OF THE TEAM

40. I see a time when more and more quartets and choruses are blessed to spend time with an experienced coach. It is a very difficult job to critique your performance from within.

41. I hope for a day when more of us REALLY appreciate the work of some of our Society's most gifted vocal arrangers and express our thanks at every opportunity. The same could be said for the work of our chorus directors, section leaders, administrators, and coaches.

42. I hope for a day that Barbershop choruses no longer concern themselves with the gender of a prospective director and choose the most talented and available candidate for the job, without gender bias clouding their judgment.

DEEP THOUGHTS

43. I think it would be fun for many of us, at some point in the future, to be able to sit in the audience and rate the performances of a group of quartets comprised solely of Society judges.

44. Don't we all hope for a time at some point in the future where we can all meet for the annual ceremonial burning of our \$7.00 patent leather chorus shoes, perhaps on the Sunday morning of each International convention?

45. I see a time when the quartets on the annual AIC show actually sing more Barbershop and are allocated more than 10 minutes of time on stage.

46. One day I envision a "kinder, gentler" Harmonet with thousands more Barbershop enthusiasts contributing to the discussions.

47. I envision a day when having one of our quartets or choruses on national TV is really no big deal.

CLOSING REMARKS

I realize that some of you may interpret certain aspects of my "wish list" to be very "business oriented" and somewhat "serious" for involvement in this "hobby" we call Barbershop.

However, like me, many of you devote countless hours of your time and energy to Barbershopping. If you're going to make that kind of investment, why not take every opportunity to help the Society to become a better and more popular place where men of all ages can come together and enjoy the thrill of singing four-part harmony to an even larger and more appreciative audience. I know THAT is what I intend to continue doing. ■

Beyond the Cat

Some of you who have been wishing for another "Barberpole Cat" type of song collection are now able to order "Harmony Classics."

The Society's Music & Performance Committee, along with assistance from the Music Publications Subcommittee, chose six songs that could also be used as a performance package for a show.

The songs in this package are: "Zip-A-Dee Doo-Dah," "Lazy River," "Little Pal," "This Little Light of Mine/Do Lord Medley," "I'm Sitting On Top Of The World," and "Hello, Mary Lou."

"Harmony Classics" can be ordered as stock no. 6068 for \$6.75. A set of learning tapes, stock no. 4884, will cost \$18.00, or \$5.00 for a single tape.

Order from Harmony Marketplace, 1-800-876-SING, or online: HarmonyMarketplace.com.



Barry Towner

Contact - Canada

1-905-473-2424

Mark Phelps

Contact - USA

1-734-427-8743

or See our Website

<http://members.xoom.com/highwaymen>

100th anniversary of Fred Waring's birth

From Penn State University's Special Collections Library

Fred Waring is known to generations as the "Man Who Taught America How To Sing," "America's Singing Master," and the man who helped make the popular song a classic American art form. He is one of the most fascinating figures in the history of show business. His fans, young and old, are awed by his contributions to the music industry via vaudeville, movies, radio, recordings, Broadway, television, and the concert stage.

Frederic Malcolm Waring was born on June 9, 1900, in Tyrone, Pennsylvania. From his first stage appearance at the age of five to becoming leader of the Boy Scout Drum Corps in his home town of Tyrone, Fred Waring made music.

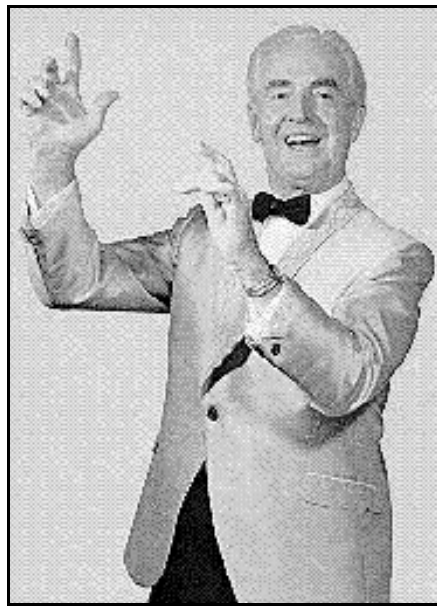
In the twenties, "Waring's Pennsylvanians" played movie theatres from coast to coast. They starred in the first musical motion picture, "Syncopation," then in "Varsity Show," and appearing in the first "talkie" shorts.

In the thirties, "Fred Waring's Pennsylvanians," as a 55-piece jazz orchestra, had an unprecedented six-month run at New York's Roxy Theatre. Their first network radio program, "The Old Gold Show," was followed by the famous "Ford Dealers Show."

In their long history, the Pennsylvanians recorded over 1,500 songs and 100 albums.

Waring wrote songs about every imaginable subject, from his own theme song "I Hear Music" to college fight songs (over 90) and patriotic songs.

To foster better singing techniques, he organized the Fred Waring Choral Workshop in 1947. He



taught and supervised his staff of "working show business professionals" for 39 years, literally right up to the day he died.

To share his wealth of choral arrangements, he established Shawnee Press, Inc., which became one of the world's largest publishers and sellers of choral music.

During the 1960s and '70s, Waring became known as the "King of The Road," touring some 40,000 miles every year, mostly by bus. He completed 69 years with his performing group, a record unequalled in the entertainment field.

On December 15, 1983, President Ronald Reagan, in a White House ceremony, presented Fred Waring the Congressional Gold Medal, the nation's highest award to a civilian. The medal, up to that time, had only been awarded to five entertainers in its 100-year history.

Fred Waring died July 29, 1984, at Penn State, just after videotaping a concert with the Pennsylvanians and completing his summer workshops. ■

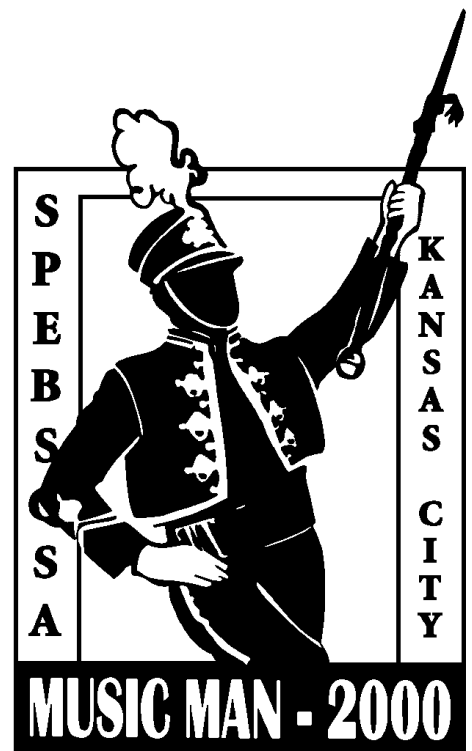
Here's the pitch (Continued from page 7)

Director of the MSVMA suggested that the Pioneer District become a member of the MSVMA for a mere \$40.00 per year. *What the heck would that do for us?* This would give us a list of all of the vocal music teachers in Michigan and access to their library of videotapes on vocal production, directing, chorus movement, seminars, calendar of events, etc. They would even provide us with mailing labels for all of their members if we needed them.

Are we going to join? At the Pioneer District Board meeting, which was held at our Spring Convention in Battle Creek, it was agreed that we would join. This will be a great source of potential directors and a help in our Youth Outreach.

You know, we can do some of those things that Pat did in our own communities, like asking other people if they know someone who likes to sing.

BINGO! ■



Director certification

(Continued from page 10)

sign up for and complete a planned sequence of classes that will allow them to progress toward greater proficiency as musical leaders. As each director satisfies the requirements for "Certified Director" or "Master Director," he will receive a certificate of achievement. His achievement will be celebrated in his chapter and at an appropriate district event.

Obviously, one of our goals is to encourage directors to attend Directors College. There are several reasons for this, not the least of which is to meet other directors who face the same challenges we all do and have an opportunity for a discussion of different approaches they might have tried.

From a personal point of view, I am a lifelong educator as well as a lifelong learner. In every class I attend, either as a teacher or a student, I learn something new or hear of a different approach to some problem I face. Attending Directors College is good for us on many levels: as a social escape, as an educational opportunity, as a chance to build a support network, as an ego-builder when we find that many other directors face the same frustrations we do, or possibly as an ego-deflator when we discover that we haven't handled some situations as well as we could have. In any case, it helps us grow as directors and musicians.


What does the certificate do for you? A certificate has no inherent worth. Having a certificate won't make anyone a better director. The pursuit of that certificate, however,

is sure to do so. It indicates to you and to the members of your chorus that you are trying to become a better director — to attempt to make it possible for the members of your chapter to enjoy this hobby even more.

In all likelihood the chapter will sing and perform better because of your continuing efforts to improve your directing and musical skills. As an added bonus, you get to experience an intense, exhilarating, and re-energizing week at Directors College immersed in Barbershop at its best.

Please give serious consideration to joining the Director Certification Program. Applications are available from your district VP for Chorus Director Development. Your chapter, your district, and your Society will thank you. ■

Sing ... for life!



BILL DAN

A BARBERSHOP QUARTET

Contact: Dan Casamatta
6705 Adaridge Dr. SE
Ada, Michigan 49301
(616) 676-8814
E-Mail: porgyt@aol.com

JOEL MARK



Chapters in Action

Wayne

By Bob Wolf

Nothing much has been heard of the Wayne Chapter for some time, But I'm here to say that we are still alive and SINGING!

We recently made a tour of shopping malls for the Observer Newspapers, celebrating the 50-year anniversary of the City of Livonia.

This year, we took a stab at the Singing Valentine program. It was exciting because we formed two new quartets within the chapter. It generated a lot of enthusiasm, and those that participated thoroughly enjoyed it and are anxious to do it again next year.

This year's annual show, "Through the Years," featured the JURASSIC LARKS and UPSTAGE SOUND along with some chapter quartets and ensembles.



Larry Radley, Wayne Chapter's 1999 Al Fricker Memorial Barbershopper of the Year.

In March, we held our ladies appreciation dinner at Pic A Bone Restaurant, honoring the fine work our ladies have done for the chapter as well as their forgiving nature to their husbands, allowing them the time for

their hobby.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Al Fricker Memorial Barbershopper of the Year Award to LARRY RADLEY. In his 12-plus years in Barbershopping, Larry has held many executive positions and is a credit to the lead section of the chorus. I was proud to be able to present this award to Larry.

Be sure to keep ringing those chords.

Traverse City

By Elbert Ford

Hello to all our friends in the Pioneer District. We just returned from the spring convention, with many Cherry Capital members attending the entire weekend. I felt that it was one of the best I've ever attended in my 28 years of Barbershopping. DOC did a super job putting together lots of fun things to keep us hopping, from a super quartet contest Friday evening to the Sunday morning worship service, and everything in between. They are to be congratulated.

The Traverse City Chapter will host the fall convention, and we hope all you fun-seekers will return and give us a chance to offer to you another great weekend of harmony!

We didn't finish as high as we had hoped in the chorus contest on Saturday. I'd like to think it was because we have been concentrating on our show music this spring. We decided to just take two songs, go down to represent Traverse City, and get in on the fun of a good old Pioneer District convention.

Speaking of the show, we've been hard at work, not only learning new music, but also selling tickets and advertising. Our guest quartet will be CHORDIAC ARREST from the Chicago area. The show will be on Friday and Saturday evenings, June 9 and 10, at Interlochen's Corson Auditorium at 8:00 p.m. If you have been wanting to come north and relax in the Grand Traverse area, you can obtain tickets from Jeff Belanger. Call 231-933-9900 or e-mail at tcdoughboy@hotmail.com.

We are looking forward to a busy summer with all of the activities we have lined up. We also plan to have a membership drive following our show. We're not only looking for a few good singers, but also some willing workers to help us host the fall convention.

Our doors are always open to visitors, so if you find yourself up here on a Tuesday night, come on over to the Presbyterian Church on Airport Access Road, just off Munson Avenue (US 31 North), at 7:00 p.m. and sing a tag with us.

Livingston County

By Ralph LeRoy

The Lamplighters are lighting up the towns in Livingston county with good old-fashioned Barbershop songs. We have several scheduled singouts from church services to family reunions. We are totally committed to helping our community advance its goals along with our own.

President Ray Jones has initiated a new member campaign that includes most of the usual methods of attracting new singers such as signs, and we have also developed a unique mailer that is being sent out to the churches this month and will also be used to help in our recruiting efforts. The mailer highlights our community singing efforts with emphasis on senior appreciation, fund raisers, holiday parties, business functions, and church services.

We work closely with our Chamber of Commerce and are planning to have a float in this year's Fourth of July Parade.

The entire chorus takes part in most of our outings with our quartet THOSE GUYS handling spur of the moment activities.

Any questions, call or email me: Ralph LeRoy. 810-227-0780 or RLeRoy@ismi.net.

Golden anniversary club adds three



At the district spring convention, Golden Anniversary Award Chairman Don Funk (above right) proudly announced that Gordon Kesterke of Benton Harbor-St. Joseph, Jack Oonk of Holland, and Bob Wisdom of Motor City Metro (above left) had attained 50 years of membership in SPEBSQSA.



Livingston County Chapter's Lamplighter Chorus

Chapters in Action

Saginaw Bay

By Ralph Brown

Wow! Wow! Wow! Contest weekend was absolutely an incredible experience for us “first time contenders.” It was interesting to note how much the veteran competitors of our chorus were enjoying the process. We had the entire gamut of thoughts regarding our decision to go to contest: We aren’t ready (apprehension), we should wait until fall (procrastination), we don’t have enough singers (bigger is better), we need to improve our craft (must compete to improve), we want to grow (achievement helps), we must have goals (sing at contest and have fun with other chapters).

In late January, Nan Wardin signed on and told us she would get us ready for contest if we made the commitment and worked hard by pulling out all stops and have only positive thoughts and comments at all times, especially at rehearsal; no negativity allowed. We had little time to select music, schedule extra practices, get contest outfits selected, etc.

As luck would have it, we managed to get past various hurdles, the worst of which were illnesses. We were at the end of March and still not certain if we would have sufficient parts to go to contest. One of our leads, Tom Kren, must have thought he was off the beat because he went into the hospital after contest and had a pacemaker replaced, which he had had for a record 18 years. He said he is doing fine and is kept on beat electronically.

One of our tenors, Bill Grumbley, hastened his recovery from surgery so he could be with us on stage. I personally was concerned that I might have a kidney stone attack and not make the performance; thank God for pain pills.

At the last minute (which means we were already dressed for the stage), three wives — Yvonne Donnelly, Barb Davis, and Mrs. Ligrow — volunteered to put our stage make-up on us. It was like putting wheel dressing on a bunch of old tires (in some cases).

Alas and alack, we made it to the risers 20 strong and, as Nan put it, we flat-out had fun. About half of our chorus has been at this hobby for over 30 years and a couple for 50 years or more. Boy, do they have stories

to tell of contests past, especially the evening activities and “allnighters” that saw and heard some crowing going on by sunup and they were not roosters from the near by farms. The pipes only last so long!

I was very fortunate to have my mother and eldest sister standing next to me by the monitor in the hall when it was announced that we won our plateau. That was one of those special moments in life!

Barbershoppers truly are an extended family because so many wives and other family members get involved with our hobby. Several of our chorus members have told me how they were congratulated by people they had never met before. Barbershoppers exalt and encourage their winners unlike any other competitive groups I have been involved with.

The HARBOR SOUNDS CHORUS sends its thanks to everyone involved for making the 2000 contest weekend a most memorable event for us and as one of our members, Paul Ward, put it, “Keep an eye on us because every time we sing, we are going to sing better than the last time.”

We hope to see everyone in the fall.

Windsor

By Needa Reporter

Each chapter can proudly be called the Kings of Barbershop in their own community. After our 56th anniversary show, “The Best of Barbershop,” the sell-out crowd once again said, “Bravo, wonderful, superb, great job, well done!” Director Dan Bezair and his capable assistant Doug Scott helped us put our best foot forward.

Six chapter quartets each had an opportunity to perform: JUDGMENT DAY, MIX MASTERS, LITTLE MIX MASTERS, COUNTY CONNECTION, DESPERATE MEASURES, and BORDER CROSSING. Our guest quartets were the icing on the cake. FOURTHWITH SOUND from Strathroy tickled everyone’s funny bone, and WJBC showed why they are district champions.

The SUN PARLOUR CHORUS and several quartets are very active throughout the Windsor area. We have been asked to provide the entertainment for eight Lutheran churches as they raise funds for the Canadian Lutheran World Relief.

In June we will entertain thousands as they enjoy the beautiful Dieppe Gardens on the Riverfront. This is part of the Organization of American States (O.A.S.) Convention. We will be followed by the Windsor Symphony Orchestra. I hope the crowd sticks around to

hear them.

A number of summer activities are in the planning stage in addition to our weekly meetings. One of the highlights will be the Koop Pig Roast on Civic Holiday in August. Peter Koop was a Windsor member and his widow, Elsa, enjoys having us each year at her place in Wheatley.

In order to save postage, I will use this forum to put forth the following challenge. The Windsor Chapter challenges the Sault Ste. Marie Chapter to a sing-off at the fall convention. Two songs on the contest stage will determine the Canadian champions of the Pioneer District. We have thrown down the gauntlet. Pick it up if you dare!

Detroit-Oakland

By Tom Uicker

It is the first week of May and Detroit-Oakland members are still catching up on their rest after a long and glorious convention weekend in Battle Creek. No, our chapter can't claim to be responsible for the beautiful weather we had, but we did enjoy it all the same. There is nothing like a beautiful spring day to brighten an already fun-filled event. We thank you all for the kind remarks in person and on the PioNet in regard to our job of hosting the convention this spring.

The truth is we enjoyed it also. This was our fourth opportunity to host since the district went to repeating the convention at the same site for multiple years. If your chapter hasn't tried it yet, join the fun. You will find it rewarding, not only monetarily, but also in the spirit of togetherness it brings to your workers. Good luck to Traverse City who has agreed to take on the job this fall. And thank you to the various district personnel who do the job every time. You make it all so easy.

By the time you read this, our Jug Night party will be over for another year. I hope you all saw the fliers we had out and had a chance to attend. If it is like last year, it will be another great night out. It is too bad that Jug Night and the Windsor Send-Off show are on adjacent Fridays. Our International-bound representatives can use our combined support rather than competition between chapters. Any suggestions?

Anyway, Detroit-Oakland has a couple of performances coming up this summer. We sing for the Royal Oak Concert Series on Wednesday, July 12, and then for the Nardin Park Concert Series (Farmington Hills) on Wednesday, July 26. Both are free concerts and you are welcome to attend.

We also have a chapter picnic set for Saturday, July 22. We would love to see our inactive members show up and renew acquaintances. And our music team and show committee are already working on new songs for next year's show.

Meanwhile, if you happen to be in the neighborhood of Royal Oak some Monday night about 7:30, stop by Starr Presbyterian Church at Thirteen Mile and Crooks Road and sing a couple with us. Or, if you are free on Wednesday afternoons, our Daytime Singers meet at the same church between 1:00 and 3:30 pm.

Flint

By Chuck Murray

The Pioneer District has honored Paul Smith for his work in chapter public relations and marketing for 1999 with a first-place Public Relations Officer of the Year (PROTY) award. A recently retired General Motors engineer, Smith has been a Barbershopper for 10 years, has received 16 Man-of-Note awards, was Flint Chapter President for two years, and has been PR chairman for more than a year. He was jointly nominated by Chapter President Ed Wracan and Music Director John Noteware.

Smith's activities during 1999 included promotion of the annual show, an open house, a chicken dinner fundraiser, and a series of Christmas Chorus appearances. In addition to promoting Chorus activities in ten newspapers and various electronic media, he designed and produced ads, fliers, mailers, ticket mail order forms, a show program cover, and a media fax form. Looking forward to the future, he created a three-page document to guide a successor PR chairman. Even with this written job description, we think his shoes will be difficult to fill! Congratulations, Paul!

Flint Chapter nominated Bob Longroy as Barber-shopper of the Month (BOTM) for his multitude of services to the chorus. Not only did he coordinate the mass direct mailing which advertised the spring show, but he also managed the reserved-seat ticket sales as well. He also functions as the main chorus contact for chorus performances. He coordinates the Bowl-A-Pedics fund-raiser in Grand Blanc. He is also the lead singer in TIME OUT! quartet. Congratulations, Bob!

Dave Lonsbury, the creative juice behind our spring show, "When Everything Old is New Again," recently took the chorus through a "dry run" of the show. This author got lucky and learned that he gets to stand behind the bar. Guest pianist, Bob Milne, will appear, as

Chapters in Action

Flint

(Continued from page 27)

will guest quartet RUMORS. We are all working hard to insure a successful show. Check our Website for ticket info: <http://community.mlive.com/cc/flintbarbershop>.

Chapter quartet TIME OUT! said many good things about the helpful suggestions they received from the judges, and others, at Spring Contest. It was this quartet's first time behind the microphone in Battle Creek, and they said it was truly a memorable experience. Their thanks go out to their coaches, Ed Wracan for his help, and to POWER PLAY for their inspiration and for setting such a great example. They also expressed gratitude for the efficient, professional way DOC hosted the contest. They are recommending to newly formed quartets to include going to contest as one additional step in the "continuous improvement process." Gee, with brothers like this, "It's great to be a Barbershopper!"

Gaylord

By Jim Quin

The Gaylord Chapter has been very active since our highly successful Singing Valentine program, with a performance for the Lions District Convention held at the Grayling Holiday Inn on April 14 by the combined HARMONIE MEISTERS CHORUS and quartet.

May engagements are filling up our calendar with a performance scheduled May 20 for the Kirtland's Warbler Festival held at the Kirtland College campus and, something new for our chapter, performing at area high schools to promote Barbershop singing to the young people in our communities.

We found the principals of the three schools very receptive to our proposed program, which was to sing only to the chorus groups at each school, but have asked us instead to put on our program for the entire student body in an assembly setting. What is really neat about the whole thing is that the three high schools are in three different neighboring counties. We are trying to do more schools in June, but are running out of time before summer vacation.

July is the huge Alpen Fest held in Gaylord, with a

request for us to perform on July 19 and supply street singing strolling quartets through July 22.

Don't forget our big program for 2000 Bush League to be held Sept. 30 in northern Michigan's newest and biggest state-of-the-art auditorium and the greatest hospitality in Michigan. See you there.

Grosse Pointe

By Nick Piccione

It's amazing how a marked improvement in contest performance brings infectious enthusiasm for all things convention. The leap in standings from 14th place last time to 4th place was noticeably enjoyed by all at our "Harvey's Dinner" following the Saturday afternoon performance. Heartfelt thanks go to our talented director, Steve Pauling, for providing this pleasant memory!

In the upcoming events category, we expect to have a dozen or so members attend "Harmony Round-up" this year ... and Chairman Frank Lozzi tells us he expects about two dozen at our annual golf outing on May 23, 24, and 25 at Gull Lake, perennially a grand success.

The grease paint will be out again on Thursday, June 8, for a new venue for the Grosse Pointe Chapter Dinner Theater. The elegant ballroom at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial is the perfect place for cabaret entertainment. The vibrant "Life is a cabaret, old chum, so come to the cabaret" will introduce songs by our chorus, our own quartets, and our guest quartet WJBC. Our regular show will take place on September 16 at Roseville Junior High School.

The Grosse Pointe Chapter spotlight falls this issue on the co-winners of this year's "Barbershopper of the Year":

Gordon Dubnil - With 52 years of Barbershop singing dating back to high school, Gordy's presence has been an important one. Transferring to Grosse Pointe Chapter in 1971, he has been a strong part in both chapter responsibilities and in chapter singing. Instrumental in the activities of our most appreciated GOOD NEWS GOSPEL SINGERS since its inception, he has been active in quartet singing from the OCCIDENTAL FOUR in 1950 to winning the seniors contest in 1991 with FRIENDS. Gordon and his wife, Lucille, are indeed long-term assets to the chapter.

Michael Sullivan - Mike has served as chapter president and a myriad of other chapter posts too numerous to list here. As charities chairman, he identified

the Holly Ear Institute at St. John's Hospital as worthy of our fund raising (they have received over \$15,000 to date). But Mike is best known for his enthusiasm for life and fun. Spearheading pub crawls, bus trips, sing-outs, and the like. He and his wife, Donna, have hosted several of our more successful hospitality rooms. Entertainment, fun, laughs are all synonymous with Mike Sullivan ... another asset to the chapter.

*To pick winners can be so unnerving
From fields where so many are deserving.
But "Barbershopper Of The Year"
Is a title easy to steer
To two guys with devotion unswerving.*

Pontiac-Waterford

By Gene Downie

Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Woodshed Contest

In March, the Pontiac-Waterford Chapter held its 44th Annual Woodshed Contest. Seven Pioneer chapters were represented in the competition including Clarkston, Detroit-Oakland, Flint, Grosse Pointe, Milford, Motor City Metro, and Pontiac-Waterford. The Carol P. Adams Bennington Trophy was awarded to Motor City Metro for having the highest percentage of participating chapter members at the contest.

There were two winning quartets recognized this year. The STAR SINGERS included Jim Grogan, tenor (Grosse Pointe); Ron Arnold, lead (Pontiac-Waterford); Jeff Woodruff, bari (Motor City Metro); and John Wade, Bass (Grosse Pointe). Individual awards were presented to the second winning quartet BEST PARTS. This quartet included "best tenor" Marv Wilson (Detroit-Oakland), "best lead" Ron Gilles (Flint), "best bari" Dick Johnson (Pontiac-Waterford), and "best bass" Bert West (Grosse Pointe). Bert captured his second individual award, the first coming 39 years ago.

There were two additional highlights during the evening. The first was special recognition of the originator of the woodshed contest, Hall of Fame member Bill Pascher. Chapter President Gene Downie then recognized nine past presidents of the Pontiac-Waterford Chapter: Bill Dabbs (1998), Bob Woodward (1997, 1996, 1995, 1992, & 1991), Roger Holm (1994 & 1993), Mel Parrish (1993 & 1988), John Smith (1986), Len Barnes (1985, 1964, & 1959), Bill Pascher (1984, 1957, & 1944), Dick Johnson (1977 & 1976) and Lyle Howard (1969).

This very successful event was held at the Pontiac

Country Club. Mark your calendars now for the 45th Annual Woodshed Contest on March 30, 2001.

A man of note

The Pontiac-Waterford Chapter has come a long way in the past three years. We are within sight of our three-year membership goal and our music and performance skills are showing signs of steady improvement. We have a good mixture of experienced singers and some strong new voices.

The one aspect of our chapter which stands out more than any other is our musical leadership. Chris Miller is a director who believes in the full spectrum of Barbershop music and does his best to pass that belief on to others. He has taken great pains to provide plenty of variety in each rehearsal and to actively involve as many men as possible. He is serious about Barbershop music, yet is able to keep things light and have fun. His sense of humor keeps the group relaxed, even as we're being criticized.

New men are often involved in tag singing with Chris before they even know what a tag is. Many of them have been caught up in the thrill of a ringing chord before the end of their first evening. His easy manner and desire for honest fellowship with all members helps to provide a strong bond among chapter members.

As a strong proponent of fun, fellowship, and good singing, he has helped to create the conditions for growth within our chapter. We will continue to grow because it is such an enjoyable experience.

I, for one, have benefited greatly from this experience and I know others feel the same way. We are fortunate to have a director of his temperament and caliber standing in front of us. We recognize Chris Miller as a real **man of note**.

Lansing

By Paul Howe

I've only been a Barbershopper for about four years, but I have to say that, for me at least, the spring 2000 convention was the most fun of any that I've attended. I just wish that I could have been two people, so that I could have seen and done everything I wanted. What an absolute blast singing in a 100-plus-man JOE BARBERSHOP CHORUS. From on stage, the sound was incredible.

We of the Lansing Chapter were pleased to help
(Continued on page 30)

Chapters in Action

Lansing

(Continued from page 29)

form the nucleus of that chorus. It was also an honor to “sing away” the district trophy to our good friends in the GREAT LAKES CHORUS Saturday night.

We are beginning work on two new songs for our fall convention package, but this will have to take a back seat for a few weeks as the feverish preparations for our upcoming Krazy Kwartet Kontest swing into high gear. This year’s Kontest will be May 23. The Kontest is the low, er, highlight of the year for many Barbershoppers. Past participants have included such notable quartets as the PITTSBURGH SQUEELERS, PALEFACE, and last year’s winner — a quartet that has since gone on to some notoriety — FOOL’S GOLD. Guests are always welcome. However, we are sorry that we will be unable to accept applications from registered district quartets.

Other upcoming events for Lansing include our annual picnic July 16 and singing the National Anthem for the Lugnuts baseball game at Oldsmobile Park on August 15.

Holland

By Art Lane

Tag-singers of Pioneer District invited to July contest

The 15th Annual Chester P. Oonk Memorial Tag Contest will be held by the Holland Chapter on Saturday, July 22. Members from throughout the district who like to sing tags are invited. In addition, we expect a delegation from the Terre Haute, Ind., Chapter and Sweet Adelines from western Michigan.

For those inclined, the day starts with a golf tournament at 8:30 a.m. at West Shore Golf Course in Douglas, south of Holland. About noon to 3 p.m., people will start practicing tags at the nearby Saugatuck RV Resort. There will be a dinner of roast pig followed by the tag contest about 7:00 p.m. You can bring a quartet and also form additional quartets from among the other singers. There are prizes for the best novice and profes-

sional quartets, the biggest bass sound and the person who competes in the most quartets.

Interested? Call Holland Chapter President Jack C. Oonk for details at 616-392-4794. Or visit him by e-mail at joonk@wmol.com, or tour the chapter website at <http://members.aol.com/hollandwmc>.

Holland Chapter awaits grants from city, community foundation

Grants to speed fund-raising for renovation of the Park Theater and to help with music education and musical shows have been recommended by the Community Foundation of the Holland-Zeeland Area and by the City of Holland. The Community Foundation said in a letter to President Jack C. Oonk, “We are pleased to announce to you that your request for funding has been granted in the amount of \$20,000 to assist in establishing an office for theater planning and fundraising efforts for the Park Theater Performance Center. We hope that this grant will help to enable a successful project for the benefit of the entire area.”

The chapter will use the money to set up an office at the theater and to secure the services of a professional fund-raising firm. With the aid of the firm the chapter seeks to raise some \$850,000 for a complete renovation of the century-old building, which was a movie theater from about 1920 to 1984. The chapter purchased the vacant theater in 1998. In addition to meeting and practicing there, the aim is to make the theater available for community performances of all kinds.

City of Holland grant proposed

A grant of \$3,750.00 has been proposed for the chapter by the City of Holland Department of Leisure and Cultural Services. The funds will be used for two purposes: to help the chapter put on its weekly music education program for area men, and to help put on a series of vaudeville-style shows using talent from throughout the community.

Auditions for Admissions brings new members

Did you ever have a program that worked better than you thought it would? That’s what happened to the Holland Chapter with “Auditions for Admissions” created by James Hall. In three weeks, we had 15 potential members sing with us, and two have become members, with more expected. The goal of the program was to invite men who like to sing to join us on the risers during our regular weekly meetings and show them what our hobby was about.

We used a series of nights instead of a single evening, so the guests could start to feel comfortable.

Auditions were informal, conducted by the music committee. Follow-up included music to take home and personal thank you notes mailed to guests. We got word out through personal contact, newspaper ads and stories, and our theater marquee. During meetings, Director Myke Lucas and Assistant Director Mike Oonk offered a wide variety of music, from warm-ups to chorus singing, regular quartet and round-robin quartet singing, craft tips, and tag singing. One week we had a special treat — a visit by members of the Muskegon Chapter, including quartets WHATEVER FOUR and HARMONY TRANSFER. We plan to have several more member programs that extend for several weeks later this year.

New gang on the risers

At the recent district convention, the HOLLAND WINDMILL CHORUS had three men on the risers who had never competed before. Hats off to Bruce Rabe, David Chamness and Nathan Rowan.

Monroe North

By Chris Berry

Monroe North has been a happenin' place lately. The chapter has been out of the spotlight for some time, but we are coming back with a big splash.

In March, we hosted a very successful show with eight separate acts (yep, that's right — eight!) The show opened with the FLORAL CITY HARMONIZERS showing new life. Our upbeat music selections kept the audience tapping their toes and singing along. We came out with a brighter attitude, a great musical blend, and even choreography (just to prove even an older chorus can still move with the best of them). After the chorus got the audience warmed up, we had no less than three chapter quartets on stage — LONG AND SHORT OF IT, CHORDIAL FOUR, and JUST BY CHANCE — again showing the chapter's vitality.

We also had the pleasure of having our director's quartet, ARCHIVE, on our show with a fantastic sound that I'd place in my book as a headliner for any show. The chapter also hosted a mixed a cappella group from Monroe High School called GENERATIONS OF SOUND. I'd like to say that I was very impressed with the 18 young men and women who graced our stage with a great sound that we should include again next year.

The singing went long into the night, almost three hours, and finished with our two headliners, PLATINUM and TURNING POINT. Both quartets showed the chapter and audience the way Barbershop should be per-

formed. PLATINUM'S sound was nothing less than perfect with posts from the quartet that seemed to go on forever. TURNING POINT'S mix of music and comedy was right on the mark.

With the end of this show, we again have raised the bar for our chapter's performance for next year. I am looking forward to the challenge.

A pleasant outcome of the show came the following Tuesday at practice when we had three guests, two of whom became new members of the chapter in the last month. Guess it goes to show that everyone loves to sing with a good group.

We came off the show high and turned right around to head off to the Spring Contest in Battle Creek. What a time. We had 28 men on stage, singing and stepping our hearts out. We told the same story we said at our concert in March: we are having a ball singing Barbershop!

I was quite pleased with our placing 10th. We have come a long way from last year's competition. We have a drive to continue to improve, and with Dave as our new director helping us put out a greater sound and increase our musical knowledge, I see Monroe North in the top five in the next couple of years. With a cabaret scheduled for the fall and several performances through the summer, we are keeping quite busy and I am looking forward to this time next year!

Huron Valley

By Darrell Richmond

Huron Valley quartet visits Saline H.S. Chordsmen

A quartet from Huron Valley arose a daybreak one recent Tuesday morning to entertain, demonstrate and teach a local group of singers about Barbershop harmony. The CHORDSMEN, a Saline High School group of young men and their dads, sing together every other Tuesday morning before their work or school day begins. Huron Valley members Keith Opal, Lynn Herche, Delruss Wolff, and Dave MacLeod performed a recent contest uptune, "Sweet Georgia Brown," and taught a tag. They were invited to stay for the first hour class, a girl's chorus, where they repeated their package.

On Tuesday, May 16, Huron Valley will again be welcoming guests at the Stony Creek United Methodist Church in Ypsilanti. Tireless in promoting the chorus and increasing our membership, Hal Thompson has both organized this "Barbershop party" and invited quartets WJBC and chapter quartet CHORDIOLOGY to perform. More than 20 guests will be visiting, including a Saline newspaper reporter ... as a singer! ■

... New edit #10

One tequila, two tequila, three tequila, floor!

Isn't it about time for some new clichés?

"Suppose you were an idiot. And suppose you were a member of Congress. But I repeat myself."

Mark Twain

If Milli Vanilli are alone in the forest and fall, does someone else make a sound?

Top 10 reasons to procrastinate:
1.

What if the hokey-pokey really is what it's all about?

Ninety percent of the members of any given Barbershop chorus will consider themselves to be in the top 25 percent of that chorus talent pool.

Wayne Chapter, SPEBSQSA, Inc.
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An official publication of the Pioneer District Association of Chapters of the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.

"Music must take rank as the highest of the fine arts — as the one which, more than any other, ministers to human welfare."

Herbert Spencer

Upcoming Events

2000

June 9-10 - Traverse City Show. Contact Jeff Belanger: 231-933-9900

June 9 - Windsor Send-Off.

July 2-9 - SPEBSQSA International Convention & Competition - Kansas City. www.spebsqsa.org/KansasCity

July 15-18 - Harmony Explosion Camp, Ball State University, Muncie, Ind. Contact Al Bonney: 231-223-4064

July 30-Aug. 6 - Harmony College/Directors College, Missouri Western State College, St. Joseph, Missouri. Contact 1-800-876-SING x-8551

Aug. 17-20 - Buckeye Invitational, Columbus, Ohio. Contact Walt Miller: 740-928-6306, or <http://www.singingbuckeyes.org90>

Sept. 16 - Alpena Show. Contact Karl Heidemann: 517-734-7038

Sept. 16 - Grand Rapids Show.

Sept. 16 - Gratiot County Show. Contact Mark Wilson: 517-833-2466

Sept. 29-30 - Bush League 2000. Contact Hank Hedges: 517-731-1169

Oct. 7 - Muskegon Show. Contact Mike O'Donnell: 616-363-1368, or Web Scrivnor: 616-842-9041

Oct. 20-22 - District Fall Convention

Oct. 28 - Pontiac-Waterford Show. Contact Dick Johnson: 248-363-5173

Nov. 4 - Rochester Show. Contact Carl Hasselwander: 248-651-6172

Dec. 1-3 - COTS, Gull Lake

Dec. 8, 10 - Grand Rapids Show.

2001

Feb. 3 - Macomb County Show.

Apr. 27-29 - District Spring Convention

Oct. 19-21 - District Fall Convention

Note: All chapter show activities must be cleared through District Secretary Jack Schneider (contact info. on page 2).

Correction

In the April/May 2000 issue, the charitable contributions chart on page 13 should have indicated that the Rochester Chapter earned a Bronze award.