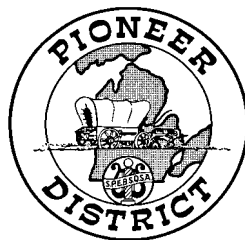


# Pioneer Troubadour

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

Volume 52, Issue 4



August/September 2001

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## Roger Lewis elected Society president

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

**T**he men on the third row of the risers in the small chapters — the Alpenas, the Hillsdales, the Battle Creeks — have an advocate in the Society's new president-elect.

"I get to feel their excitement and their discouragement on a personal, first-hand basis," said Roger Lewis, who will be installed into the Society's presidency next January, succeeding Chuck Watson of Columbus, Ohio.

As president, Roger wants "to



listen to Joe Barbershopper who stands on the third row of the risers every week, and to make sure we're fulfilling his needs."

Roger's been Society executive VP for one-and-a-half years and was elected to his new post at the International Convention in July.

Even with his new office, Roger said he plans to stay just as active with his "smaller, sometimes struggling" chapter in Battle Creek. "That represents about 80 percent of the chapters in the Society, I believe."

His weekend travel may be greater, but he wants to stay on the chapter board and continue participating in many of the weekly meetings, sing in performances and competition, lead tags, offer ideas, host parties, and entertain with the HARMONY HOUNDS comedy quartet, just as he's done since he joined the chapter and quartet 40 years ago.

### Extensive experience

He calls his experience in the small chapter — where he's held all offices and twice been Barbershopper of the Year — a "great advantage" along with his extensive involvement at the Pioneer District and Society levels.

Roger, 63, previously was a Society board member and headed

*(Continued on page 28)*

## Power Play fifth, Privately Funded 17th, Great Lakes Chorus 21st at Nashville

**P**ioneer District quartet representative POWER PLAY finished a solid fifth for the second year in a row in the International Quartet Contest in Nashville. The veteran group has enhanced its reputation as one of the finest performing quartets in the Society. (See page 16 for quartet contest story.)

Hillsdale College's PRIVATELY

FUNDED quartet finished 17th at the College Quartet Contest. These fine young men represented the Pioneer District well in Nashville. (Story on page 19.)

Grand Rapids' GREAT LAKES CHORUS was one of the most entertaining at International. Their baseball theme was well received by more than 10,000 Barbershoppers. (See page 18 for story.) ■



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

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# What a blast!

By Coordinator Dave Anderson

The first Pioneer District high school youth weekend, A CAPPELLA BLAST!, was declared an overwhelming success by both the participants and the organizers.

The event was held May 18-20 in conjunction with Harmony Round-Up at MSU. Al Bonney, Pioneer VP of Young Men in Harmony, who was the promoter and organizer, had obtained grant money to subsidize the cost so the students and teachers needed to pay only \$25 each.

We had expected about 30-40 participants and were surprised when 56 students and six teachers attended, which put our budget in the red, but we did not want to deny anyone a chance to attend. Several chapters helped boost attendance, but special mention goes to Saginaw Bay and Traverse City.

Ken and Vicki Gibson were our clinicians and did an outstanding



A Cappella Blast! participants in their finale position. Photo by Norm Thompson.

job of teaching and demonstrating the Barbershop style. Tracy Ulrich, Bill Woodbeck, Marty Chirgwin, and Ken Gibson served as the teaching quartet and they really produced some overtones as well. Chairman Al Bonney was busy keeping things flowing and working with Dan Bezaire, Harmony Round-Up chairman, to coordinate the two events.

The students learned two songs from music and learning tapes and then were taught several tags on Friday and Saturday, while the chorus was taught more vocal techniques and even some choreography. The result was a performance on the Saturday night show that won them a well-

deserved standing ovation.

Vicki and Ken coached the teachers in separate sessions on how to use Barbershop as a teaching aid for ear training as well as a way to get more male voices into their choirs. The response from the teachers was very positive, and all said they would come back again with more boys.

The boys were really turned on by performing ... never have I seen such a bunch of natural hams. They all wanted the front row! They also loved singing tags and wanted to stay up all night singing with us "old timers," especially learning new tags.

We are now planning another A CAPPELLA BLAST! for 2002, so talk to your high school music teachers and get them ready to come.

Wouldn't it be great to have 100 young men in that chorus next year? ■



Clinician Ken Gibson demonstrates a choreography move for the boys. Photo by Gary Simon.

# PROBE recognizes Elbert Ford, Art Lane

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

After being felled by a stroke, Elbert Ford came up with a goal. He now has achieved it.

When Elbert moved to Traverse City in the early '70s, he saw a sign in a music store window advertising the local Barbershop chapter's meeting time and place. He joined immediately and continued to be an active and productive member.

But about four years ago on a Thursday as he was about to head to a Pioneer District convention in Lansing, he suffered a stroke that paralyzed his right side.

"We got reports throughout the weekend from Elbert's wife, Pat, and the prognosis did not sound good," said Al Bonney, chapter president at the time. "When we returned, we all tried to do what we could to visit and support Elbert, but he was hurt pretty badly by the stroke and his attitude was beaten up badly as well."

After the stroke, Elbert retired from a career as a maintenance supervisor for appliances and technical products. But he didn't quit Barbershop.

"Elbert has three pillars in his life: God, family, and Barber-shop," Al said. "Each played a strong part in his wonderful recovery, and we must not discount the role Barbershopping played."

Several weeks into his rehab, Elbert spoke to Al about the chapter bulletin, *The Chorister*. Al recalls: "He wanted to resurrect it, but only on the condition that it would win the district in three years and place well internation-

ally soon after that. I assured him that that was a worthy objective."

During his first year as editor, he had not completed enough bulletins to be eligible for the contest held by PROBE, the Society's association of PR Officers and Bulletin Editors. But he submitted copies anyway for evaluation; his score would have placed him second in the district.

In the succeeding two years, he placed first in the district contest and was entered at the international level.

Last year, he placed 22nd at international with a 1,401.8 score.

This summer, at the Society convention, he was announced as Most Improved Editor among 30 entrants from all districts.

And he placed fifth with a 1,740.3 score, up 339 points to reach 87 percent of a perfect 2,000.

Goal achieved.

Elbert also continues as baritone section leader and puts out the bulletin monthly even while he winters in Florida.

"I am firmly convinced that Barbershop contributed significantly to saving Elbert's life," Al said, "and to supporting the wonderfully constructive and positive attitude he displays in his daily life."

After he won the district contest last spring, Elbert sent PioNet, the district e-mail list, a note of encouragement to all bulletin editors: "You're doing your chapter a big favor. I'm sure anyone who edits a bulletin will tell you that it's a very important job in the chapter — sometimes discouraging

when you're hoping for that column from one of your guys to complete an issue."

He added: "Being able to return something to the hobby that I love makes it worth my while alone. The fact that I can do something to contribute, with my handicap ... is truly a blessing from God. Bulletin editors, don't be discouraged!"

Elbert isn't. At least not anymore.

## Art Lane

The other Pioneer District entrant, editor Art Lane of Holland's *Windmill Blade*, placed 24th in the international contest, improving on his placements of 27th and 29th in the previous two years. In the district this year, he placed second.

The bulletin awards are in addition to the award he received in 1999 as international PR Officer of the Year.

Bulletins are judged in three categories: grammar and style, content, and layout and reproduction. The top two bulletins from each of 16 districts are entered in the international contest. ■

**Quartet  
singers  
make  
better  
chorus  
singers.**

*Dr. Greg Lyne*

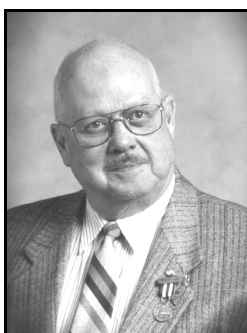


## A View From The Top

### Don Bazely, President

# A jigsaw puzzle

Three days of extensive meetings in Nashville has left me with numerous pieces of information and recommendations that, when fitted together, form a complete jigsaw puzzle called "My Barber-shop Harmony Society."



Don Bazely

Oh, it will work with missing pieces, but it sure wouldn't look attractive. It wouldn't look finished. It wouldn't be very satisfactory.

No, my friends, we need to look for all of the pieces to form a complete puzzle. Here are some of the important edge and corner pieces.

**MEMBERSHIP** is our first concern. Ev Nau presented some very disturbing stats that have the Society shrinking at a steady rate IF the majority of us don't make recruitment our personal concern and help to replenish the ranks.

Ev says that each of us needs to recruit ONE new guy every SIX years just to maintain the present level. Doesn't seem too tough, does it? But let's not be satisfied with that.

**CHORUS DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT** comes next.

Many of our chapters are shrinking (and even disappearing) because their directors don't measure up. We have approximately 800 chapters in our Society and that means 800 or so directors.

Among that number are some outstanding directors. You see them at our international competitions.

What about the chapters that don't even come to our district conventions? I figure if you have a product that you can be proud of, you will want to show it off.

So here's the deal ... the district and the Society offer chorus director training. Why are there so few directors from Pioneer taking advantage? We will never grow as a district unless we can offer our new recruits a wonderful musical experience. That applies equally to our current members.

Chorus directors: In your hands (literally and figuratively) lies the future of our district. Examine your conscience and answer the question, "Am I the best that I can be?"

If not, sign up for a school and get better. It is a true saying that the chorus director is responsible for a chorus's success ... or failure.

**QUARTET FORMATION & DEVELOPMENT.** We are falling down at our chapter level in this regard.

Quartets, in my opinion, are the frosting on the cake. Our Society would not be what it is without our quartets. In the upper stratum, and equally at chapter level, our quartets are our ambassadors because they are seen and heard in public more often than our choruses.

Are we sending GOOD quartets as our representatives or are they less than satisfactory? This is a question that you need to address.

**ORIENTATION OF NEW MEMBERS.** Wow! Why is it that I feel guilty when that subject comes up? I do believe that most of us fall flat on our fannies when it comes to this activity.

Here is what I am asking: If there are any Pioneer chapters with orientation programs, please share them with the district through the PioNet.

**BRIAN DUNCKEL**, Pioneer membership VP, received praise from Ev Nau regarding Brian's operation in the membership department. Now if you knew how seldom Ev praises anybody, you will realise that Brian must be doing a lot of things right. Brian, well done. We are proud of you.

Finally, here is a thought that is worth while passing on. "AIM FOR FEWER OBJECTIVES THAT CAN BE DONE WELL."

Are you planning on sending representatives to the October House of Delegates meeting?

If so, good! If not, why not?

Are you planning on sending your new chapter board to COTS?

If so, good! If not, why not?

This is about all I can cram into this edition of the *Troub.* In future issues I hope to share more goodies with you. ■

## Here's the Society Pitch

### Raleigh Bloch, Society Board Member

# Was there a contest?

**H**ey! You're back from Nashville. Was there a contest?

Was there a contest? I'll say there was and it was one of the best I've seen and heard in a long, long time. WOW! Every competitor should be proud of his effort. They all were great.



Raleigh Bloch

*OK, let's get busy writing about the contest.*

W h o a , you'll hear plenty about that from others.

*You mean you're not going to write about the contest?*

No, but there are some very exciting things that happened at the convention that you'll be interested in.

*Like what?*

Well, we had a Board meeting. (Yawn!)

That meeting had some very significant things happen.

(Yawn!) *Like what?*

Well, you know how you've been complaining about some competitors not keeping it Barbershop and how the judges in all the categories seem to talk about the same thing?

*Yah, that "common ground" thing.*

Well, at the direction of the International Board, Lou Benedict

and his crew have fixed that. The "common ground" has been eliminated.

*Great! What about keeping it Barbershop and that over-arrangement complexity or embellishments stuff?*

Guidelines have been established and, if they are not adhered to, the competitors will be penalized.

*OK! That's important to the preservation of our art form. How are they going to get the changes to the judges?*

A new C&J Manual has been written and will be presented at the category school this summer at Harmony College. Not only that, it will be put on the SPEBSQSA Web site so everyone can learn about the changes.

*What else happened?*

The E-commerce project is moving along faster than planned and we approved additional spending to take advantage of some bargains on the software we need.

Won't be long and we'll have our own chat rooms and be renewing our membership online.

At this point, it looks like this project will not cost as much as we planned.

*What about the future of our Society? Anything said about that?*

The PPDG presented the PLANNING GUIDANCE for SOCIETY YEAR 2002.

*What's that?*

It's a guide for all of the dis-

tricts and committees to use as they plan for the year 2002.

*Do you mean what we should be working on next year?*

Yes.

*So what did it say?*

There were four issues that were prioritized, beginning with the greatest concern — membership growth.

Success in the other three critical issues — chorus director & chorus development, quartet formation/development, and more enjoyable chapter meeting programming — is expected to create the most immediate positive impact toward membership growth.

Each of these issues was more fully defined, assignments were made, and expectations were spelled out.

*I guess you won't have room in this article to include that document.*

No, but the district presidents have copies and members can get more information from them.

*I suppose they'll be using that at the forum in Kenosha in November, when they work on their district and committee plans.*

That's the idea.

*You know, this stuff is all starting to fit together.*

Isn't it amazing what we do just so we can sing?

*It's great!*

There are a lot of other things to tell, but we're out of space and time. I will leave with one of the great highlights of the week though.

*What was that?*

THE NIGHTINGALES, which is the Russian eight-year-old boys quartet. They were worth the trip. They harmonize and perform well and they sing so high, I can't even think that high. ■

## Here's the District Pitch

**Brian Dunckel, Member Services VP**

# How committed are you to growth in our hobby?

Sadly, many in our organization don't realize (or care) that our membership continues to decline. If you were at the last House of Delegates meeting, you



Brian Dunckel

know that we honored (how's that for spelling, my Canadian friends?) the memory of 19 Pioneer members who had passed away since last October.

Our district goal for membership growth for the year is two percent, which means that we not only must replace those deceased members and those who drop out, but add an additional 25 men. With over 30 chapters, that task is spread out to make it seem like a pretty reasonable job.

However, many chapters aren't growing; in fact, they are getting smaller, thus placing an even greater burden on the others.

The members of the Lansing Chapter probably remember that in one of my years as president I chose "commitment" as a motto for the year. I now ask you as a member of the Pioneer District to reflect on your commitment.

Consider if you will a breakfast of bacon and eggs. The chicken

contributes to it, but the pig is **COMMITTED** to it! Are you committed to preserving our hobby? Are you a contributor? Do you even care?

We have the obligation to preserve Barbershop harmony for the next generation. Contributors can help, but committed members can help us more!

I challenge each of **US** to do all that we can to not only keep our glorious hobby all that it is, but to make it even better.

I recently had dinner with new Membership Specialist Dick Bek of the Society staff. He spoke about the meaning of the word "keep" based on a part of my article from last month's *Troubadour*, "a farmer who keeps his fields tends, tills, and cares for them."

We must keep our hobby, too — by learning more, singing better, and growing in numbers. Chapter development vice-presidents: Are you doing all you can to plan, inspire, motivate, and direct your chapter's growth?

Chapter Boards: Are you expecting growth and supporting your VP's efforts? Members: Are you doing all you can to help your chapter grow?

We all must **WORK** together and **EXPECT** growth from our **HARD WORK!**

If you're gonna dream ... dream **BIG!** ■

## Soo Novice Quartet Contest

By Don Bazely

Many years ago, the Sault Chapter inaugurated an annual novice quartet contest. It was usually a month or so after our annual show. At first it was open to male singers only, and non-members were invited to participate provided they were male.

Two years ago we opened the competition to SAI, mixed-voice quartets, and to youngsters. The diversity has proved delightful.



This year we had a total of 13 quartets, which included a VLQ of five young women, a mixed quartet of three men and a woman, and a quartet consisting of three kids and a mom.

There is only one winning quartet and all of the rest came in second. A special prize is awarded to the quartet that does the best job of "singing from the heart." This is the second year it has been awarded. The emphasis is on having fun and a few of the four-somes provide a great deal of hilarity with innovative outfits.

The first-place quartet was the SNOW BIRDS and the winner of the "Heart" Trophy was MORNING GLORY. ■

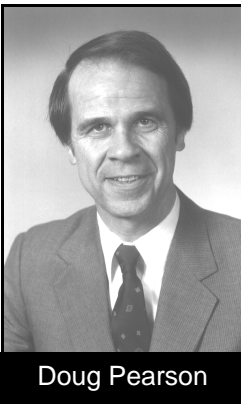
**Sing ... for life!**

## Public Relating

**Doug Pearson,** Marketing & Public Relations VP

### Please excuse a few of my Adventures in Barbershop Wonderland

So here I was on a Wednesday night in the shower, washing off the residue from a forgettably hum-drum day, and the aquatic skin-pounding zapped me into loud and uncontrollable vocalization.



Doug Pearson

“WELL I WONDER, WONDER WHO WROTE THE BOOK OF LOVE,” I bel-

lowed to absolutely no one as my expanded sound ricocheted without direction off the porcelain walls. “The Book of Love,” you know, is one of our PATCH CHORDS comedy numbers, and we actually throw in some four-part harmony just for good measure and also to make sure our Society membership isn’t revoked.

Honestly, I DO wonder who wrote the book of love — doesn’t everyone? Well, maybe not.

But as the back-and-forth motion of my Norman Rockwell towel jolted me into a more realistic frame of mind, I started wondering about a few other things that impact this great hobby.

I WONDER why one of our top chapter members suddenly quit the chapter and the Society a few years back. This guy, both a long-

time chorus and quartet veteran, was great. He took over as show chairman for several years. Thanks to his administrative skills, we had sellout houses during his chairmanship. I asked him why he quit. He was pleasant in his response, but didn’t give me a “real” answer. I always worry when members leave our Society without verbalizing any substantive reason. Do you know why members leave your chapter? Do we do a good enough job in trying to find answers?

I WONDER why 10 of our top district members turned me down when I asked them if they would succeed me as district vice-president. I had long conversations with all of them and they gave me what they considered were valid reasons. I’m sure they were.

Maybe I’ve lost my sales touch. But I can’t help think that our district can only be as strong as its Board members.

I WONDER if we realize what a good job Jim Styer does in communicating as PioNet administrator. Jim’s a behind-the-scenes kind of guy and a lot of us simply take his talents for granted. His prodigious PioNet reports from the International in Nashville were pure platinum. I doubt if anyone in the Society exceeds Jim in this type of reportorial thoroughness.

I WONDER if anyone else misses the “Chapters in Action”

and “Quartets in Action” news articles and photos that used to appear in the *Harmonizer*. The magazine’s new “top-down” approach may have some advantages, but I sure would like to get a better feel as to what our fellow singers — both choruses and quartets — are doing around the country.

I WONDER if you realize the importance of the recently initiated A Cappella Blast! project that was held in conjunction with Harmony Round-Up in Lansing. The turnout on the part of teenage singers was outstanding and they loved harmonizing with our veteran members. At a time when our overall membership is in a state of decline, these youthful singers symbolize our future. This Young Men in Harmony project deserves bouquets from all of us.

I WONDER if you’re aware that our district has taken a very-aggressive posture in seeking grants. There’s a real knack in successfully pursuing this type of money but, believe me, it’s out there and well worth going after. The more positive results we get from our grant seeking, the stronger our district will become.

Guess that about does it. Am I the only one who delves into Adventures in Barbershop Wonderland? Do you, too, wonder about various issues facing our four-part hobby? Is there any way you can place that wonderment into action? Why not give it some thought.

Well, enough of this. It’s time for me to get into a more practical mode — like learning my bass part for “From the First Hello ...” In this case, I don’t have to wonder. I KNOW my three quartet compatriots are counting on me.

And I KNOW the consequences if I fail in this endeavor. ■



## Chapter Coaching

**Doran McTaggart,** Chapter Support/Leadership VP

# Chapter coach a valuable facilitator

**H**ow can your chapter coach help your chapter be the best it can be? He can attend your chapter and/or board meeting, be involved with your guest nights, and be present to install your officers. He can assist in developing or reviewing your chapter mission statement, your written goals and objectives, and your membership growth plan.



Doran McTaggart

He can access help for you from your district and Society personnel. Our Pioneer District VPs for chorus director development, music and performance, marketing and PR, membership development, and Young Men In Harmony all have assistants who are ready and eager to share their talents with you.

Your chapter coach can place all of this wealth of knowledge at your fingertips and it's FREE. It's yours for the asking.

Our Society staff and committees have a wide range of experiences that he can tap as well for the benefit of your chapter.

He can get assistance for your chorus director or music team and

give help in administrative planning, show planning, and other special events. He is invaluable when it comes to chapter programming and membership growth.

Ask him for assistance with the Young Men In Harmony and Standing Ovation programs. Is your chapter coach a valuable facilitator? You bet he is!

### District convention

I hope that you have made your decision to attend the October district convention. What better way to wind yourself up like a two-dollar watch!

Be there as we crown our new district quartet champion and select our chorus representative for the 2002 International Convention. It is another opportunity to renew old friendships and make new ones and, of course, bust a chord or two.

### Elections

Chapter elections take place in October and the future of your chapter will be affected by the choices you make. We need dedicated people who will work together for the betterment of the chapter. Every chapter needs hard workers who will move the chapter forward.

Now is the time to tell your nominating committee that you want to be part of the leadership team.

### COTS

Your chapter leadership team is shortchanging you if it doesn't attend COTS on December 1st and 2nd. Last year, one-third of our Pioneer chapters chose not to send anyone to this excellent training weekend. There are classes for all of your officers, your musical director, and several committee chairmen.

Although the number of men attending last year was a record, more individual chapter participation would be welcomed. The COTS faculty is **world class** and always offers a wealth of knowledge. Insist that your chapter take advantage of this opportunity. Ask your chapter coach to outline the classes for you.

### Help needed

Your district needs talented men who would like to be trained at COTS to become chapter coaches. Talk to your chapter coach about the program and your willingness to serve others. He'll discuss it with me and I'll go over the procedures with you.

Time is slowly ticking away, so do act quickly. We need to train at least six or seven new coaches in all geographic areas of our district.

I await your response. ■

**Be a Champ at  
BUSH  
LEAGUE  
2001  
Sept. 28-30**

## Take Note

**Fred Kienitz, Chorus Director Development VP**

# Singers make director's ideas come alive

In my last *Troubadour* article, I informed you that I am getting old and have made the decision to pass the ol' briefcase onto a younger and more energetic Pioneer member.



Fred Kienitz

"The changing of the guard," so to speak, will not be announced until after the next district Board meeting in October. But I will give you a hint as to the person I would like to see in this chair as my successor.

He was at the Young Men in Harmony session at MSU in Lansing this past May and was also an instructor at that festivity.

And, now to the matter at hand!

The main focus of my program throughout my tenure as VPCDD-VP (chorus director development vice-president) has been to encourage every director in our district to set a personnel goal toward "self-growth" and to never, ever allow self-satisfaction to set in to the degree of feeling that he or she has reached the point of perfection as a frontliner.

Now, however, as I prepare to bid you all a fond adieu, I want to be sure I submit at least one article which goes past the director and

onto the singer himself.

You see, without the singer, Ol' Jim Clancy from Dallas, Texas, would not be a household name known to 90 percent of Barber-shoppers everywhere.

True, the planning, the brains, the creativity, and the artistry come primarily from the leadership. HOWEVER, it's the singer who makes all of these great ideas come alive.

Keep in mind that the chapter's music team uses every method possible to assist the singer to become successful through the use of printed music, section rehearsal, learning tapes, section leaders, choreographers, breakout sessions, and the like. None of these tools can ensure success without the full cooperation of the singer himself.

You must take some responsibility in the learning process and here is where the focus is transferred to you. You now become an intricate part of the whole.

In order to keep the "whole" intact, you must do your part. You (singular, or one of many) now becomes YOU, an individual who now becomes a single part of many, who combine to make ONE. But how do we accomplish this?

This is where "dedication" raises its ugly head. If you dedicate yourself, then you, a single individual, become "you," a single

group working toward a common goal.

Do you think there are chapter members who do not know the two contest numbers, but are still planning to compete? Do you know chapter members who do not know their part, but still plan to sing at the next performance, or worse yet, the chapter show? Should you say something to them? What would you do if you were on your sweetheart's front porch ready to ring the bell and looked down, only to see a huge gravy stain on your new necktie?

We, as chapter and chorus members, expect our officers and, more important, our director, to be on top of all chapter music selections, to teach our members, and to be responsible for the quality of our chorus performances. But we fall short of realizing that it is the chorus members who are producing the music being heard by John Q. Public.

Thus, this part of my article is directed to you, John, (or if you prefer) Mr. Public.

You are given ample time to look at your music, memorize the words, and, most important, learn the music.

Some special quotes might be appropriate at this point and you really need to take these comments to heart.

The director waving his arms has never won a contest. Seventy percent of the chorus members producing the correct notes and words have not won a contest. The same percentage of chorus members cannot create an outstanding chapter show that will literally capture an audience and send them home wishing that next year's

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## Yours 4 A Song

**Dan Bezaire, Music & Performance VP**

### Harmony Round-Up and other stuff

**I**t was all over in a flash! Months of preparation, with a lot of attention to details, last minute surprises of the unpleasant kind ... sorta sounds like putting on the annual show, doesn't it?

It was my first Round-Up, as DVP M&P, and I certainly learned a lot. Of course, it would not have happened without Russ Seely, my esteemed predecessor. If things went smoothly, it was because of Russ.

It was pretty tense for the last couple of weeks before the actual event, not knowing how many students to expect, and the last minute cancellation of the headline quartet, but it turned out pretty well. The vast majority of comments on the evaluation sheets were very positive, and also encouraging. Financially, we did OK, meaning we didn't lose money.

About 85 men attended, counting 10 quartets. This was in addition to the 60+ attendees at Al Bonney's YMIH event, A Cappella Blast! This was an unqualified success, and we hope to integrate their activities more into ours. (The biggest complaint from the boys was that they couldn't sing enough with the older Barber-

shoppers.)

We had a great teaching staff, including Jerry Knickerbocker, Ron Knickerbocker, David Krause, Denny Gore, Glenn Van Tassell, and Bill Rashleigh, as well as our own district faculty. Jerry, Denny, and Glenn deserve special mention because these gentlemen were pressed into service at the last minute. That sounds like they had to be coaxed, but the truth is, they readily agreed to fill in when REVIVAL had to withdraw due to a family crisis. Thanks, guys!

The biggest challenge we have is attendance. Our goal, as suggested by the Society, is 10 percent of the total membership of the district. This works out to approximately 130 men for the weekend. We were well short of that mark. We would love to have another 50 or 60 men come to MSU for that weekend. But how do we get them there?

This is what the M&P committee has to figure out, but we would like your input. What would it take to get more Joe Barbershoppers to Harmony Round-Up? More classes? A champion quartet?

If you have any ideas about this, please contact your music & performance VP, or you can e-mail me directly at <dbezaire@wincom.net>.

\* \* \*

As you may recall, last February

we held a Chorus Coaching Clinic in Lansing. We hope to do that again in 2002. We have no details as yet, but if anyone has suggestions, please send them along. We are looking into the possibility of using MSU as a facility for this event, and that should help keep the costs down.

\* \* \*

Have you heard of the Standing Ovation Program? This is a way to have your show package evaluated according to certain established criteria.

How it works is that you invite an evaluator to your show, and you receive an evaluation based on the entertainment value of the package. This is not a judgment on your chorus's musical performance, but a tool to help improve your show and get that standing ovation.

For more info, contact your chapter M&P VP or me. ■

## Fred Kienitz

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show was going to be held tomorrow.

You need to listen to your chorus tapes and spend time studying and memorizing your part (and the words that accompany the notes). You need to attend all rehearsals, spend time learning your music and choreography, and develop an attitude that the success or failure of the performance is your responsibility alone.

You need to develop an inner sense that if you fail your chapter in this endeavor, then there is a good chance that (failure) could be the ultimate result.

No Barbershop chorus is ever better than its weakest voice. ■

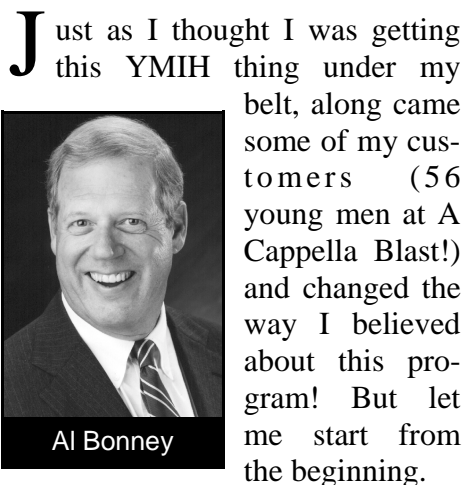


Dan Bezaire

## Young Men in Harmony

### Al Bonney, District Chairman

# Youth — changing our district



Al Bonney

**J**ust as I thought I was getting this YMIH thing under my belt, along came some of my customers (56 young men at A Cappella Blast!) and changed the way I believed about this program! But let me start from the beginning.

Dave Anderson and I, in cooperation with Ken and Vicki Gibson, began designing A Cappella Blast! back in December. Never did we guess that we would TOTALLY miss one of the major components of the weekend.

We planned in fun and we programmed in a couple of great quartets (REVIVAL and FOUR MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR!). We planned for special food for the young men and took into account that they liked fun T-shirts. We designed all of the brochures and promoted the heck out of the program (and got great help from many chapters who knew teachers and helped spread the word — thanks!).

All in all, we thought we did a pretty thorough job.

But never did we suspect that 16-year-old young men would

WANT to sing with us older guys!

Before I get too far into this, let me say that throughout the weekend, one could find intergenerational singing in many places during every free moment between classes and coaching sessions. I was not necessarily surprised at this, but who would ever have imagined that one of the MOST IMPORTANT components of the weekend would be when the young men got to sing with the older guys. It's true!

The teachers loved it. They called us GOOD MENTORS and EXCELLENT ROLE MODELS. (While this is certainly true, I did not expect to hear it from them in the context that they thought the time we spent singing with the boys was IMPORTANT to their musical education!)

The boys cited as the second-best thing about the weekend was singing WITH the older guys! (The best thing was the concert and singing FOR the older guys!) The boys LOVED listening to ALL of the quartets. If you didn't see them, I did; they were mesmerized when each of the quartets was on stage!

There is a lesson here for me. I had been convinced that if a quartet or a group of adult Barbershoppers wasn't a high B-level in com-

petition at least, that they should not represent us in the high schools — that the teachers would feel that they were not skilled enough to present to the students and would give the wrong impression of what good singing is.

While I think that there is validity to the concept that we should always present a musical product that presents our style in the best light, what I now believe is that ALL OF US can take part in YMIH activities in our chapters and that NONE OF US should ever be embarrassed to step forward and offer to sing with a young man — or to include a teacher in the singing.

There is another issue related to this that surprised me less, yet made me very proud.

We had organized two afterglows at Harmony Round-Up: one for the boys without beer, and one — same as always — for the adults with beer. What happened is that most of the boys left to go sing in the corridors — and many of the adults joined them! What really happened is that most everyone went to sing together — not to their afterglows. The adults had the time of their lives and the boys did, too.

Dave began a thread on the Pioneer Net in June discussing what everyone's opinion of having a non-alcoholic afterglow so the older guys and the younger guys could be together and sing after the show at one fun 'glow.

The results have been unanimous in support of one non-alcoholic afterglow, indicating that the Barbershoppers like singing with the boys as much as the boys like singing with us.

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## The Judge's Corner

**Ed Fritzen, Contest & Judging VP**

# Singing category requires artistic singing in the Barbershop style



Ed Fritzen

**F**or those of you who have been looking forward to this article in each *Troubadour*, I apologize for not submitting an article for the last issue.

To tell the truth, the deadline snuck up on me and I was in the midst of preparing for the spring contest as well as for the Pioneer District Harmony Round-Up.

I promise I'll do better in the future.

I would first of all like to thank all those who participated in the "Introduction to Judging" class at Harmony Round-Up. I have received numerous compliments and have been encouraged to make this course available for future Harmony Round-Ups as well as for those chapters interested in learning more about the judging program. Those who attended the course found it worthwhile.

Thanks again to all those who attended.

As promised, in each article I'd like to touch on one aspect of the

judging program. Since I'm a certified judge in the singing category, this month I'll talk a little about that category.

Very simply put, the singing judge judges the degree to which the performer achieves artistic singing in the Barbershop style. To achieve truly artistic performances, the quartet or chorus must exhibit a high degree of vocal skill, precise intonation, and a high level of unity and consistency within the ensemble.

When these elements are mastered, the result is a fullness of sound, which has been referred to as either expanded sound or "lock and ring." This fullness of sound is one of the hallmarks of the Barbershop style.

When artistry is present, these elements are natural, unmanufactured, and free from apparent effort. In other words, the listener is not drawn to the technique, but only to the emotional impact of the performance.

That's the singing category in a nutshell. In future articles, I'll expand on each of these elements, as well as the relationships between the singing category and music and presentation.

During the last contest, we had a quartet disqualified in the semi-final round for choice of song. I'm sure many of you might be a little confused as to the reason why.

The song in question is a Society-published arrangement of "If There's Anybody Here in My Hometown." The song certainly is a fun song to sing, and was well performed by the quartet.

Unfortunately, the arrangement violated one of the rules of what makes a good Barbershop song. In particular: Barbershop harmony is a style of unaccompanied vocal music characterized by consonant four-part chords for every melody note in a predominantly homophonic texture.

This is stated in the very first line of the "Definition of the Barbershop Style." The arrangement featured excessive non-homophonic patterns and, at one point, two melodies.

Thus, a severe penalty resulted.

If you have any questions about the suitability of a song for contest, please ask a judge — preferably a music judge — before you take the song to contest.

Finally, by the time you read this, our International quartet and chorus contests will be history, and I'll take this space to congratulate our Pioneer representatives, POWER PLAY, PRIVATELY FUNDED, and the GREAT LAKES CHORUS on what I'm sure will be fine performances. I'll be cheering for you in Nashville.

Also, wish our Pioneer judges luck as they attend category school in July for extensive training and re-certification. I'll be attending along with Roger Lewis and Mike O'Donnell in the presentation category. ■

# Quartets Champions Association

## Al Fisk, Secretary

### Spotlight on Glenn Van Tassell

*Greetings, gang! This month's bio is in his own words. He's gonna hate me for saying this, but I grew up watching him in a variety of terrific quartets ... heh-heh. May I introduce the one and only, Mr. Glenn E. Van Tassell. (Thunderous applause)*

A farm kid born in out-state New York, I had the good fortune to be raised in a very musical family. Mother, Ruth, was a very fine contralto soloist who also played piano quite well. Father, Clayton, was a wonderful bass soloist and sang with Barbershop quartets long before our Society was formed.

We frequently sang together in harmony as we took family joy rides around the New York and Pennsylvania countryside. The result of this early and constant exposure to music was that the four boys and one girl of my generation of Van Tassells acquired a great appreciation of music.

I studied the violin for nine years, but was always more attracted to vocal music, taking a leading role in high school choir and in community vocal ensembles. I played violin with the county symphony — badly, but such intense exposure to music started me on a path that I could never abandon.

I sang solos as a boy soprano at age five, sang in every available vocal ensemble throughout my school years, worked in commu-

nity and high school theatrical productions, and joined the Society at age 15.

Though I had sung in one organized quartet, the EXCELSIOR FOUR, in Binghamton, New York, at the outset of my SPEBSQSA career, my first serious quartet experience came in Detroit in late 1953. I became the replacement baritone in the WOLVERINES, the reigning Michigan District champions. We competed in the International contest in Washington, D.C., in the summer of 1954, scoring 19th, and I was off to the races.

There was a long parade of quartets over the years: TREBLE MAKERS, COMBUST-A-CHORDS, AUTO TOWNERS, GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT, CENTER STAGE, FLORIDA TRANSFER, and SHENANIGANS. All of these quartets competed successfully at the district level and in international contests.

It has been my good fortune to sing with some very sharp people (Boy, there's an understatement!) and have sung in top-20 quartets in five decades, the 50s, 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s. The AUTO TOWNERS won fourth place in the International contest in 1965 and first place gold in 1966. GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT placed fourth in 1970 and first in 1971. CENTER STAGE was fourth in 1981 and second in 1982, 1983, and 1984.

The inimitable Dave LaBar once said, "Glenn has competed in 23 international quartet contests

and lost all but two of them."

Someone once said, "There must be some sort of secret to explain the good fortune to have sung with so many good quartets." I said then — and I still say — that there *is* one big secret, and that is to find three other really good singers and try your best not to mess them up.

In addition to this odyssey of joyful quartet experience, I became involved in the Society's judging program. I was a certified interpretation judge for 15 years, serving on judging panels in many of our districts and on the International contest panel in 1987.

Intense exposure to the finest experts in the many aspects of general musical skills and specifically to Barbershop quartet and chorus work has given me a treasure trove of information and the insights with which to coach quartets and choruses and to function as a chorus director. I have always believed that our special kind of music is unique in that people of widely diverse levels of skill can perform it and enjoy it thoroughly.

I see my current role as that of a teacher, of one who can share my experience with others who like to sing and who express a desire to do it better. I am frequently involved in coaching quartets and choruses throughout the Society.

There is much to be said for the building of musical skills that can occur in a lifetime of experience in Barbershop music. Even more can be said for the great joy of having shared in the quest for musical growth with so many great contributors to our special form of music.

And just think — it isn't over yet. ■

## The New Wrinkle “talk of the town”

By Pam Frucci

This past spring, a new senior quartet in the Pioneer District, THE NEW WRINKLE, was formed. Their first performance was for a home-bound couple on Grosse Ile. Then they serenaded three 90-plus-year-old ladies in their homes on the island, including tenor Jack Frucci's mother-in-law, Bernie Marsh.



THE NEW WRINKLE at Southland's food court. (from left) Bari Ed Condor, lead J. Kelly Brummett, bass Walt Quick, and tenor Jack Frucci.

They later sang for the residents of the Hearstone Nursing Home in Brownstown Twp. There the quartet was referred to as “the talk of the town.”

Soon after, the quartet had a gig the food court at Southland Shopping Center in Taylor.

After receiving some excellent coaching at Harmony Round-Up, the foursome is planning to compete in the district's senior quartet contest this fall. ■

## How I got hooked”

By Gordon Dubrul

Tenor, GOOD NEWS SINGERS quartet,  
Grosse Pointe Chapter

Starting in grade school, I always enjoyed most our choir's a cappella songs.

In 1947, while still in high school, my choir director brought to my attention an article in the local paper mentioning the Oakland County Chapter and their search for “men who like to sing.” I went, got lost, and finally arrived just in time to catch the end of the business meeting.

At that point, four guys ambled to the front, blew the pitch pipe, and let fly with “I'm a Comin a Courtin' Carrabelle” — the five (I think) times top-five CLEF DWELLERS just blew my socks off.

Before the evening was over, I tried to join the Society right then and there, but was informed that there was a waiting period of three months ... thus I didn't become a member until January 1948, when my (can you believe it) \$5.00 annual dues was accepted. ■



## The Barbershop lead's creed

By David Bailey-Aldrich

- We will not flaunt in front of others the fact that we have the best voice in the group (unless the music calls for it, which it usually does).
- We will do our best to stay in tune, but won't say too much about that since the other guys have to follow us anyway.
- As consummate gentlemen, we will continue to let the basses feel like they're the most important part of the group, even though, without the melody, they would have nothing to harmonize with.
- As we focus on shaping and caressing a song, if we forget a word (or all of them), we won't worry since the other guys have to follow us anyway.
- We will never allow a baritone to sing louder than us, even when we're on the seventh. The melody must be heard!
- In a chorus, although we will do our best to follow the director, we realize that we have to take advantage of all of the opportunities in a song to show off our wonderful lead voice. After all, that's what the audience has come to hear, right?
- We will do our best to cover the fact that the baritone has a weak, emaciated instrument. Otherwise, he'd be singing lead.
- When a coach/director advises us that we were under pitch, or too loud, we will always nod appreciatively, all the while knowing that we were just doing what the composer/arranger originally intended (even if the coach/director IS the composer/arranger). ■

# Power Play medals again!

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

**L**ove scores well. Sincerity scores well. Heartfelt storytelling through song scores well.

And they all scored well for POWER PLAY as the Pioneer District family quartet again achieved adulation within the inner circle of International medalists.

The Slamkas placed fifth for the second consecutive year in quartet competition. They also achieved the even more exclusive ranking of second place in the finals round.

Last year, they were second in the semi-finals.

Not only in competition, but throughout the convention, a tangible bond of affection flowed both ways among the Slamkas and their Barbershop friends — and even among the country music enthusiasts in “The Music City.”

The bond was felt even when Don, Jack, Mark, and Mike weren’t around. People seeing POWER PLAY name tags and badges would enthusiastically ask for one.

Many observed how they were mesmerized by the quartet’s ability to share the feelings in a song. It was said so often that it’s almost become a mantra.

“It’s an inside vision,” said Dave Anderson of Macomb. “They’re able to bring what’s inside themselves to the listener. You

can just see and feel their hearts.”

On stage, “the level of competition this year was just awesome,” said Ed Fritzen of Kalamazoo, a certified singing judge. “Believe me, with the level of competition this year, that was quite an accomplishment. Overall, they did themselves proud.”



## Second place in finals

Team Slamka powered ahead to achieve second place for the final round.

The finals performance “was nothing short of miraculous,” opined Macomb Chapter President Gary Washburn, scoring more than 100 points higher than their previous two rounds. “Only three sets in the entire contest scored better,” Washburn observed, “and all three belonged to 2001 champion MICHIGAN JAKE.”

POWER PLAY placed fifth in the quarter-finals and seventh in the semi-finals. Despite this drop in rank, their scoring difference between the two rounds was only five points.

The total score of 7,818 for all

three rounds was only 13 points away from fourth-place RIPTIDE and 37 points below third-place FOUR VOICES, a fast-rising college quartet from the Dixie District. Coming in second was UPTOWN SOUND, and MICHIGAN JAKE led the pack with 8,144 points.

In the finals, POWER PLAY led off with “I’ve Been Working on the Railroad,” the same number they sang the night before at the Grand Ole Opry.

This arrangement by Judge Roger Payne also was sung by three other quartets in competition — at the World Harmony Jam-boree, at the collegiate quartet contest, and at the chorditoriums.

But POWER PLAY’S rendition, with the bass solo by dad/uncle Jack Slamka, ranked at the top.

## Barbershop classics

Roger, writing on the *Harmonet* e-mail list, also noted that “a lot of our competitors were re-energizing Barbershop classics this year.” For POWER PLAY, he listed “at least five classics out of six,” then added, “I personally would say six after hearing how brilliantly Michael (the lead) sings ‘Time After Time.’”

The Slamkas have long been known for their selection of traditional numbers that tell a story and the way they exude the emotion of the song. The score sheets this year

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## Power Play

(Continued from page 16)

confirm that approach, as the judges favored the mellow ballads over the uptunes.

"The Sunshine of Your Smile" scored higher than "Railroad" in the finals, "Moonlight Becomes You" outpointed "I Love the Way You Roll Your Eyes" in the semi-finals, and "Time after Time" received more points than "Play That Barbershop Chord" in the quarter-finals.

And, proving POWER PLAY's ability to sell a song, their scores in the presentation category were higher than the music and singing category scores for every song.

### Ribbons and autographs

The district distributed several hundred yellow ribbons promoting the district competitors.

And John and Elaine Szewc of Macomb showed up with hundreds of computer-generated stick-on tags promoting POWER PLAY, with a district logo and a small color photo of the quartet surrounded by the words: "#1 PO"WOW"ER PLAY." Elaine said she came up with the idea while thinking about POWER PLAY and eating "WOW" potato chips.

The Slamkas were met by autograph-seekers upon leaving the stage at the Society chorditorium — just as they were in country music territory at the Opry.

And next?

"As of now, there is no clear-cut favorite to win the gold at the 2002 convention in Portland," said Ed Fritzen. "Any of the quartets placing 2-10 this year, especially in the top five, have a legitimate shot." ■

# Power Play performs at Grand Ole Opry

In the heartland of country music, POWER PLAY captured the hearts of country-music lovers.

Pioneer District's bronze-medal Barbershop quartet was invited to sing on the Grand Ole Opry show during the International convention in Nashville. This, Society spokesman Reed Sampson said, "provides us the chance to reach yet another segment of the American public that loves music."

And that it certainly did.

Average attendance at Opry shows has been about 2,400, said Kitty Slamka, the family quartet mom. But she said the audience that night was 4,000 — clearly including a large contingent of Barbershoppers, too.

Further, the show was broadcast nationwide by Nashville Radio WSM and carried worldwide by the Society's audio Webcast.

Host Jim Ed Brown's introduction was interrupted by a large ovation even before the quartet began singing "I've Been Working on the Railroad."

Another ovation came upon Jack Slamka's bass solo.

And, as they hit the tag, Sonny Griffith of Greencastle, Ind., told the *Harmonet*, "I'm sure only the radio audience could hear them finish, due to the deafening applause."

Guest performers at the Opry do only one number, and this is

pretty well fixed because the show must fit broadcast time constraints, lead Mike Slamka later told a chorditorium audience.

But when the applause quieted down, Griffith reported, host Jim Ed told the Slamkas, "If you think I'm going to follow that, you're crazy. You better get back up there and do something," apparently giving up the song that he would have done next.

This was a very rare occurrence, Mike said later.

The quartet selected "My Foolish Heart," which it has done in the Pioneer District after winning the spring contest. The solos in the arrangement showcase the musicality of the individual voices, most often heard only as part of the well-blended family unit.

This was met with another ovation in the Opry hall of country music.

The adulation didn't end on stage. Behind the stage, a band that hadn't heard the quartet asked the Slamkas to sing for them, Kitty said. They did.

Baritone Mark Slamka, himself a country-music fan, was gathering autographs. But POWER PLAY also was greeted with requests for their autographs.

It suddenly made them realize that they might be famous, too. ■

# Great Lakes Chorus wows Nashville audience

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

**T**he GREAT LAKES CHORUS went to the International convention in Nashville in July to share the fun, and they succeeded.

They also sang better, say two judges who weren't on the International competition panel.

The elaborate GREAT LAKES CHORUS baseball parody sent laughs through the audience several times.

The greatest reaction — surprise and glee — came as Society music staffer Bill Rashleigh appeared to restore order to an off-the-beat "Take Me Out to the Ball Game."

Applause filled the auditorium as the set concluded; the chorus started a baseball "wave" from the risers and it carried out across a third of the audience of thousands in the giant arena.

The chorus put 58 men on stage, a third of whom hadn't been to an international convention. This was up from 54 in last fall's district competition and 39 in the international appearance last summer. It placed 21st among the 21 competitors, scoring 2,208 points.

## Northbrook is champ

The new international chorus champion — finally, after eight years in second place — is THE NEW TRADITION CHORUS from Northbrook, Ill., succeeding last year's champ, the DALLAS VOCAL

MAJORITY.

Northbrook won with 2,810 points, a wide margin of 50 points over second-placer TORONTO NORTHERN LIGHTS.

Others in the top five were the ALEXANDRIA HARMONIZERS, the AMBASSADORS OF HARMONY from St. Charles, Mo., and GREAT AMERICAN CHORUS from Lake County, Ill. (including Pioneer past president Dave Cole of Holland).



## Chorus improved

The International score sheets don't indicate the amount of work that went into the performance and the singing improvement as seen by judges who have a perspective of Grand Rapids beyond just this performance.

"Grand Rapids did a great job; the performance was polished and very entertaining," said Ed Fritzen of Kalamazoo, a certified singing judge. "The level of competition gets better each year. I felt Grand Rapids sang better than I've heard them sing in long time."

Ed said was at the contest with another singing judge, who has judged in Pioneer. "He, too, was

impressed with the improved singing demonstrated by the GREAT LAKES CHORUS."

This is the most intricate, most active production a Pioneer District chorus has attempted in competition in several years. "The concept, ideas, writing, schtick, and props were virtually all created by chapter members," said Jack Schneider, chapter president. The wave idea, suggested by a mem-

ber, was added after the chorus arrived in Nashville.

The chorus often has sung and performed as a group, with movements in unison. One of its challenges this time was to act like individuals, baseball fans in the stands, doing several different things at once while maintaining the overall unity of the production.

Outside coaching came from Bill Rashleigh, who became a dual member of the chapter, along with help from Battle Creek's Roger Lewis, a presentation judge.

## Baseball field on stage

As the curtain opened, several banks of ballpark lights and a

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# Privately Funded places 17th at Nashville

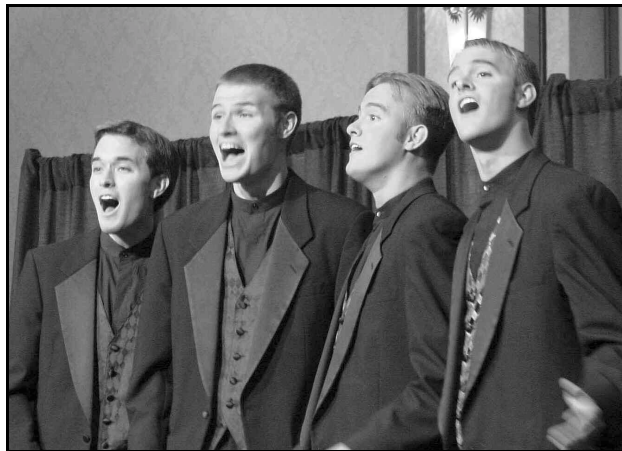
**P**RIVATELY FUNDED from Hillsdale College (tenor A. J. Siegmann, lead Jason Siegmann, bass Dan Simson, and bari David Talcott) placed 17th among 20 quartets in the International College Quartet Contest in Nashville.

They scored 683 points singing "Mistakes" and "Love/Eyes Medley."

The quartet also had ranked 17th in spring comparisons of scores among all of the college quartets qualifying for international in their various districts. PRIVATELY FUNDED'S package then was "Love/Eyes Medley" and "Goodnight Sweetheart."

The quartet's score in the spring would have put it in seventh place in district competition.

PRIVATELY FUNDED has sung in the Pioneer spring college contest



for three consecutive years, scoring significantly higher each time.

The college quartet winner was REPRISE from Brigham Young University in the Rocky Mountain District. They were followed by CATFISH BLEND (Johnny Appleseed), LOW DOWN SOUND (Dixie), FORMAL AFFAIR (Sunshine), and THE CLASSICS (Mid-Atlantic).

The Hillsdale quartet's coaches have included Lynne Peirce, Huron Valley's chorus director.

In a letter to the PioNet, Lynne wrote: "I was impressed with these young men. They are so coachable, so respectful, and so eager to learn.

Their enthusiasm is so

sincere and contagious, their awe of the talent in our organization so genuine.

"What I love most is that they have no idea how good they are. They are knowledgeable about our craft, our organization, and our history like few others of us are.

"We have a lot to learn from them." ■

## Notes on Privately Funded

By Al Bonney

**T**o my ears, PRIVATELY FUNDED sang an entertaining and enjoyable contest set. While the scores did not reflect it (They scored higher in the district prelims than they did in Nashville.), I thought they sang with more confidence and energy than we witnessed in Battle Creek in April.

Three members of the quartet graduated from Hillsdale College in June. Dan Simson has left for a mission in Uganda. A. J. and Jason Siegmann are seeking employment in their fields of study, marketing and finance, in the southern Michigan job market. Only David Talcott remains at Hillsdale.

In fact, all of the Barbershop

plans are up in the air for these four singers as they now have their lives to rearrange, new countries to adjust to, and careers to launch. Jason said, "We all love Barbershopping and hope to be able to return when the time is right. Hopefully, A. J. and I will be able to join up when the rest of our lives are in order."

I asked the quartet their thoughts about working with the Pioneer District and their views on the college competition. A. J. said, "We learned a great deal about singing and competing through the CBQC and think it was an invaluable benefit to have been able to sing both in the prelims and in the International contest."

Jason added, "Lynne Peirce was a wonderful asset to us for

this year's competition. I wish we had met her earlier. She was so generous with her talents and time; we will never be able to adequately repay her kindness."

So ends one chapter in a YMIH story and a new one opens. This is what YMIH is about — building platforms on which young men grow and then jump off into other life interests. Sometimes we get to see and enjoy the results, sometimes we don't.

In the case of PRIVATELY FUNDED, we watched the young men grow in skill and stature during their three years in Pioneer. We know they love our hobby, and I bet one day soon we will see them on the risers with a Pioneer chorus — and who knows — maybe with a quartet, too! ■

## Interview with Power Play Coach Darryl Flinn

*Power Play was superb and showed a great deal of poise in international competition this year. But a journey toward the gold will be one of high pressure, said the quartet's coach, Darryl Flinn, Society executive director and a contest judge.*

*Darryl responded to e-mailed questions a few days after the convention.*

**How well does it appear they did in comparison to last year?**

In what was a stronger contest, POWER PLAY was superb. Even though the judges did not agree, I thought their second-set ballad, "Moonlight Becomes You," was the ballad of the contest.

**What appeared to be the quartet's strong points?**

Poise. The air is filled with a

strange substance that some call "gold dust." That's to say that it's VERY difficult to control your emotions and your body and your voice when you are at that level of competition. POWER PLAY is gaining ground and can now do their very best on the international contest stage.

**Any comments on their song selection, especially "I've Been Working on the Railroad"?**

"Railroad" was a last-minute insertion and, of course, was the tune they selected to sing for the Opry crowd. What a crowd favorite! It is a Roger Payne chart and found favor with at least two other quartets. POWER PLAY always wants to present good Barbershop to their fans. "Railroad" is just the ticket.

**What does the scoring in various categories tell you?**

That they should sing nothing but ballads. 8~)

**Your perception of the support and backing POWER PLAY has among Joe Barbershopper?**

Only this: I want to be in the room when they are announced winners. It will be a cheer heard 'round the world.

**What do you think of their chances of winning first place in the next few years?**

A lot will be in direct proportion to the pressure the young guys and their families must endure to keep up the enormous pressure to always go for the gold. POWER PLAY can't just go out and have fun. They need to perform like contenders. Huge pressure here. ■

# Steppin' Out

**November 17, 2001**

Macomb Center for the Performing Arts

Clinton Township - 44575 Garfield Road at M-59/Hall Road

**Great Lakes Chorus  
&  
Shoreline Sound Chorus**  
*Sweet Adelines International*

**"Late Night Barbershop"**  
*Barbershop Harmony Society comedy quartet*

**"Spotlight"**  
*Sweet Adelines Border Lakes Region Two  
2001 Champions*



## TICKETS

3 p.m. \$16 Advance, \$14 Senior/Student  
At the door—\$18

7:30 p.m. \$18 Advance, \$20 At the door  
(Group of 10 or more discount available)

Make check payable to "Great Lakes Chorus"

Louise Dimattia (810) 566-5965

49700 Potomac Court

Shelby Township, MI 48314

Please send self-addressed, stamped envelope



# What does SPEBSQSA mean to you?

## A director's pre-retirement thoughts

By Marty Chirgwin

*The following article was written by Traverse City Chapter's Musical Director Marty Chirgwin as he announced his retirement this past spring after leading the Cherry Capital Chorus for the last 28 years.*

When Barbershoppers are asked the familiar question "What does SPEBSQSA mean?" we enthusiastically respond with a fairly simple, generally accepted definition relating to the preservation and encouragement of the art form of four-part Barbershop-style singing.

I would like to share some quotes (as applied to Barbershop-singing) and personal thoughts that suggest SPEBSQSA is a society of the "greatest men on earth" that preserves and encourages individual participation, achievement, satisfaction, a general sense of well-being, and a basic love for life ... through Barbershop singing.

A. K. Chalmers stated: *"The grand essentials of happiness are: something to do, something to love, and something to hope for."* The Society and specifically the Traverse City Chapter's CHERRY CAPITAL CHORUS (CCC) are prime examples of providing those happiness essentials.

Barbershopping provides a multitude of opportunities for every member to "give and receive" accordingly. Each individual contribution makes possible collective achievements and a mutually creative satisfaction for all partici-

pants. *"Any activity becomes creative when the doer cares about doing it right or doing it better."* - John Updike.

The CCC has always provided a full spectrum of activities and opportunities to assist and encourage each man to reach his creative potential. *"Opportunities are usually disguised as hard work, so most people don't recognize them."* - Ann Landers.

*"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world for indeed that's all who ever have."* - Margaret Mead. The Society and its chapters are all perfect examples and proof of that quote. We are continually blessed by caring and dedicated men who "step up" and give freely of their time, talents, and expertise for the mutual benefit of all.

*"The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it."* - William James. Now that's "preservation!" What a great way to go through life!

The CCC puts an "exclamation mark" on the end of every rehearsal by singing the tag, SINGING BARBERSHOP IS LOVE. That statement truly summarizes what we are all about. It is great to

be a Barbershopper! When a man opens his heart and mind and gets "in tune" with all the multifaceted benefits of being a Barbershopper, that's when he discovers what SPEBSQSA really means.

I would like to acknowledge and give my heartfelt thanks to the loving, caring, and giving gentlemen of the Society, the Pioneer District, and the CCC. I thank you for the special friendships, camaraderie, and extraordinary life experiences we have shared over the last 35 years.

I would especially like to thank the CCC for the honor and privilege of serving as your chorus director for a wonderfully harmonious 28 years. I must have taken Theodore Roosevelt to heart when he said, *"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."*

I greatly appreciate each and every man's contributions, dedication, long-term support, and loyalty to the CCC and me. The beautiful experiences we have shared through the years will remain in our hearts and minds forever. I am extremely grateful for the many blessings I've received through my involvement with the CCC through the years. THANK YOU!

*"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no one can sincerely try to help another without helping oneself."* - Ralph Waldo Emerson.

I wish the CCC continued growth and success in all its future endeavors.

BREAK A LEG! ■

**Note:** All photos of the International Convention appearing in this issue were courtesy of Jamie Bree-don and Dan Proctor.

## Great Lakes Chorus

*(Continued from page 18)*

baseball scoreboard on stilts were behind the stands, filled with fans. Ballfield ad signs, players' benches, and a green carpet of infield with home plate, a pitcher's mound, and three bases were in front.

Dan Casamatta was shirtless among the fans. The big TV monitors caught this and many other close-ups of the package's schtick.

Ten chorus members are in their teens. Eight, aged 11-14, were on the Great Lakes Little League player benches. One was Jay Carey, 11, son of director Jamie Carey, slated to pitch a game.

The song started mournfully: "On a Sunday morn, sat a boy forlorn, with his teammates by his side. Just before the game, it began to rain ... ." Some fans on the risers were wearing slickers, a few raised umbrellas.

Jamie as the "coach" went to Jay to "wipe away each tear," saying with the fans, "Wait 'til the sun shines, Billy ... you'll be a hero." Billy dreamed of being a Derek Jeter superstar.

The game finally began; Jay pitched three straight strikes, and was hoisted by the other young players in a victory pose.

### Yankees on deck

As the applause sounded, the scoreboard sign changed from Little League to Yankee Stadium, Detroit vs. New York. Several Yanks took over the field to warm up.

A vendor tossed hot dogs to fans. A Yankee signed an autograph for little fan Jay Carey. An agent with a suitcase handed a wad of money to Yankee "Manager" Jamie Carey.

"Take Me Out to the Ballgame" moved into a "That's Why We Play Ball" interlude, then into the "one, two, three strikes" conclusion off the beat. Jay tugged at Jamie to get his attention for quite a while before he realized something was wrong.

Amid the ruckus, Jamie was ejected and Bill Rashleigh came on stage to save the day with "four balls, you're safe."

A similar celebratory pose ended the song with Bill in the victory spot, briefly, until Jamie took him out and again assumed the closing role of a winner — as the whole chorus did at International.

The chorus has a special memento of the experience. A representative of the VOCAL MAJORITY, always a class act, visited a rehearsal in Nashville and handed a VM welcoming pin to each Grand Rapids chorus member. ■

## Youth get experience

**Y**outh added an extra dimension to the GREAT LAKES CHORUS convention experience, and is continuing back at home in Grand Rapids.

Several teens and a pre-teen, director Jamie Carey's son, Jay, were up front as Little League players during the competition baseball set.

But "these guys weren't just there for their acting ability; they were singers," said bass Jeff Chesnut. "They had to turn in tapes and qualify for the right to go, just like the rest of us."

And it's not stopping with the convention, the first one for the young men. "They were planning

to bring a bunch of their friends to guest night on July 31," Jeff said.

One of the boys, Chris Markey, 14, was bitten by the "tag bug" while in Nashville. Anytime he saw three or more guys together, "he would walk up and ask if he could sing with them," Jeff said. "Chris must have sung with half the guys in Nashville by the time we left. He was also inspired to start learning the tenor part and can't wait to start a quartet."

"The future of our Society," Jeff added, "is in good hands with youth like these."

This recalls the fact that Roger Lewis of Battle Creek, who will be Society president in 2002, joined the Society 40 years ago after quartetting in high school as

a result of a Grand Rapids Chapter Youth Outreach program.

### Other observations

Jeff also had other observations about the Grand Rapids experience. "In the past, we have been a 'stand and sing' chorus at International. This year, we wanted to breathe more life into our performance and really strive to entertain our audience. The most difficult hurdle was that we had so much fun and energy that it was difficult not to gang sing. It wasn't until we were in Nashville that we all got a handle on that.

"An extra touch was added to the show: The scoreboard read 'Gordon Field' in honor of bass

*(Continued on page 27)*

# **PIONEER DISTRICT 2001 FALL CONVENTION**

**October 19-21, 2001**

**BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN**

## **CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM**

**PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY**

REGISTRANT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE/GUEST NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

COMPETING CHORUS? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ CHORUS NAME \_\_\_\_\_

COMPETING QUARTET? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ QUARTET NAME \_\_\_\_\_

CHAPTER NAME \_\_\_\_\_

VOICE PART: TENOR \_\_\_\_\_ LEAD \_\_\_\_\_ BARITONE \_\_\_\_\_ BASS \_\_\_\_\_

EARLY REGISTRATION: \$20 PER PERSON; LATE REGISTRATION: \$25 PER PERSON

**EARLY REGISTRATION MUST BE RECEIVED NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 5, 2001**

If you wish to purchase tickets to the Friday, October 19, Pioneer District Quartet Champions Show, you must enclose \$5.00 for each ticket.

FEE FOR \_\_\_\_\_ PERSONS @ \$20/\$25

FEE FOR \_\_\_\_\_ PERSONS @ \$5.00 EACH

TOTAL FEES: \_\_\_\_\_

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: **PIONEER DISTRICT, SPEBSQSA, INC.**

or MASTERCARD or VISA # \_\_\_\_\_ EXPIRATION DATE \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM AND FEES TO:

**Stan Williams, Treasurer**

**421 Franklin Street**

**Leslie, MI 49251-9491**

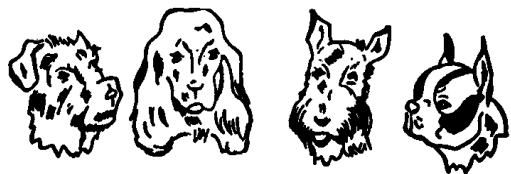
All-event passes will be at the convention registration desk in McCamly Plaza Hotel (headquarters). Single-event tickets may be purchased at the registration desk or W. K. Kellogg Auditorium: Friday \$12; Saturday noon \$12; Saturday eve \$12. Children 12 and under are free.

Each member of a competing quartet or chorus **must** register for an all-events pass. Failure

to do so could disqualify the quartet or chorus from the contest.

**Refund policy:** Registration fees will be refunded to persons canceling **in writing** prior to the 10:00 a.m. convention opening on Friday.

District convention facilities are handicap accessible. Please indicate any special requirements you need to fully participate.



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# PIONEER DISTRICT 2001 FALL CONVENTION

## October 19-21, 2001

### HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

- All spaces must be filled out completely -- **type or print clearly.**
- Hotels require a credit card guarantee.
- All acknowledgements will be sent to the individual whose name and address appears below.
- Confirmation will be sent directly by your assigned hotel.
- Any changes in reservations must be made directly to the hotel after confirmation is received.
- **Do not send any room deposits to the Housing Bureau.**
- Reservation requests must be received no later than **September 19, 2001. We will not accept room requests after this date.**

PLEASE MAIL FORM DIRECTLY TO:

**Battle Creek Visitor & Convention Bureau**  
**77 E. Michigan Ave., Suite 100**  
**Battle Creek, Michigan 49017**

**Phone 1-800-397-2240 Fax 1-616-962-6917**

Hotel should confirm this reservation to:

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF ROOM:

☐ 1 bed (1-2 persons)

☐ 2 beds (2-4 persons)

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Days): ( \_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Names of additional people in room:

#### **HOTEL RATES** (not including taxes)

*Please number in order of preference*

McCamly Plaza Hotel - \$84.00 flat rate ☐

(Headquarters hotel)

**(TWO-NIGHTS STAY REQUIRED)**

Baymont Inn & Suites - \$80.00 flat rate ☐

Quality Inn & Suites - \$79.95 flat rate ☐

Econo Lodge - \$48.95 flat rate ☐

☐ Non-smoking Room

☐ Handicap Room

☐ Special Request \_\_\_\_\_

#### **GUARANTEED RESERVATIONS:**

Credit Card: AE MC VISA DISC

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Party of Four hits airwaves

By Toby Shaver

They are a new group, but PARTY OF FOUR is already getting some great exposure for itself and for Barbershop. The quartet reached its largest audience ever in an appearance on the Dick Purtan & Purtan's People morning radio show on 104.3 FM, WOMC.



(Pictured l to r) Timmy Seguin, Toby Shaver, Dick Purtan, Wally Krause, and Kevin Morey.

The radio visit was part of a promotional segment for the Dearborn Food Festival, where PARTY OF FOUR performed and manned the food tent for Castaldi's Market and Grill, a restaurant where the four-some works as singing waiters. The guys sang one song and gave a quick promotion of the restaurant and the festival.

Dick Purtan has an estimated morning audience of about 500,000 listeners!

PARTY OF FOUR performs Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays at Castaldi's in Dearborn, Mich. ■

## Lansing quartet sings to state senators

By Bob Fox

Quartet RENAISSANCE was recently invited to sing for the opening of the Michigan Senate session. Traditionally, the Senate opens its sessions with a prayer, so the quartet was asked to sing "The Irish Blessing." It sang to the rapt attention of all of the senators and their staffs.

After the ceremony, RENAISSANCE had their pictures taken with Senate Majority Leader Dan DeGrow, long-time member; Senator Harry Gast, chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee; and Senator John Cherry, Senate Minority Leader.



(From left) Bari Mike Hansen, bass Bob Fox, lead Paul Jones, and tenor Tim Duman, singing from the podium in the State of Michigan Senate chambers.

All of the guys — well, all except a certain silver-haired bass — had to take an hour or two off work for the performance, but all agreed that it was well worth it. ■

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ACAPPELLA  
QUARTET

Doug Morgan

## Comments on the election of Roger Lewis as Society president

**Darryl Flinn, Society executive director:** "I've known Roger since way back in the early days of the Hounds and have always admired the balance in his life and in the way he approached his work and his Barbershop life.

"Roger works harder than most guys would ever guess. He is real deep into the details, yet has the ability to step back and look at the big picture. Roger leads by good ideas, consensus, and enthusiasm. Roger is a 'first things first' kind of a leader.

"Have you ever known a more likeable couple than Roger and Sue? These are folks who, if their treasures were to be measured by the number of their friends, they would be mighty wealthy people.

"I would be quick to tell you that every person on our headquarters staff welcomes the opportunity to work with Roger and to help him carry out his ambitious plans for the future of our beloved Society."

**Raleigh Bloch, Kalamazoo, Society board member:** "Many of us have heard the term 'The Right Stuff.' I feel Roger has the right stuff and will be a great Society president. Above all, he has the love of Barbershopping.

"He also has the people skills required, the organizational skills, the business acumen, along with the experience in Barbershop and business. He has the de-

sire to do the job, the energy to make it happen, and the vision to guide us. Oh, yes, he's a good singer, too.

"We all should feel proud and welcome the opportunity to have Roger direct us as we help him to take us to a new level in our Barbershop hobby."

**Al Bonney, Pioneer Executive VP:** "I have always found Roger interested and inquiring as to how to do things best or better. My corporate training taught me the need for 'continuous improvement' as a prerequisite for growth and ultimate success. Roger embodies this concept without 'fiddling' with the status quo.

"He reads the prodigious quantity of daily e-mail faithfully and picks out the nuggets that he can add value to and moves forward on those gems.

"We are lucky to have him in our district, but we are even more lucky to have him as our friend, contributing as he does to the ongoing health and future prosperity of our district. As the (if elected) president of the district next year, I look forward to having his counsel and mentorship, which I know he will continue to provide.

"Congratulations, Roger. The Pioneer District looks forward to supporting your presidency and programs." ■

## Youth get experience (Continued from page 22)

Gordon Sterzick, who was diagnosed with throat cancer and had surgery five days before the performance.

"When I looked at the photos of our chorus on the Society Web page, every one of our guys was really into it. We had several people tell us, 'You guys really set a high standard.' This was, as it was repeatedly said, one of the best chorus competitions ever." ■

## Great Lakes reflection

By Chris Lewis

It was an amazing experience. Nashville, being my first Barbershop competing experience at the international level, I truly was impressed by the talent and showmanship shown by all.

I also learned some valuable lessons about singing and competing while there. As a member of the GREAT LAKES CHORUS, we had the opportunity to take the stage, knowing we were opening an exciting day of competition.

We performed, had a great time on stage, and felt good about the performance. When the competition had ended and we found out our placement, there's no way to deny that, personally, I was a bit disappointed. Yet, my disappointment was short lived.

I feel lucky to have had the opportunity to have shared some talent, some music, and a lot of heart. As I believe the late Lou Perry said, "It's about the music."

I hope we all can live by this and celebrate our gifts. ■

**Bush League 2001  
September 28-30**

## Roger Lewis elected (Continued from page 1)

the Society's convention committee. He also helped develop Sing! An A Cappella Celebration, the three-day gathering of a cappella groups in Nashville that led into this summer's Society convention.

He has held several other Society positions and many in the district, including president, *Troubadour* editor, and convention manager. His convention manual is used throughout the Society, and visitors from other districts often compliment the Pioneer District on its convention operation. Roger also is a member of the district's prestigious Hall of Fame.

Roger's a strong supporter of youth programs, community outreach, and quartetting. He became a chapter member after a Grand Rapids Chapter youth program got him into high school quartetting. More recently, he co-chaired the Society's SingAmerica pilot program in Battle Creek. And besides singing with the HOUNDS, one of the 10 oldest quartets in the Society, he has been a quartet coach and is a presentation judge.

### Focus on singing

His motto will be: "SINGING IS LIFE ... the rest are just details."

The Society needs "a clear focus, a clear direction," he said. "We work on too many things, that take us in too many directions, and do not point toward a specific Society thrust."

His goal will be "to have all volunteers and staff focus on getting more men singing, and singing better.

"There are thousands of men out there, of all ages, who sing in

the shower, sing along with the radio, with CDs, sing to a loved one when the situation fits well-known lyrics — men who sing simply when they feel good.

"Barbershopping offers singable music, the kind that keeps running through your head, that you hum through your day.

"We offer the opportunity to be better singers. I believe the average man, when he visits a Barbershop chapter, discovers he's a better singer than he thought he was. In addition, our craft and training help him improve."

### Membership follows

Membership continues to be the Society's greatest concern, Roger said. But it's "a result, not a goal," he said.

"It's a result of good singing, good PR, good chapter programming, quartet promotion, greeting and treating guests properly, good community activity, performances, and involvement. The list can go on and on. The little things do count."

Little things like having a visitor sing a tag with three Barbershoppers and hearing himself ring a chord, one of Roger's favorite goals.

Roger's been married 26 years to Sue, a retired elementary teacher and chapter-at-large Sweet Adeline. They have three children and six grandchildren.

### Not a one-man job

Roger looks forward to "the challenge and the fun" of being president and hopes there's an equal balance of the two.

"I realize that it's not a 'one-man job,' but the opportunity to lead a great group of volunteers and staff. We have a terrific group of both." ■

## Youth — changing our district

(Continued from page 12)

A Cappella Blast! is with us to stay. We have a number of teachers around the state who value what our style does for their serious vocal music program and we have a lot of boys who LOVE singing our music.

We have already begun thinking of ways to improve the overall Harmony Round-Up/A Cappella Blast! event so that more boys and more Barbershoppers can experience the joys of growing in our hobby, singing and ringing our wonderful chords together and generally make this spring event the most exciting Barbershopping event of the year.

You can help us by telling me or anyone on the district Board what you would like to see happen at the re-invented harmony event.

We have already formed the development committee and are beginning planning and organizing for a real concert venue with bigger space for more activities.

We have written a grant request to help fund more coaches and perhaps secure an exciting master of ceremonies for the concert. (Wouldn't Freddie King be fun to have around all weekend?)

A Cappella Blast! has changed this event and youth will continue to change our district as we move forward through the years. The great thing is that most of you think, as Martha Stewart says, "It's a good thing!" ■

**Sing ... for life!**

## Society honors two in Pioneer District Barbershopper ends long-time radio show

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

**T**wo Pioneer District Barbershoppers — both from the Battle Creek Chapter — have been honored with PROBE Outstanding Achievement Awards.

Dick Campbell, for his radio work, and Roger Lewis, for Sing! An A Cappella Celebration, were among those recognized at the annual meeting of PROBE (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors) in Nashville.

These awards don't result from a contest, but rather are "special recognition for special accomplishments that promoted Barbershop harmony in a big way."

### Radio work honored

Dick was cited as host of "Keep America Singing," reputedly the longest-running a cappella vocal music radio show in the world.

He retired the show this past May after 25 years on Battle Creek radio. From the era of records through tapes to CDs, he played Barbershop harmony for half an hour a week. During the past year, the show audio also was streamed to the Web.

It was deemed the longest-running show of its kind by Debbie Baddour, the operator of a Contemporary A Cappella Society of America computer site, which lists nearly 40 such radio shows world wide.

On his show, Dick featured both Society and Sweet Adelines quartets and choruses. He interspersed the music with comments on the featured groups and information on the local chapters of

both organizations.

Dick also sang lead with various Barbershop quartets, including the SONG SPINNERS, and with the CEREAL CITY CHORUS. He was immediate past president and held several other chapter offices.

Dick's wife, Mary Jo, provided sign language for the anthems and "Keep America Singing" at many district conventions.

They have retired and moved to the Lake Huron shore near the top of the Thumb, about 90 miles from Saginaw. (Dick may have to start a new chapter there.) They can be reached at 4323 Main Street, Port Hope, MI 48468.

### SING! recognition

Roger was cited along with six others for creating and promoting Sing!, the three-day gathering of top a cappella groups that performed for Barbershoppers and other close-harmony enthusiasts as a lead-in to the Nashville convention.

He initiated the Sing! project in 1997 while he was Society events chairman and, the *Harmonizer* reported, he "was involved for several years before that in the discussions and decisions that led up to it." Roger subsequently became Society executive vice-president, and now is president-elect for 2002.

Others cited for Sing! were Tim Hanrahan, Robb Ollett, John Miller, Todd Anderson, Jim Bagby, and Bob Morrissey. ■

**Sing from the heart ...  
or don't bother!**

## Chapters in Action

### Saginaw-Bay

By Ralph Brown

**W**e are having another busy summer. The chorus and pick-up quartets have been treating the community with great performances at various functions.

One of our chapter quartets — HALF-TON PICK-UP, featuring bari Randy Meldrum (a Slim Fast salesman), bass Bob Deming (a physical fitness instructor), tenor Josh Biggs (a model for Victoria's Secret), and lead Paul Ward (a free-lance proctologist) — gave a volunteer performance at a local non-profit organization, Created for Caring.

We performed for the Girl Scouts of America annual meeting as a chorus and at the instigation of Marty Musolf, a quartet was formed and sang between chorus sets at individual tables.

Again this summer, we performed with the local Sweet Adelines at Wanona Park as part of the Bay Area Arts Council Summer Program.

We also had a special treat by the Sweet Adeline Region II Silver Medalist quartet, MOTOR CITY MIX. They are a fabulous quartet and gave the show an added element to make it well rounded. We were proud to appear with them because our director, Nan Wardin, sings lead in the quartet.

I have only mentioned a few of the activities for our chapter this summer and as Chorus Manager Jerry Hammond put it, "THIS AIN'T NO LAZY CHAPTER." ■



## Chapters in Action

### Sault Ste. Marie

By Bob Shami

#### What a way to end our year!

Some years, it can be a challenge to keep everyone in the chorus involved and interested in our weekly chapter meetings after the long run up of intense preparation and the resulting emotional high of the annual show. We've found the way to beat the post-show blues is to pack a lot of singing activities into our agenda.

The period from the annual show (April 7 this year) until we break for summer at the end of June is the ideal time for us to go out into the community and share the music we've spent all year learning. However, this year we may have outdone ourselves! Barbershop is indeed alive and well up North on both sides of the border.

Here's a look at our recent performance schedule:

April 29 - Sang at Willowgrove United Church service - Soo, Ontario; May 6 - Sang at Zion Lutheran Church service - Soo, Ontario; May 19 - Sang a combined show with the local Sweet Ad chapter for a Rotary convention held at Vegas Kewadin Casino in Soo, Mich. This included the men and women jointly singing an original Judy Hendrickson arrangement — in eight-part harmony, no less — of Rotary's theme song: "The Four-Way Test"; May 27 - St. Andrew's United Church service - Soo, Ontario.

June 3 - Fifth annual "Pie-Gig" at Zion United Church in Thessalon, Ontario. I have learned that the chorus will turn up anywhere there is the promise of free food!; June 10 - Salvation Army Church service as a way of thanking the Army for providing us with an exceptional hall in which we hold our weekly chapter meetings and any extra rehearsals; June 11 - Annual Novice Quartet Night (See special report by Don Bazely on page 7); June 12 - Funeral service of long-time and much-loved chapter member Dan Murray; June 18 - Annual season wind-up show at Davey Retirement Home. Their staff put on a great spread of beer and pizza afterwards as a kind of incentive to get us to come sing for the residents. Does it get better than this?

June 25 - Hosted Alana MacIntyre and Celia Moore, speech pathologists from the Sault Area hospitals, at our regular chapter meeting. Their unit at the hospital has been the recipient of an annual donation drawn from the proceeds of our show since 1996. Our total contributions are now approaching \$15,000. In return, they visit us each year to tell us how they are spending the money and to coach us on various topics relating to taking care of your voice. A warm and wonderful relationship has developed between us.

June 28 - Combined show with the Sweet Ads at Soo Locks Fest Ice Cream Social in Soo, Mich. All of the free ice cream we could eat! There's a pattern here: If you feed us, we will come.

After all that, I believe the boys have earned their summer off. We'll meet next on Monday, Sept. 10.

### Gratiot County

By C. W. Kocher

In the winter, our snowbirds leave us for happier climates, returning in the spring rejuvenated and raring to go. In the summertime, the fine Michigan weather tempts all of us to spend more time outdoors, work in the yard, fix up the boat, and maybe, if we have masochistic tendencies, we even follow the fortunes of the Detroit Tigers.

The chapter continues to meet most every week and the guys who attend get an advance look at the material for the October show. But things are even now accelerating and some folks are already working hard on the committees and the show package. Excitement looms.

Meanwhile it's time for outdoor performances. The MIDSTATESMEN sang the National Anthem at the opening of a women's softball tournament and at the last game played by the men's baseball team at the home field, both at Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant. They sang at a recent American Cancer Society event in Montcalm County and plan to sing at the Midland River Days Celebration in July. The same group found a float somewhere and paraded in the Highland Festival Parade/Memorial Day Celebration in Alma.

The Midland-based MIDSTATESMEN and their CHORDIALLY YOURS colleagues had a truly unforgettable experience. We sang for the toughest judges of all, an investment celebration for the TRI-CITIES CHORUS of Sweet Adelines. This wasn't a bit like the Bat-

tle Creek contest of recent memory where the judges sit on the other side of the proscenium arch, mostly hidden by the lights; this time we were right up amongst the audience and we could track our performance instantaneously by the facial expressions. Smiley crinkles — fine. Glazed eyes — POW!

Four MIDSTATESMEN took part in the Harmony Round-Up this year, and eight young men were sponsored by the Gratiot County Chapter for the Young Men in Harmony activities at the same time.

We'll be back in the fall with a whiz-bang show and lots of harmony. See you then.

## Huron Valley

By Tom Peirce

If you accept that time is one of the most precious commodities we share, then you would probably also agree that those who use time the most efficiently benefit the most.

Keeping this in mind, the Huron Valley Chapter, in its effort to keep moving forward in the right direction, has recently held a strategic planning retreat and completed our strategic planning process. It is an amazing process to be part of as you see the needs of the chapter members addressed and goals identified and the strategies to achieve these goals falling into place. We have a plan that will carry us forward for the next couple of years.

We held a guest night on May 15, and it was — with the help of a lot of people — another success for the chapter. There were more than 30 guests in attendance, with the majority being singers and excellent candidates for new members. A great deal of the success for this event came from the help, support, and effort of our featured quartet, FERMATA NOWHERE. These guys not only performed for our guests, but also were teachers and directors for our tag contest. If you looked around at the end of the evening, they were still at it over in the corner singing with some of our guests. How lucky we are to have such great guys as friends.

The HARMONIZERS are in the process of supplementing our repertoire with many new songs, and learning two new contest packages, featuring an arrangement of one of our coaches, John Hohl. There is a chorus picnic planned for August 26, 2001. Fall contest is certainly on the agenda as is our show November 10, 2001, and another guest night November

13, 2001.

With our strategic plan in place, the HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS are looking forward to the future.

## Pontiac-Waterford

By John Cowlishaw

Our first song at the Pioneer District spring chorus competition, "High Stickin'," satirized fans' love of rough play. "We're here to entertain you the Canadian way, (eh?), so grab a stick, give a whack, and let's start to play."

When "referee" Chris Miller caught Art Carinci high sticking, he went off to the penalty box while the chorus sang "Mistakes." "We make mistakes when we're checking somebody into the boards; we make mistakes that bring headaches, and front teeth fall like rain drops ..."

As Director Chris Miller said going into it, "We may not win, but two years from now, we'll be the show everyone remembers."

Presenting the only parodies in the competition, audience responsiveness was high! The judges' adrenalin may have risen even higher when Ron Arnold shot a foam puck into their midst and Mike Keith whacked Art's candy teeth into the crowd.

On a more serious note, the judges' critique gave us a road map to keep improving. In the last three years, our scores have risen from 547 to 645 to 701, and our size on stage from 32 to 34 to 40. We like the trend and are committed to continuing it. Thanks to Chris for the concept and Linda Liddicoat for coaching! We liked her work so much we have arranged for it to continue this year.

Jeff Doig is the lead in THE HARMONY KNIGHTS, which signed up for quartet coaching at Harmony Round-Up. He wrote a report of the experience for the chapter bulletin, saying, in part, "It was a long exhausting day, a lot of hard work, and we sang ourselves hoarse. And for all that work, we got about five pages of notes on how to be a better quartet, to see how we stand up under some close scrutiny, and to perform twice in front of a large audience. And the friendship and acceptance of the other quartets. All things considered, well worth the price of admission."

We finally have a Web home page. John McDowell was honored as June Barbershopper of the Month

*(Continued on page 32)*

# Chapters in Action

## Pontiac-Waterford

*(Continued from page 31)*

for creating it. Check it out at [www.PontiacChapter.com](http://www.PontiacChapter.com). Click on "Officers/Members" for recent bulletins.

Our Bill Pascher was one of a dozen Barbershoppers honored as 50- and 60-year members at the International Convention in Nashville. White-capped and cane swinging, he grinned broadly as he was introduced.

What is it like to move from an international award-winning chorus to PONTIAC-WATERFORD BIG CHIEFS? Ask Wally Plosky, who recently joined us when he moved back to Michigan from Atlanta, Ga., where he had been a member of the BIG CHICKEN CHORUS, Dixie District champions for 11 consecutive years.

Every chorus is interested in increasing its membership. We now stand at 49 and intend to reach 60 by the end of the year. Walt DeNio is heading up a membership committee (with Gene Downie, Jim Owens, and Jeff Spires) that has outlined specific ways in which we can (1) raise general awareness, taking advantage of free publicity; (2) demonstrate Barbershop singing to local groups with our chorus and quartets; and (3) capitalize on the fun current members are having.

Be sure to set aside November 3 for our fall show! This year's theme will be "Fortune in Dreams."

## Holland

By Art Lane

**H**ats off to four Holland Barbershoppers who helped the GREAT LAKES CHORUS of Grand Rapids compete in Nashville. Quartet BLACK RIVER decided joining up with Grand Rapids was their best chance for the bright lights of international competition. Mark Andrew, Bill McAndrew, and James Hall sang in the GREAT LAKES CHORUS's fine baseball presentation, and Steve Foster made the sets.

August will be a busy time for us. There's a com-

munity performance for the chorus on Friday, Aug. 17, in Centennial Park, across the street from the chapter's Park Theater.

Then on Saturday, Aug. 18, there's a golf tournament and a tag contest. The golf tournament is planned to raise money for operation and renovation of the Park Theater. Chair Paul Bekker is arranging an 18-hole scramble with prizes and a free lunch. Tournament sponsor is our director Myke Lucas and Go Subaru of Grand Rapids. Thanks, Myke.

If you'd like to golf with us, call Paul: 616-393-8122.

Following the golf tournament, the 16th annual Chester P. Oonk Memorial Tag Contest will be held at the Park Theater. The event will start in mid-afternoon with the distribution of tags and the formation of quartets.

Tag practice will be followed by a picnic dinner, followed by the contest. Tag enthusiasts from throughout the district are invited, as are Sweet Adelines and family members. For information call Steve Foster: 616-281-9389.

On Tuesday, Aug. 28, it's "An-Chords Aweigh" as the chapter holds a sweethearts' appreciation cruise on the Port City Princess. We leave from Muskegon about 6:30 p.m. for a three-hour cruise on Lake Michigan with dinner and music for dancing.

Barbershoppers and Sweet Adelines from West Michigan are invited. Tickets and information are available from Dale Bekker: 616-738-7455.

We appreciate new members! Receiving certificates from Secretary Scott Bruursema recently were Bud Dawe, Jack Boyer, Stan Zachery, and Denny Wilson.

## Windsor

By Bill Strong

Summertime and the singing was fantastic. A great move was made by the Windsor Chapter some time ago when a decision was made to meet during the summer months.

It was a great time starting with our "Send Off Show" in June. If you haven't attended in the past, mark your calendar for next year. The date is always the second Friday in June. It's a chance to assist our competitors going to International but, just as important, it is one of the great shows of the year.

Choruses come from all over the district and, of

course, our competing chorus and quartet. To sing on stage with 200 other men is a thrill we look forward to every year. What a night! The master of ceremonies for the evening was no less than the “laid back” Doran McTaggart. Good job, Doran.

Our chorus had no less than six performances during the summer and, even though our ranks were a little thin sometimes, we were able to do ourselves proud.

We have already started to work on new material as the fall convention is just around the corner.

Kudos to POWER PLAY, PRIVATELY FUNDED, and the GREAT LAKES CHORUS for their fine performances at International. For those of not able to attend in person, the facilities provided over the Internet gave us at home a very small taste of the flavour in Nashville.

Looking forward to seeing you all in Battle Creek.

## Lansing

By Paul Howe

All of the convention attendees are back, bringing with them rave reviews of the convention and the host city. So, now it's time to kick back and relax for the summer. WRONG!

Now's the time to begin working on those new songs, get a little extra quartet activity going, and maybe add in a few performances to spice things up a bit.

That's exactly what the Lansing Chapter is doing. Director Jeff continues his museum internship at Mystic, Conn., but much of the chapter continues hard at work — but having some fun, too.

Lansing recently presented a Barbershop concert in Owosso, and a “mini chorus” — 16 to 20 singers — has been performing at some of the area's senior citizen assisted-living facilities. The Owosso performance was scheduled for the band shell, but was moved indoors due to a threat of rain. If the number of mosquito bites I got entering the auditorium was any indication, I'm really glad we sang inside. We were joined by quartets GALLERY, RENAISSANCE, and THE PATCH CHORDS in presenting a nearly three-hour concert.

Plans are now being made for a Wives Appreciation Night riverboat dinner/cruise aboard the Michigan Princess on August 27. Naturally, we all plan to sing for our supper, so to speak, so it should be a

really fun evening. If any other Pioneer Barbershoppers are interested, please contact Mike Cirrito: <michaelscirrito@hotmail.com>.

Tickets are \$25.00 per person if booked through Mike (regular price is \$35.00 per person).

## Traverse City

By Elbert Ford

We just finished our 35<sup>th</sup> annual show, and many feel (including your reporter) that it was the best so far. We were ready for it musically, and technically it came off without any problems — thanks to the great organizational efforts of Show Chairman Art Lambert. He had covered every detail, and it was evident.

The CHERRY CAPITAL CHORUS opened and closed the show, as well as a set after intermission — 14 songs. Chapter quartets appearing were BACKWARD GLANCE, THIRD COAST, and LEGENDS IN THEIR OWN MINDS.

We were also entertained with the singing of the 1998 champs, REVIVAL, and 1996 senior champs, FATHERLY ADVICE.

The show was also Marty Chirgwin's last as director. Trying to mark the special occasion might have been what caused us to give the extra effort that everyone seemed to do. We'll miss Marty, but after retiring from his job this spring, I'm sure he has many other things he wants to do.

We had a guest night on the Tuesday following the show with 68 guys showing up. We had all the regulars, plus some members who have dropped out along the way, as well as some 15-20 visitors. We had the current district champs, FMFTC, teach us all a new song. We had tag singing and refreshments to round out the evening.

Come visit us when you travel this way. Call 231-223-4064 or 231-947-8714 for details or directions.

## Detroit-Oakland

By Tom Uicker

Detroit-Oakland's GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS were invited to perform again this summer at the Concert Series at Nardin Park Methodist Church in Farmington Hills. On July 18, we shared the stage with

*(Continued on page 34)*

# Chapters in Action

## Detroit-Oakland

(Continued from page 33)

chapter quartets SHINDIG, TODAY'S SPECIAL, and NIGHT SHIFT along with the SONGSTER'S ENSEMBLE. It was a little bit of a squeeze since there was room for only two riser sections.

We have one more gig toward the end of August. There are a group of banjo players that play every Thursday at different halls in the northern suburbs. We will join them on August 23 at the Clawson K of C Hall for a night of Banjos and Barbershop. The show starts at 7:00 p.m. It's free admission with a cash bar.

The "Return of the Jug" party, on the first Friday in June, was another success. We are always worried whether we will have a representative crowd since we are sandwiched between Memorial Day weekend and the Windsor Send-Off.

But this year we had 180 people in attendance, up 30 people from last year. Livingston County Chapter brought one of the jugs. The other jug came all the way from Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario.

We had at least four choruses with our own GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS, Windsor's SUN PARLOUR CHORUS, Macomb's HARMONY HERITAGE CHORUS, and Wayne's RENAISSANCE CHORUS. The other performing groups were BORDER CROSSING, TREBLESOME, the SONGSTER'S ENSEMBLE, NIGHT SHIFT, and International reps and fifth-place medallists POWER PLAY.

Because both jugs were very sluggish in making their rounds and each jug only visited half their assigned chapters, we raised only \$480 instead of the \$900 we raised last year. Don Stewart and Pete Peters have volunteered to track the jugs for the coming year; maybe they can keep them moving faster.

We are already working on songs for a new show next February. (Featured quartets will be gold medalists NIGHTLIFE and, from Walt Disney World, the HUMDINGERS.)

We will be competing in the district contest this fall. So we continue to work on improving vowel matching and breath support. As you can imagine, our

Monday night meetings are busy.

But we are not too busy to stop and sing a couple of chestnuts with friends, old or new. So feel free to stop by Starr Presbyterian Church on the corner of Crooks Road and 13 Mile in Royal Oak some Monday night.

"You're as welcome as the flowers in May."

## Wayne


By Gary Simon

Our RENAISSANCE CHORUS has been quite active since our "May Cabaret." We've been averaging two gigs a month for the past several months, performing at senior assisted-care centers, for retiree groups, and at volunteer luncheons.

We were pleased to present the fifth annual Albert J. Fricker, Jr., Memorial Barbershopper of the Year award to Hal Reid at our Ladies Appreciation Dinner on Sunday, July 15. In addition to being assistant musical director, he has been chapter treasurer for the past two years. Three years ago, he joined chapter quartet A LA MODE, singing bass.

On a sad note, we recently lost a dear member to ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease). John French, our former music VP, died in June after a three-year battle. His story appeared in an earlier issue of the *Troub*.

John's ever-present smile will be missed. ■



BILL
DAN

### A BARBERSHOP QUARTET

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

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***Bush League: The home of Past, Present, and Future Champions!***

## ... New edit #10

No, Taco Bell is not the Mexican Phone Co.!

I may live life in the fast lane, but I'm married to a speed bump.

My wife and I are inseparable. In fact, last week it took four state policemen and a police dog to keep us apart.

The 50-50-90 Rule: Any time you have a 50-50 chance of getting something right, there's a 90-percent probability you'll get it wrong.

It may be that your sole purpose in life is to serve as a warning to others.

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*"It is the best of all trades to make songs and the second best to sing them."*

*Hilaire Belloc*

## Upcoming Events

### 2001

Aug. 16-19 - Buckeye Invitational, Columbus, Ohio.

<[www.SingingBuckeyes.org](http://www.SingingBuckeyes.org)>

Aug. 31-Sept. 3 - Harrisville Harmony Weekend. Contact Craig Pollard: <[caponyx@entropytech.com](mailto:caponyx@entropytech.com)>

Sept. 15 - Alpena Show

Sept. 28-30 - Bush League 2001. Contact Hank Hedges: 517-731-1169

Oct. 19-21 - Pioneer District Fall Convention, Battle Creek.

Oct. 27 - Rochester Show

Nov. 2 - Pontiac-Waterford Show

Nov. 10 - Huron Valley Show. Contact Bob Taylor: 734-728-2453

Dec. 1-2 - COTS, Gull Lake, Michigan

Dec. 7, 9 - Grand Rapids Show

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

## Chapters in Action

### Muskegon

By Frank Scott

**W**e had a successful guest night on May 10. We hope to sign up some new members.

Summer is a busy time for our chapter. Chorus members were on the chapter float singing Polecat songs and "Coney Island Babe" for Muskegon's Summer Celebration Parade.

We are scheduled to appear on the float in Fremont at the "Gerber National Baby Food Festival" parade on July 21 and the "North Side Spectacular" on August 9.

Our 61st annual show is set for October 13 at Mona Shores High School. FOUR MAN FISHING TACKLE CHOIR and THE TRI-COUNTY RECLAMATION PROJECT will be our guest quartets.

Sadly, Barbara Duff, wife of bari Jim Duff (ACT FOUR), suffered a fatal heart attack in late June. She was a strong supporter of Jim's Barbershop activities and will be missed by all. ■