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COTS 2000 biggest ever

By Staff Writer Doug Pearson

You say you missed COTS this time around? If you did, you missed an action-packed, two-day seminar at Gull Lake on how to improve your own talents and strengthen your chapter. A record turnout of enthusiastic Pioneer District Barber-shoppers interacted with an excellent faculty of nationally known experts in making this COTS one of the most successful ever.

Just in case you forgot, COTS stands for Chapter Operations Training Seminar. "It's not just for officers anymore," said Coordinator John Gillespie. "It offers something for everyone."

And this recent December COTS was no exception, with lively sessions on music and performance, chorus directors, marketing & public relations, member services, and chapter coaches. There were also sessions for chapter presidents, secretaries, and treasurers.

Attendees also benefited from informal networking with members from other chapters, picking up valuable tips on how to improve

their own chapters. In addition, there was great food and, of course, lots of singing.

"This was one of the best COTS ever," said John, who has administered a lot of them. "I was very pleased with the large attendance and the positive spirit of all who attended."



GENERAL SESSION ASSIGNMENT: Exercises in problem solving were an important part of COTS.

In his keynote address at the general session, Faculty Dean John Schneider emphasized that "we've got to love 'em or lose 'em." Stressing the importance of getting and retaining members, he told the delegates that "we need to be more proactive. What we do with members the first year is extremely im-

portant. We lose 50 percent of our new members in the first year, and 30 percent in the second year."

The opening general session was followed by breakouts into specific areas of interest.

In commenting on his COTS experience, Gary Washburn, Macomb County's president-elect, said, "The classes, by all reports, were very well received by all our Macomb guys there, and very beneficial to both our new and returning officers. The COTS staff did a terrific job of bringing home the importance of quality leadership in our chapters."

And HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS CHORUS Director Lynne Peirce said, "The international and district faculty and resulting educational experience is outstanding. But maybe best yet are those times spent with members of our own

chapters, meeting in the cafeteria, the general sessions and the afterglow, literally bursting with renewed enthusiasm, new ideas, and breakthrough thoughts. On many, many levels, these COTS weekends are some of the best times spent in our hobby." ■



Pioneer Troubadour

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Spring convention preview

Even though our hard winter of snow and ice may not yet be over, it's not too early to begin planning for the Pioneer District's spring convention and competition.

While singing contests highlight the convention, activities are planned to involve all Barbershoppers and their families.

Beside competitions, other convention features will include Grand Rapids' GREAT LAKES CHORUS show, JOE BARBERSHOP CHORUS, Sunday-morning gospel sing, three mass sing-alongs, afterglows, hospitality rooms, and informal singing throughout the weekend.

The convention will run from Friday through Sunday morning, April 27-29, in Battle Creek. Headquarters is the McCamly Plaza Hotel downtown.

Competitions will begin at noon Saturday to determine the district chorus champion, and at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday to select quartet representatives to the international convention. All contests will be held at W. K. Kellogg Auditorium, within walking distance from McCamly Plaza Hotel.

POWER PLAY, the district's fifth-place International medalist in 2000, is expected to vie again for another trip to the international contest.

Great Lakes Chorus show

The GREAT LAKES CHORUS of Grand Rapids will present a show at the headquarters hotel about one-half hour after the Friday-night quartet semifinals. "The theme is kind of up in the air, but something like 'Cocktails for Two!' Quartets performing will be PRIZM, FOOLS' GOLD, and a special guest," said Director Jamie Carey.

A \$5 admission fee will help cover the cost of the chorus's trip to represent the district this summer at international. Show tickets can be requested in advance when you submit your convention registration.

Joe Barbershop Chorus

Grand Rapids' Chorus Director Jamie Carey will direct the JOE BARBERSHOP CHORUS, open to all district members, whether competing or not.

You can join an estimated 40 members of the championship GREAT LAKES CHORUS to sing "The Chordbuster March" and "From the First Hello to the Last Good Bye."

"There will be no dress code," Jamie said. "Come as you are: tux or street clothes, but you must have a shirt on ... and pants."

The chorus will rehearse at 10:30 a.m. Saturday in the auditorium gym and sing as mike-testers for the chorus contest.

Collegiate quartet contest

The district again will offer a Collegiate Quartet Contest at the spring convention. The winning quartet can receive a cash prize and represent the district at the summer International convention in Nashville.

It is open to men who are ages 17-25 as of the International contest date. No more than two singers may have been Society members before January 1, 2001.

Entry forms are available from Al Bonney <albonney@aliens.com> of Traverse City, district VP for Young Men In Harmony, or from Jim DeBusman <jdebusman@spebsqsa.org> at Society headquarters. Entries must be received by Jim by April 7.

Many details on the college contest are on the Web: <http://www.spebsqsa.org/college/>.

Three mass sings

A group sing-along will be held in the auditorium about 20 minutes before each of the three competition sessions.

In this new approach to the mass sing, those invited to direct will be students enrolled in the district directors' workshop, said Fred Kienitz, district VP for chorus director development.

The trial run in October of this procedure, Kienitz said, "proved to be a super time for all of the attendees to join one another in song."

Other activities

- A district-sponsored afterglow will be held in the headquarters hotel ballroom after the Saturday quartet finals. Several chapters are expected to host hospitality rooms at various hotels.
- A gospel service with Barbershop harmony will be held at 9:00 a.m. Sunday at the headquarters hotel.
- A Barbershop Shop will be open throughout the convention (except during competitions) with CDs, tapes, books, clothing, and many other items from the Society's Harmony Marketplace.
- A ladies' hospitality room will be set up at McCamly Plaza Hotel.
- On Friday, the district Board will meet at 9:00 a.m., and the chapter delegates will meet at 2:00 p.m. The Society's representatives at these meetings will be Raleigh Bloch of Kalamazoo, a new member of the Society Board.
- Meetings will also be held for

(Continued on page 9)

COTS recap

By Coordinator John Gillespie

Ninety district Barbershoppers converged on the W. K. Kellogg Education Center, Gull Lake, Michigan, for the Pioneer District Chapter Operations Training Seminar (COTS) on December 2, 2000. Sixty-four sessions offered something for everyone including Joe Barbershopper.

The faculty consisted of Dean John Schneider, Land O' Lakes District; Presidents Instructor Bob Cox, Evergreen District; Member Services Instructor Tim Hanrahan, Sunshine District; Music & Performance Instructor Tom Nasman,

Mid-Atlantic District; Secretaries Instructor Dave Maw, Ontario District; Treasurers Instructor Frank Santarelli, Land O' Lakes District; Chorus Director Development Instructor John Devine, Southwestern District; Marketing & Public Relations Instructor Reed Sampson, Land O' Lakes District; and Chapter Coaches Instructor Judd Orff, Land O' Lakes District. All of these men were well trained and professionally competent.

The following district chapters had representation at COTS: Benton Harbor-St. Joseph, Motor City Metro, Macomb County, Detroit-

Oakland, Grand Rapids, Grosse Pointe, Holland, Allegan County, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Muskegon, Traverse City, Wayne, Battle Creek, Flint, Windsor, Huron Valley, Monroe North, and Gaylord.

The registrations we had this year were the most we have had in the eight years I have served as district COTS coordinator. They may be the most in district COTS history!

Special thanks to Roger Lewis for bringing the HARMONY HOUNDS out of semi-retirement to sing at the afterglow. ■



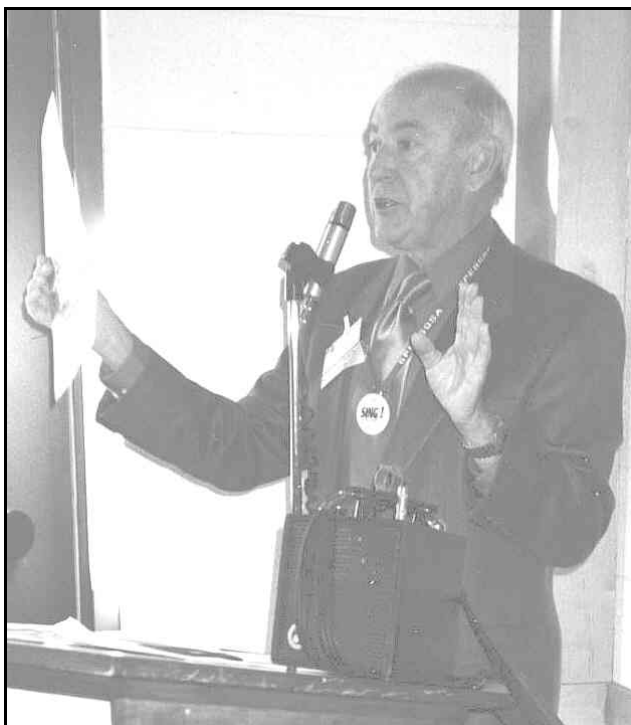
Faculty Dean John Schneider (left) gives the keynote address at the COTS general session. (Below) Gang singing — a major feature of any Barbershop event.



COTS photos by
Doug Pearson

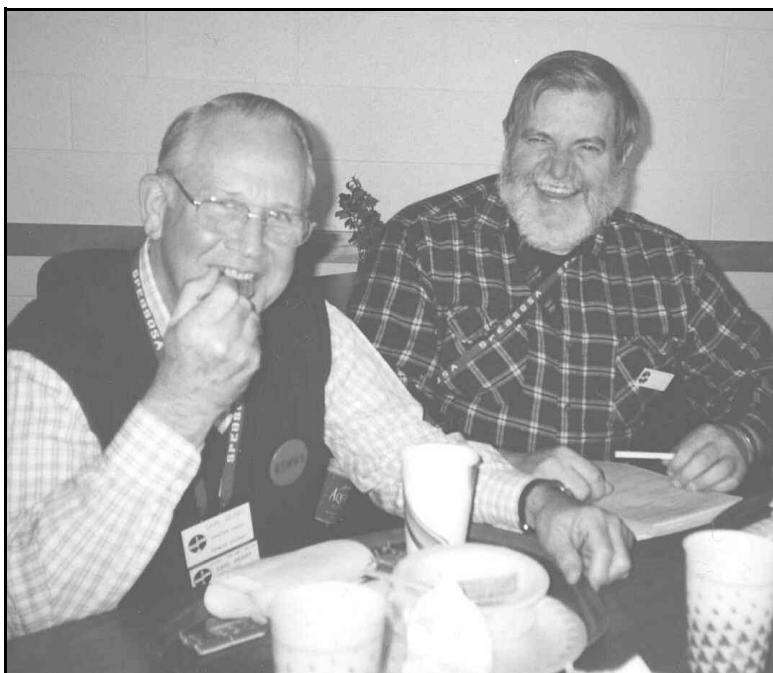


The Harmony Hounds performed at Saturday's afterglow. (From left) Roger Lewis, Dean Burrill, Dorn Burrill, and Dick Smith.



(Above) Addressing the general session is Tim Hanrahan, faculty member for member services/ chapter development.

(Below) As in the past, the food was spectacular at COTS. Finishing off a well-deserved lunch are Detroit-Oakland's Earl Berry (left) and Tom Uicker.



Who me? A musical director?

By Lyle Pettigrew,
music services assistant,
from *The Harmonizer*,
November/December 1981

Did you ever think you'd like to be the guy waving his arms in front of the chorus? Maybe it was just a brief, fleeting, secret thought? Then you quickly dismissed the idea because you have no music training, you don't sight read well, and you can't tell one chord from another?

If you've ever felt that way, read on. Many of our outstanding directors were made, not born. The majority learned their trade after they joined a Barbershop chapter.

Let's list some of the qualities of a good director. Our better people possess many, or all, of these qualities:

1. They are salesmen. They can sell songs and motivate people. Men get excited listening to these people talk about shows, performances, and rehearsals.
2. They have a "feel" for music. They have a good sense of rhythm and recognize "out-of-tune" chords.
3. They have natural athletic ability — that is, they are well coordinated.
4. They have a positive attitude toward themselves, their fellow Barbershoppers, their families, their friends, and their jobs.
5. They are open-minded, flexible, and willing to learn from every new experience.
6. They are energetic and not afraid of hard work.
7. They sing (or did sing) in a quartet and love(d) every minute of it.

This list could go on, but I think

you begin to see the pattern. Why did we leave out music training? It's not that we don't think it's important. On the contrary, we'd all like to have a director with the attributes mentioned above and music training, too. But these guys are few and far between.

We must solve our director shortage problems from within our own membership. Take a Barbershopper with a positive attitude, an open mind, a feel for music, good coordination, lots of energy, who can sell, and he'll learn what he needs to know about music. We think there are many men in our ranks right now who fit this description. What about you?

The next logical question is do we have programs to assist a Barbershopper who wants to become a director? Yes! Yes! Yes! You, and anyone in your chapter, can take advantage of them.

They are:

1. A full-time music staff of five people at our International office in Kenosha. These men will answer questions (by phone or by mail), give advice, and offer chapter and school training sessions in all sixteen districts.
2. In addition to the above district schools, there is the annual Harmony College. This is a week-long session available to all members offering courses at every level.
3. A director of music education in each district with assistants helping him organize an educational program at the local level. This includes one-day and weekend schools and festivals.
4. A dozen or so complete Barbershop shows (including sug-

gested scripts and music) for chapter use. These were developed at Harmony College and are free. No need to worry about your first show; just call or write and we'll send them to you.

5. A music publishing program which ensures a full and ready supply of good Barbershop music at reasonable prices.
6. A complete set of manuals on directing, basic craft, Barbershop theory, and arranging. It's sort of an "everything-you-wanted-to-know-about-Barbershop" collection.
7. A large contingent of certified judges ready, able, and willing to assist Barbershoppers with songs, staging, sound, and interpretation. Many of these men are available for coaching and assisting beginning directors.
8. There are other experienced directors and coaches ready to help (who do not fall into No. 7 above).

What can you do to get involved in a directing program? Here are some possibilities:

1. Offer to work as a section leader or helper.
2. Attend a weekend or mid-week music session in your area to study the fundamentals of directing (watch for a program called Direct Hit in your area).
3. Watch for visits by International staff music men to your district, and make a point to attend their meetings.
4. Plan to attend Harmony College and ask your chapter and/or district to assist you financially.

(Continued on page 8)

A View From The Top

Don Bazely, President

Operation Bootstrap

By the time this issue hits the stands, 2001 will already be at least one month old and your district Board will already be hard at work to make Pioneer into an even greater district than it already is.



Don Bazely

How are we going to do that? With YOUR whole-hearted support. Oh yes! You don't need a college degree to figure out that no matter how hard your Board tries, no matter how many wonderful programs we come up with, no matter how many experts we bring in to advise and counsel us, it will all be a heap of expensive garbage unless you, Pioneer Barbershopper, decide that you want to help yourself. Let me tell you something — **it won't hurt a bit!**

Here are the tools by which we, collectively, can raise ourselves up by our bootstraps. (That's our slogan for 2001: **"OPERATION BOOTSTRAP."**)

Here's all you have to do to make your chapter into a place where your members WANT to be every week; it's the place where they will eagerly look forward to a great weekly musical experience. So open up your tool bag and look at all the tools you have.

The following are in no particular order of priority:

- **100-percent participation at House of Delegates' meeting.** Here is where you, the members, can control the destiny of this district. [A recent lesson in the USA ... "every vote counts."]
- **10 percent more (that's another 15 guys) at Harmony Round Up.** Don't you REALLY want to improve your own musical abilities? Well, here it is, right on your doorstep: everything from quartet coaching to chorus directing to vocal techniques. I have yet to meet a Barbershopper who doesn't want to sing better or who doesn't want a quartet coaching experience.
- **10 percent more (that's another 10-12) representatives at COTS.** Having troubles in your chapters? Are you brand new on the chapter board? You couldn't come to a better place for solutions. There is everything from a chorus director's relationship with the chorus and board to how to be an effective chapter president.
- **Be part of the membership recruitment AND retention team.** Unless we grow, we die! What's more, the larger the membership, the better we can serve you. Don't want a bigger, better chapter? Take up knitting. This is the wrong place for you.
- **Start having chapter meetings** instead of just chorus rehearsals. Let your chapter members experience woodshedding, gang singing,

tag singing, quartet singing, watching International contest videos, and just plain "having fun."

- It's all in the program manual and chapter boards owe it to their chapter members to make Barber-shopping as exciting and wonderful as possible.
- **Make a commitment** to show up at SOME of the **district conventions.** And while you are there, why not get on stage and sing a couple. It would be unrealistic to ask every chapter to compete each and every time. I know from first-hand experience how distance and cost can be a strong deterrent. But they don't have to be a PERMANENT deterrent. You can decide to attend every 2nd, 3rd, or 4th convention. That's not a burden at all. It's a pleasure.
- And how about a **Standing Ovation evaluation.** D'you know, the Sault chapter has enjoyed two show evaluations in the past two years. The guys who plan and produce the shows will attest to the invaluable advice and show tips passed on by the evaluator. Why do a lot of you try to do without a Standing Ovation evaluation? Beats me!
- **Chapter coaches** trained and asked for the job because they WANTED to be your assistant in improving your chapter. If you have a mission statement (and if you don't, why not?), the chapter coach will help you to achieve your full potential and then go on to greater things.

Y'all know, of course, that for every chapter vice president there is an equivalent position on the district board. BUT I bet it never occurred to many of you that your alter ego

(Continued on page 11)

Here's the Society Pitch

Raleigh Bloch, Society Board Member

Now what?

I'm new in this job. So what do I write about?

Hey, don't worry. I'm here to help you.

Oh great, you're the guy who would wake me up at 5:30 in the morning to write articles when I was on the Pioneer District Board.

Yup, aren't you lucky?

H m m m , we'll see. So what should I

write about?

Well, weren't you at the Society Leadership Forum?

Well, yes.

Why not write about that?

Everybody knows about that.

Wanna bet? Lots of guys think it was just fun and singing tags.

Well, OK, it was fun and we did sing tags, but one heck of a lot of work went on as well. As most of you know, the officers of all of the districts met in Racine for what might be called a COTS for district officers. We have some very talented leaders in this Society and this was a chance for them to learn, share, and plan. At the same time, the Society Board Members met for the same reason.

So what did you do?

Well, I was placed on the PPDG.

What the heck is the PPDG?

That's the Program Planning & Development Group. This part of

the Board is to help in planning for the future. Our task for this session was to develop a five-year budget for the Society.

So, was that a big job?

Was it? Wow, I felt that I was trying to take a sip from a fire hose. Thankfully, we had people in the group who were not new board members, like Ed Waesche, who sat in as a replacement for the Society treasurer, and we also had Frank Santarelli, director of finance.

Well, how big is the Society budget, anyway?

It's \$6,200,000.00!

Holy moly. That's big business!

Without the preparation provided by these guys, we would not have been able to complete the five-year budget in the time we had to complete it.

So what did the district guys do?

Well, they met with the committee heads. For example, CSLT district VPs met with CSLT Committee Chairman Thom Hine to discuss and make plans.

Yeah, I guess we don't want people on the Society level doing one thing and the district VPs doing another.

That's right. The district presidents met with the Society Board and finished up with their own district board members to draw up their plans. Throughout all of this, we were fortunate to have the Leadership Task Force (LTF) guiding us.

What the heck is the Leadership Task Force?

These are a great bunch of guys from our Society who are professional consultants. They roam the meetings and facilitate meeting skills, teamwork, and problem solving.

They just donate their time?

Yup. Many of these sessions went into the late hours of the evening.

Ab-ha, that's where the tags singing took place.

Don't we wish? That's enough for now, I need to take a nap.

Hey, that wasn't that tough. See ya next time.

Is he gone? Thank goodness. Anyway, there is no way I could cover everything that took place. Let's just say that a lot of work and planning took place by a lot of talented and dedicated people. Now it's up to us to get behind them to make it happen.

You can count on me! We'll be better for it.

I thought he was gone. ■

Who me?

Continued from page 6)

5. Get some of the Society manuals on theory and directing and start your self-help program now!

Most important – plan to take some positive steps toward self-improvement and education right away. Somewhere along the road your goals may change, but the knowledge and experience gained will help you enjoy your Barber-shopping more than ever. And maybe ... just maybe ... you could be the next director of a chapter in your area.

We think you can do it ... go ahead ... prove us wrong! ■

Here's the District Pitch

Brian Dunckel, Member Services VP

Just what is membership?

Membership in any organization has three aspects: obligation, duty, and responsibility. Regardless of the organization you join, you are expected to contribute something to it.

As a member of your chapter, your *obligations* include learning words and notes, regular attendance at rehearsals and performances, and general support of the chapter.



Brian Dunckel

Duties are varied, but not limited to setting up/tearing down risers and chairs, selling tickets to your annual show, selling ads for your show's program, serving on a committee, or being a board member.

New member recruitment is an aspect of membership in which we all have a *responsibility*. New members are the lifeblood of the Society and your chapter. You once visited a chapter and decided this hobby was something you wanted to do, so you became a member. By taking that step, you accepted the obligations, duties, and responsibilities associated with that membership.

Now is the time for you to respond to that responsibility by doing your part to recruit new members. If each member would recruit just one new member every seven years, the Society would grow by nearly two percent per year. Yet membership has been dropping for

most of the past FIFTEEN years!

Are we fighting a losing battle? Only if we continue to sit back and continue to do things the same old way. I want Pioneer to be pioneers in the area of membership growth. Wouldn't it be great if we had EVERY chapter growing and new chapters forming?

The Society vision statement says we are "an *ever growing* fraternity of Barbershop singers" — if not, NOTHING ELSE MATTERS!

Set a goal to talk to at least one new person a week about this glorious hobby; then take him to a chapter meeting. It may take time, but you will be rewarded.

I have chosen a motto for the year which should let you know of my goals for our district for the year. I hope that you and your chapter will embrace it: **"If you're gonna dream ... dream BIG!"**

* * *

A newly created District Membership Team has been established. Its members are Raleigh Bloch (Kalamazoo), Marv Rhynard (Lansing), Robert Ramio (Kalamazoo), Hank Hedges (Gaylord), Jeff Woodruff (Motor City Metro), and me. But we need one more person.

If you would be willing to call on five to six chapters (e-mail, phone call, or visit) to assist them in their membership efforts and report back to me, it would be GREATLY appreciated.

The chapters that we still need to

cover are DOC, Grosse Pointe, Macomb, Milford, Pontiac-Waterford, and Rochester.

I have a packet of materials that I will provide you with; all you need is the desire to do the job. Please let me know of your interest by e-mailing me: MSUDunk@aol.com.

Special thanks to Neil Keihm, Mid-Atlantic District VP of member services, for allowing me to use some of his ideas here. ■

Spring convention (Continued from page 3)

chapter presidents and the Quartet Champions Association.

Registration deadlines

Deadline for submitting convention registrations is April 14. All-events registration is \$20 before that date and \$25 thereafter.

Deadline for hotel reservations is March 27. Registration forms are in this *Troubadour* (pages 17 and 19) and on the district Web site: <http://www.harmonize.com/Pioneer/pio.htm>.

Registration by competing choruses and quartets must be done separately from convention registration. Competition registration is handled through Ed Fritzen <ELFritze@net-link.net>, district VP for contest & judging. A link to the contest entry form is on the district Web site.

The forms, along with contest rules and tips for competitors, can also be found at: <http://www.spebsqsa.org/C&J>.

District convention chairman is Larry Parker of Lansing <LParker437@aol.com>.

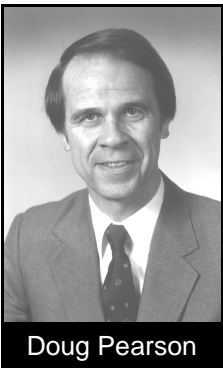
Host chapter for this convention is Lansing; the chapter committee chairman is Bruce Fitzpatrick. ■

Public Relating

Doug Pearson, Marketing & Public Relations VP

Steve the Skeptic given strong dose of Barbershop PR

During the height of the Yule season, I was shopping for the original edition of *Harry Potter and the Empire of the Lost Chords* at the



Doug Pearson

Music Mall of Michigan when I ran headlong into my old friend, Steve Skeptic.

Now, Steve is a fellow Barbershopper and really isn't a bad sort of guy, but his cynicism runs rampant when it comes to supporting our marketing and public relations. He wrote a sequel to "I Believe" and called it "I Disbelieve."

"Well, you old dog," he greeted me. (I guess that's better than "old crow.") "I see you're still spinning your wheels in that murky area of PR. I've always wanted to know what public relations is REALLY all about in the Pioneer District. I'll bet my sack of Christmas goodies here that you'd have a hard time giving me a decent definition!"

"Hey, that's an easy one," I said, thinking quickly. "I'll give you my textbook definition which our Pioneer chapter PR officers have used successfully. You see, both marketing and public relations involve strategic planning, action, follow-up, and evaluation. And this is true

whether you're looking to attract family and community members to an annual show, to gain TV coverage for a Barbershop convention, or to get young singers out to an event."

"Well, that sounds too academic for me," Steve replied. "You've got to be more specific so I can understand it. What does a chapter public relations program actually accomplish?"

"There are many answers to that," I said. "But let me give you one that we can live with. As a category, PR is one of those areas that can have a huge impact on the other areas of your chapter. Here's an example:"

"A strong public relations campaign can heighten the reputation of an award-winning quartet which, in turn, can fuel a chapter's youth outreach program.

"On the other hand, a weak marketing campaign can hurt the success of a recruiting campaign, and that in turn can adversely affect the membership of a chapter. Public relations and marketing are strongly tied to just about everything we do in our chapters."

Always the Skeptic (since that's his last name), Steve said, "Your response sounds almost halfway decent, I guess, but you've got to give me some concrete examples. How does good PR help in our district?"

Like a running back knocking off huge chunks of yardage, that was the opening I'd been looking for. "How many examples do you want?" I asked.

Without waiting for an answer, I continued, "Let's look at a recent case in our district where PR and communications made a big difference.

"In the past, we'd been hurting for attendance at COTS, so this year we revitalized our PR efforts. From a district standpoint, we placed a full-page ad and ran several major stories in the *Troub*. We also made extensive use of e-mail to hype the event. From a chapter standpoint, the officers did a good job of publicizing COTS and of talking it up among their members — all important links to PR.

"The end result? We almost doubled our attendance over the previous year with a record number of attendees."

"Boy, you sure like to talk a lot," Steve said, but I felt that maybe I was actually getting through to him.

Generating a full head of steam, I charged ahead. "You want to know something else? Check the chapter shows that have a full house, or close to it, against those that end up with a lot of empty seats. I'll bet you that those who fill the auditorium also have a cracker-jack publicity and promotion program. They get the word out to the community. And incidentally, a full house translates into dollars and cents for the chapter."

"Could be," Steve said, then looked at his watch. "Gotta be running or I'll never finish my shopping. See ya at practice."

Maybe I got through to Steve Skeptic. Probably I'll never know for sure. ■

Chapter Coaching

Doran McTaggart, Chapter Support/Leadership VP

Chapter coaches listed; more applicants needed

Our Chapter Operations Training Seminar (COTS) set a new attendance record this year.



Doran McTaggart

I'm sure that the *Troubadour* articles by many different people helped to swell our ranks. COTS Coordinator John Gillespie and his dedi-

cated committee are to be congratulated for their efforts.

As we put into practise the ideas and information presented to us by an outstanding COTS faculty, our chapters will grow and strengthen. With all of our chapter leadership teams communicating and working together for the betterment of each chapter, how can we not have a great year in 2001?

Three new chapter coach applicants — Don Bazely, Clay Jones, and Dale Hanson — successfully completed their training and are eager to put their skills to the test. Earl Berry was beaming when I presented him with a certificate deeming him to be a certified chapter coach.

Please give your coach a call and make use of his expertise. The following are our Pioneer chapter

coaches and their assigned chapters:

- Maurie Allen - Grand Rapids, Traverse City
- Dave Anderson - Detroit-Oakland, Milford, Motor City Metro, Pontiac-Waterford
- Don Bazely - Gaylord, Petoskey, Sault Ste. Marie
- Earl Berry - Hillsdale, Huron Valley, Monroe North, Wayne
- Ed Fritzen - Allegan County, Benton Harbor-St. Joseph, Michiana Metro
- Dale Hanson - Alpena, Muskegon
- Clay Jones - Gratiot County, Saginaw Bay, Swan Valley, Flint
- Jay Smits - Battle Creek, Holland, Kalamazoo, Lansing
- Doran McTaggart - Rochester, Grosse Pointe, Windsor, Livingston County

Next year at COTS, we hope we can train several more chapter coaches. If you feel that you would like to serve in this capacity, please give me a call. We need you!

No longer will we be like the Maytag repairman sitting by the telephone waiting for your call. We will be pro-active. We will call you.

We will help your chapter be the best it can be. ■

Operation Bootstrap (Continued from page 7)

wants to hear from you regarding something that went right ... or something that went wrong. These guys got elected because they wanted to serve you.

So, why can't the VP M&P from the ABC chapter call the VP M&P on the Pioneer Board and bounce stuff off of him or ask for his help in solving some particular problem you are having at chapter level? No reason at all.

By now, many chapters are aware that not only chapter coaches are contacting you, but the district officers are also calling you to see how things are going. And how come all this activity? Because we care about what happens to you. Help us to help you.

Have a great year and come out singing. ■

Spring titles for Music Premiere

Planned releases for the spring issue of the Music Premiere subscription program include:

- "Each Time I Fall in Love"
- "It's All Over Now"
- "Young and Foolish"
- "Louise"
- "I'm Beginning to See the Light"
- "Old St. Louie"

To subscribe to Music Premiere, call Harmony Marketplace at 800-876-7464 x-8410. A subscription includes the spring and fall releases (six songs in each release) plus a learning tape recorded by top quartets.

The price is \$14.95 U.S. for U.S. and Canadian orders. ■

Take Note

Fred Kienitz, Chorus Director Development VP

Harmony College chorus director scholarships available

Gentlemen and ladies, note that we are now including the gender of the most beautiful of our Pioneer directors. The reason is that we need to include them in making this offer to all frontliners in the district so they too may make some decisions on furthering their directing skills in the future.



Fred Kienitz

Now, to the business at hand. At our most recent district Board meeting, I made a proposal that we get involved in the new training program for chorus director development being conducted by our international at Harmony College in St. Joe, Missouri, each summer.

After seven ballots to lynch the CDD VP ended in a hopeless tie, the Board voted to underwrite two scholarships for \$450.00 each for the 2001 Harmony College at St. Joe in July of this year.

All applications should come through me, including any important information you feel may help us in our decision for selecting the LUCKY two recipients.

Transportation is going to be a large expenditure. You need to approach your chapter chorus to pick up much or all of your travel expenses; they will be the major recipi-

ent of your education.

Becoming certified through this channel will allow you to go anywhere in the world where Barber-shop harmony is being sung and give you an inside track for directing in that area.

A call to International (1-800-876-7464) will tell you where the local chapters are located. With this learning experience under your belt, you should find it relatively easy to reestablish yourself with a new chapter needing help.

Keep in mind that this offer is open to all Pioneer directors regardless of the fact that they may already be in the program and may still need more classes to become certified by International.

Please allow me to close by relating an experience I once had at an international contest several years ago. It is most relevant to the problem we are experiencing in our wonderful district.

To begin with, we, along with some others, do not fare well when it comes to international contests or when being judged by international-level judges.

The problem, as I see it, is that our directors aren't stupid, and when they hear the results of their labors, they know this is quality music that stands above other singing ensembles in our communities. Further, they are correct.

Then why are they scoring so low? Simple answer! They are being judged by how they sing relative to other singing ensembles WITHIN OUR SOCIETY!

Now, we cannot argue the point that we may be the best in our locality, but we are being judged how we sing relative to the very best, i.e., Dallas, etc.

I was back stage the year the late, great Fred Waring was made an honorary member of our Society. A friend of mine was in charge of backstage activities; we were talking at the time Mr. Waring came in to receive his plaque.

My friend, Bill, introduced us at the same time Louisville was accepting its trophy and singing its acceptance song.

Mr. Waring said, "Who are these guys, anyway?" Bill told him that they were our new International Champions and continued on by stating that he needed to understand that they were only amateur singers.

Fred Waring looked at Bill briefly and, as an aside, commented, "Amateurs, my a--."

Now, we aren't the Thoroughbreds and we aren't Dallas. But, what we can do with a song still ranks up high on the resiliency scale of a cappella singing in the entire USA and Canada. And that, dear reader, is exactly what Mr. Waring said as he walked on stage.

But what he may not have realized was the fact that we in Pioneer may not deserve to carry Dallas's duffle bags, but we are still professional singers here in Pioneer, and there are few if any a cappella groups in our midst that can hold a candle to our Pioneer choruses.

However, to get better, we must look within ourselves to find the answer on how best to climb A LADDER. ■

Yours 4 A Song

Dan Bezaire, Music & Performance VP

Pioneer District's first Chorus Coaching Day

It is a great honour, and an even greater responsibility, to step into some pretty big shoes. Russ Seely has served the district and the Society extremely well for the last several years, attempting to increase our musical performance level. I will do my best to continue that work.

The first thing we are going to try is a Chorus Coaching Day, to be held in Lansing on February 24. Many of you have heard some of the details at our recent COTS.

The idea came from some of the judges at our last contest in October. They felt that our scores could improve dramatically if we could have some expert coaching. It seemed like an idea worth trying, and so the district is moving forward on it.

The format will be as follows:

- 9:00 a.m.-noon - Three choruses each get coaching for one hour from each of the coaches.
- Noon-2:00 p.m. - Common

lunch, with activities such as woodshedding, tagging, etc.

- 2:00-5:00 p.m. - Similar to first session, with three other choruses.
- 7:00-10:00 p.m. - Coaching session with Grand Rapids' GREAT LAKES CHORUS (our international reps in Nashville).

The cost per man is estimated at \$20 or less, including lunch. Unfortunately, if only seven choruses can participate, that means more than 20 cannot. But if this first one is successful, we can hold another one later in the year.

Another event you should mark on your calendars is Harmony Round-Up, May 18-20, 2001, at MSU. This is a great spot for this type of activity as anyone who has attended in the past can tell you. The faculty will include our 1998 International Quartet champs, REVIVAL. You don't want to miss the opportunity to learn from these talented men.

In closing, let me say that I am looking forward to working with the men of Pioneer. Let's sing our best and have fun doing it! ■

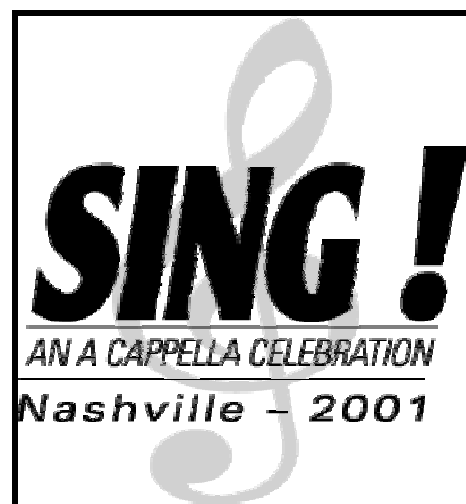


Dan Bezaire

Nashville – Music City – Barbershop – SING!

from *update*,
news from Society headquarters
November 2000

Add a friendly portion of Southern hospitality and it stacks up to be nine great days of harmony. Start the weekend before the International Convention with SING! An A Cappella Celebration, June 30 to July 2. SING! will feature many of the top performers in contemporary a cappella music —



including Barbershop.

What a fantastic prelude to our own International Convention and all of the fabulous events that accompany that special event each year. Y'gotta be there!

Register for both events on-line at www.spebsqsa.org/2001/, use the convenient registration forms in *The Harmonizer*, or call 1-800-876-7464, X-8462. ■

We sing ...

That they shall speak!

Young Men in Harmony

Al Bonney, District Chairman

A seniors quartet package for elementary schools

If you are looking for a good Young Men In Harmony idea, try this one: Singing for students in an elementary school can be a great



Al Bonney

way to further a Young Men In Harmony program. These in-school concerts do several things for the music programs that will support your YMIH objectives:

- It supports the idea that men's singing is cool and fun.
- It introduces the students to the Barbershop sound and informs them briefly why Barbershop is different than other styles of singing.
- It gives the teachers a fun musical experience to share with their students and leaves them with something to talk about in future classes.

Most chapters have a seniors quartet that might enjoy spending some extra time singing in elementary schools. This package is a proven performer by several seniors quartets around the country.

Teachers love to have groups come in and entertain/inform their students. You are building relationships by doing a legitimate service for the music programs. Elementary programs are the farm teams for the

upper school vocal programs. Supporting the elementary music teachers programs will eventually mean more students singing in the upper grades.

Program Outline:

Song one – Up tune – something to get their attention and say, "Today's performance will be fun to watch." – max. two to three minutes.

Song two – Voice parts. Briefly explain who you are and why you are there. Use a polecat song to explain the voice parts. Take no more than five minutes on this:

- Lead sings first couple of phrases alone. (Elicit applause based on if they were singing a part, would they sing that part. Repeat the polling procedure using applause for each subsequent part.)
- Tenor joins lead in a duet, then bass joins the trio for a couple of phrases.
- Baritone sings his part by himself. (Poke fun at the baritone.)
- All four sing the entire song.

Songs three and four – Student involvement. Get the students involved. Sing "Deep in the Heart of Texas" where students clap four times during the rest. Take a moment to teach the involvement with the quartet performing the piece first. Take no more than five minutes.

Sing-along – More student involvement. Congratulate them on a

great job and invite them to sing along with you. Use a song their music teacher has taught them. Make no judgment calls on quality. Take no more than five to six minutes on these two songs.

Song five – Quartet mix-ups – Sing songs that reflect the quartet's ability to make mistakes in a humorous manner. "Take Me Out to the Ball Game" is a popular song the students will probably know. Sing the chorus and then repeat it, except leave the third "root" out so the line would be:

"So it's root, root for the home team if they,
Don't win it's a shame for ... it's one,
Two, three strikes you're out at the old ball game"

This leaves you one word short. Puzzle over what went wrong, try it again, and finally conclude by adding:

"It's one, two, three, four balls you walk at the old ball game."

Keep this to a maximum of five to six minutes.

Song six – Dramatization of a classic Barbershop ballad – This should be the strongest visual comedic portion of the package. Sing a ballad like "Bill Grogan's Goat" with some props with total seriousness.

Questions and answers — Open the floor up to those who raise their hands. Keep it fast paced so the momentum of the package is not lost. Take no more than two to four minutes. Thank the students for their attention and move to your closer.

Song seven – Closer – Close with your next best up-tune. "I'm Still Having Fun" is a great closer since it expresses the joy of singing re-

(Continued on page 16)

The Judge's Corner

Ed Fritzen, Contest & Judging VP

As we start a new millennium, I would like first to wish all of my Barbershop brothers throughout the Pioneer District a very happy and healthy New Year.

I'm looking forward to some great things happening in Pioneer District in the coming year, and I'm honored to be able to serve the district as vice president of contests and judging. I have some pretty big shoes to fill as I start out on this position, and I would like to thank both Joel Mills and Mike O'Donnell for all of the help and encouragement they have given me during the past couple of years as I went through the judging program.

They have also set high standards for the position of VP/C&J, and, with their continued help and support, I'm sure I'll be able carry on the fine traditions of the Pioneer District.

As with any new year, we all have New Year's resolutions, and with this article I'm starting to fulfill one of my resolutions as VP/C&J. I hope this article will become a regular feature in the *Troubadour* and will serve both as a sounding board for you, both non-competitors and competitors, as well as a means of education about the judging program.

In future articles, I will explain, as best as I am able, our Society's judging program. I'll explain the three scoring categories as well as the very important position of contest administrator.

All of this information will help, I hope, to "de-mystify" the entire program and make it understand-

able to "Joe Barbershopper." In this way, I hope you will all gain a greater appreciation of what it takes to be a judge.

In addition, I'm sure all the competitors will benefit from additional education about the judging system we use. I will use this forum to keep you informed of the status of the judging program in our Society and what policies might have an impact on our competitors.

Finally, I hope anyone out there reading this article who might have some specific questions from which we all could learn would please submit them to me. I promise I'll do my best to answer them in future articles.

I have a number of responsibilities as VP/C&J, many of which are "behind the scenes" type of work. I won't bore you all with all those details. However, there are two very important responsibilities which I take very seriously.

The first is to ensure that every competitor in the Pioneer District has a positive, rewarding, and educational experience when he comes to contest. I see my role as one to serve the competitor. I'll do my best to ensure quality judging panels so far as I am able.

I'll also strive to ensure that any panel is well informed of the desires of our competitors and what they expect to receive in the way of evaluations and coaching sessions after the contests. In this way, I'm hoping to encourage choruses and quartets to partake of our wonderful convention weekends so that, although they might not have scored

the most points, each competitor will feel like a winner.

The second major responsibility I have is to identify qualified Barbershoppers who might be interested in becoming a judge. We have had a number of fine, dedicated judges from our district in the past, and we need to find additional men willing to become trained in our judging program.

Speaking from experience, it is not an easy process to become a judge, but it is extremely rewarding. You'll have the opportunity to interact with and learn from some of the greatest men in Barbershopping.

In addition, you'll meet Barbershoppers and competitors from all over the Society who are eager to learn from you. Believe me, it is well worth the effort, and if you feel you have what it takes to become a judge, I'd like to hear from you.

In the year 2001, all of the judges in the Society as well as invited candidate judges will be trained and certified for a period of three years. Because of this, we are not accepting any applications at this time for the judging program.

However, in order to be considered as an applicant and then candidate for the next category school in 2004, it is not too soon to begin the application process. It's pretty involved, and if I know of interested men, I'll do my best to prepare them for the application process when the categories are accepting applicants, probably in early 2002. In future articles, I'll explain the entire process one goes through to become a certified judge.

Finally, I'm here to serve, and if you have any ideas on how I might improve the contest and judging experience in the Pioneer District, please let me know. I'm looking forward to a great 2001 in Pioneer. ■

Quartets Champions Association

Al Fisk, Secretary

Spotlight on John Wearing

This month, we're featuring the talents of a great tenor, Mr. John Wearing! John tells me that he has sung with some of the greatest Barbershoppers of all time: Russ Seely, Marv Burke, Lyle Howard, Bruce LaMarte, Jack Slamka, Thom Hine, Pete Burns, Lenny Johnson (we miss you, Len), Denny Gore, Mike McClary, John Seeman, and Danny Rafferty. He has also sung with some greats who now sing in Heaven: Ray McCalpine, Marv McClary, Don Humphries, Frank Lopez, Bernie Smith, and Mel Hol-derness.

John started singing barbershop in Niles, Michigan (charter member!). Within two weeks of joining this chapter, he was singing in his first quartet – THE STEREOS.

In 1959, John and the lovely Margie were transferred to Detroit. Before making the move, another one of John's quartets (THE CHOR- DUOYS) went to International in 1961 (the year of the SUNTONES!). Still in '61, John joined the 4 FITS. They were Pioneer champs in 1964

and visited every chapter including Windsor. (Cool!) Another of his quartets was FOREIGN POLICY. They won the district in 1978 and went to International several times!

John's next quartet was SATUR- DAY NIGHT FEATURE. They took the district title in 1981 and, again, went to several International con- tests. Other quartet ventures in- cluded HARMONY ROADSHOW, ENTERTAINMENT, MOMENTUM, and TIME AFTER TIME. John wants all of us to know that he has had the honor of singing with other great quartets with wonderful guys.

The bottom line, says John, "It's great to be a Barbershopper." His greatest thrill is singing with Russ, Marv, and any bari. He and Russ currently sing with the SILVER- DOMES – International senior quar- tet reps for the past two years — with John Wade and Gene Bulka.

Wow! We are certainly blessed to have John in our ranks as a singer and friend. God bless you, John and Margie. ■

YMIH

(Continued from page 14)

ardless of age. After the perform- ance, thank the teacher; ask her if there is anything she needs from you or the chorus. You could leave a copy of the Society publications *Get America Singing ... Again!* and *An Introduction To Barbershop Singing For Youth* along with your card, and be on your way.

Suggestions for Success:

- Elementary students have a short attention span. They need to have a good time watching you have a good time, and they need to have a good time singing themselves.
- The students won't care about history, overtones, or contest structure. They deal with fast and slow, high and low, loud and soft, happy and sad. Sing solos; get them to identify each part and how they weave together and you'll involve them in your per- formance.
- Have a teacher or the principal sing a song with you. Don't leave them out of the program.
- Keep your talking to a minimum. Picture how you would entertain your grandchildren. Be funny. They love to laugh. Slapstick or visual humor works well.
- Let them have a small amount of time to ask questions.
- Make no judgment calls on the students' behavior. Compliment the behavior you want repeated.
- Sing your package in front of your chapter chorus director or another coach for their input. ■

Philatoga Township
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Barbershop Quartet





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Portage, MI 49002
Tel: 616-324-0521
Email: gcnitz@ameritech.net

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PIONEER DISTRICT 2001 SPRING CONVENTION

APRIL 27-29, 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 APRIL 13, 2001

FEE FOR _____ PERSONS @ \$20/\$25 TOTAL REGISTRATION FEE: _____

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

or MASTERCARD or VISA # _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

MAIL CONVENTION REGISTRATION FORM AND FEE TO:

Stan Williams, Treasurer

421 Franklin Street

Leslie, MI 49251

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 11:00 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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or See our Website
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Ed Gene

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Quartets: Your business card can be displayed in the *Troubadour* for only \$55 per year.
Don't hide under a rock. Let the Pioneer Barbershop fans know you're out there!

PIONEER DISTRICT 2001 SPRING CONVENTION

April 27-29, 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 March 27, 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 tax)

Please number in order of preference

McCamly Plaza Hotel - \$84.00 flat rate ☐

(Headquarters hotel)

(TWO-NIGHTS STAY REQUIRED)

Econo Lodge - \$48.95 flat rate ☐

Hampton Inn - \$65.00 flat rate ☐

AmeriHost Inn - \$66.00 (plus 9% tax) ☐

(20 rooms available)

☐ Request Non-smoking Room

☐ Request Handicap Room

☐ Special Request _____

GUARANTEED RESERVATIONS:

Credit Card: AE MC VISA DISC

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Chapters in Action

Holland

By Art Lane

Holland Chapter officers held a day-long retreat at the Park Theater in January to plan for 2001. Jack C. Oonk continues as president. We have a new secretary, Scott Bruursema, and a new music VP, Bill McAndrew. Other officers and board members are Paul Bekker, treasurer; James Hall, vice president of chapter development; Myke Lucas, chorus director; Art Lane, bulletin editor; Steve Foster, past president; Bob Eastman, member-at-large; Perry Mellifont, house; and Jim Esenberg, chorus manager.

The WINDMILL CHORUS had a busy Christmas season. For the first time, we put on our Christmas show at the Park Theater, with two performances. The show, titled "Sing to Me, Boys," was written by Barbara and Mike Oonk and John Ozinga, with a tip of the quill to Clement Moore. Director was Jack C. Oonk, with John Ozinga as narrator. Myke Lucas directed the chorus.

Quartets performing were BLACK RIVER (Bill McAndrew, Mark Andrew, Steve Foster, and James Hall) and GOLD STANDARD (Darrell Vande Hoef, Jack C. Oonk, Mike Oonk, and John Ozinga). Proceeds went to the Center for Comprehensive Therapy, which helps Holland-area kids with speech problems.

The chorus and GOLD STANDARD also sang for a tour of businesses and apartments on the upper floors of downtown buildings titled "Up on the Rooftops."

But the best gig of the season was unexpected: A busload of Senior Adventurers from Flint, returning from a day in Chicago, needed entertainment for their dinner stop in Holland. So the chorus trooped over to a spacious restaurant and, along with GOLD STANDARD, sang carols and greatest hits to applause and cheers. We have the makings of a fan club in Flint!

Gaylord

By Hank Hedges

Our cup runneth over with great joy and a lot of holiday singing. Using a "... 1, 2, 3" suggestion, the HARMONIE MEISTERS advertised that we were forming a HOLIDAY MEN'S CHORUS to sing the spirit

of the holidays "all over the town."

The first rehearsal brought 12 new voices to learn and perform carols for both community and private audiences. THE MERRY MEN (a.k.a. THE MERRY GENTLEMEN'S CHORUS) and chapter quartet SONIC TONICS sang nine gigs throughout December.

Another huge benefit of the seasonal chorus is the retention of six or seven of the new guys. Hopefully, these fine voices and gentlemen will become ardent Barbershops in the coming weeks.

At a special concert for a private community seasonal gathering, we were joined by FOOLS' GOLD and the local SAI chorus, culminating in a standing O. The two choruses sang "A Christmas in the Village," closing the benefit with a Mel Knight arrangement of "We Wish You a Merry Christmas." They received another SO and lots of new toys and food for the needy. This program was sponsored by the United Methodist Women of Gaylord.

Other gigs included extended care facilities, a senior home, and local businesses, who donated special items to the less fortunate of our community.

The HARMONIE MEISTERS wish the whole Pioneer District the happiest of New Years ever!

Michiana Metro

By Gene Hanover

Howdy from Michiana Metro Chapter. We have had a busy time of it since the convention. We prepared and gave three Christmas performances, including caroling throughout the largest mall in the Michiana area, the University Park Mall in Mishawaka, Indiana. We had our first Christmas party, where Raleigh Bloch of Kalamazoo installed our new officers.

We also awarded our first BOTY to Jim Ackles of Buchanan. Jim has been responsible for the paper trail that it takes to get a chapter up and running as well as for a great deal of the enthusiasm that our chorus has.

The year 2000 was very good to us and we are on the grow. We have just signed another music educator, Dave Carew of Niles, to our roster. Dave teaches in the Dowagiac Schools, has a great voice, and is young (and is already in a quartet!). He will be a great asset to our chapter. This brings us to 23 members. Our goal is to have 30 singers by this fall.

We also experienced another first in 2000, the loss of a great bass. Dave Riepma passed away on Thanksgiving weekend of a heart attack. Dave was with us for less than a year, but quickly became a big part of our

chapter. We sure miss him.

We are currently working toward the spring convention and our charter show. The show will be on May 12 at Brandywine High School, 7:30 p.m. EST (Michigan), 6:30 p.m. CST (Indiana). We will have more information in the next *Troubadour*.

Check out our Web site: www.lighthousechorus.org. Our webmaster, Andy McCaskey, has been doing a great job of keeping it interesting for our visitors.

Well, that's all for now. We hope that you and your chapters all have a great 2001 and we also hope to see y'all at the spring convention!

Flint

By Guy R. Hisson

Well, it sure has been busy being a Barbershopper for the FLINT ARROWHEAD CHORUS lately. We hosted our annual chicken dinner at the Masonic Temple in Flint, where we served and sang. Waiting on approximately 350 people and ringing chords while doing so sure made for one tired afternoon.

Our newly elected officers have taken their seats as Doug Lynn takes the big chair as president. Ed Wracan will surely be missed with the fine work he once again provided as president for the chapter.

Another great asset is Ed Boychuck, who is music VP and doing a fine job. Our other line officers can be viewed on the society Web site or ours at <http://community.mlive.com/cc/flintbarbershop>.

Flint's BOTY is Dave Lonsbury, who does a fine job at not only supplying a pleasant bass voice, but writes the scripts for our annual shows.

The FLINT ARROWHEAD CHORUS kept extremely busy with the annual Christmas performances for our many elderly care facilities and hospitals in the area. The Ortonville Chamber Of Commerce made a wonderful donation to Heartspring in exchange for the chorus caroling for their outdoor "Christmas in the Village."

A great Christmas party proved to be something different this year. Instead of exchanging gifts with each other, a gift was purchased by each guest and donated to the Marine Corps Toys For Tots Program. What a way to make you feel good at this time of the year.

Now it's on to the Ralph A. McMullan Center at Higgins Lake for our annual retreat, where director John Noteware cracks the whip and gets us going on the music for our annual Show.

Whatever the occasion brings for us, it is still packed with what we love to do — SING, SING, SING.

Lansing

By Paul Howe

Plop, Plop! Fizz, Fizz! (Groan!) Our celebration parties welcoming the third millennium are over and it's time to get back to some serious Barbershopping.

At our December 6 annual meeting, our 2001 slate of officers, as detailed in the last issue, was installed by District Treasurer Stan Williams. Stan used a wedding ceremony theme as he claims great expertise on that subject since he's had two weddings in his household this past year.

The president's "Key Man" award was presented to Bruce Fitzpatrick, and the Lansing "Barbershopper of the Year" award was presented to Paul Howe. Both men were cited for their hard work behind the scenes in support of Barbershopping and the Lansing Chapter.

Lansing starts off the year hard at work preparing for our spring show at the beautiful Wharton Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of Michigan State University. This year's show will be held on Saturday, March 3, 2001, at 7:30 p.m., and features 2000 International Quartet Champion, PLATINUM. For additional information, please call (517) 372-SING (7464).

At this writing, our High School Barbershop Quartet Contest on January 27 at Chippewa Middle School in Okemos promises to be fun. Entrants are anticipated from all over the Central Michigan area.

Oh, by the way, our trousers did NOT shrink in the dryer — we all really did EAT our way through the entire holiday season!

Windsor

By Bill Strong

The fun continues as we start the New Year. Our "Its As Easy As 1, 2, 3" programme continues to roll on with much success. Our latest tally for the fall drive has netted us four new members. Great job, guys, as we continue to share the wealth in the Windsor area.

Our new slate of officers has been elected for the year 2001 and I'm proud to announce that six of our Board attended COTS. With that kind of involvement, I'm sure our chapter will continue to be run with great efficiency. What a great way to start off the year with new fresh ideas that can be picked up at COTS. Thanks for participating, guys.

December was a busy time for our chapter. We hosted a Christmas party for our members and signifi-

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Chapters in Action

Windsor

(Continued from page 21)

cant others and, in spite of the weather, had great participation. The singing was excellent and the fellowship superb. Our chorus sang at the opening of Wind-sor's new downtown "Clark Park," which includes a skating rink. Our singing was heard by hundreds as we took part in a gala winter celebration. Nothing like singing outdoors in -15 degrees Celsius weather. (That's +5 degrees Fahrenheit in America.)

Our chapter quartets were also busy singing at service club luncheons, senior citizens homes, and many other performances which are so popular at Christmas time.

As of this writing, we are looking forward to Windsor's annual "Uncle Sam Night" on January 19. If you missed it this year, make plans to attend next year's. It's one of the events that makes our Society truly International. Its always a great night.

Traverse City

By Elbert Ford

I'm writing this and the next issue's contribution to the Troubadour from sunny Florida, namely St. Petersburg. I've brought my own computer, complete with e-mail access, so I can keep up with TCC activities.

We had a busy end to the year 2000. We sang for a statewide gathering of the Republican Women's Conference with a major representation of our chorus.

On December 8, we held our annual officers installation banquet, along with a fun-filled Barbershop Bucks Auction. It was the party of the year! Pioneer District Presiden Don Bazely was the installing officer, and our very own first lady, Mary, came along to provide an international air to the evening.

The finale of the evening was the auction. There was a wide variety of contributions and some pretty fierce bidding ensued. The guys could use only "funny money" that they had received throughout the year for various activities.

We also named the Barbershopper Of The Year (BOTY) that evening. We, as a chapter, selected the

BOTY for 2000 in a general vote in November. It seems to me that the choice gets harder every year. However, there was a winner picked — Art Lambert. The four other nominees, along with the BOTY, are recognized as members of the Cornerstone Society. They are Jeff Belanger, Chuck Jewell, Phill Knapp, and Clyde Whipple. Congratulations to all!

We're busy at this time putting together the Valentine's Day quartets and practicing for the performances. It's a lot of fun and a good money raiser, as well as being good PR for our chapter and Barbershop music. We're also busy with the new music for our show in June, featuring REVIVAL and FATHERLY ADVICE.

In closing, we extend this invitation to you to come in for a harmonious visit when you're in the area. We meet every Tuesday evening at The Presbyterian Church on Airport Access Road, just off Munson Avenue (U.S. 31 North), at 7:00 p.m.

Detroit-Oakland

By Tom Uicker

As we closed in on Christmas this year, Detroit-Oakland Chapter prepared for our usual Christmas activity of caroling at local hospitals and nursing homes. We visited both Providence and Beaumont (Royal Oak) hospitals, decked out in Santa hats and our red and white chorus shirts, caroling at all the nurses' stations and bringing smiles to nurses and patients alike.

Unfortunately, an unexpectedly heavy snowstorm in mid-December caused us to cancel our visit to the Arnold Home in northwest Detroit — a nursing home that Detroit-Oakland and its predecessor, Oakland County Chapter, has visited for more than thirty years.

That same snowstorm caused us to cancel one of our regular Monday meetings. With Christmas and New Year's Day taking away two more Mondays, we are feeling a bit of pressure as we prepare for our annual show coming up on February 16 and 17. But, as the saying goes, we work best under pressure.

Our featured quartets this year are both imported from the western states, so they haven't had much exposure in our area. BANK STREET, from Rocky Mountain District, is a six-time international medalist quartet. And FREESTYLE, a comedy quartet from the Far Western District, has won status as an international semifinalist. And, of course, we will have the GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS CHORUS with our own chapter quartets and the SONGSTERS ENSEMBLE.

The show will again be held at Clarenceville High

School in Livonia. All seats are reserved and tickets are going fast. If you missed our ad in the last *Troubadour*, you can find it on the web at www.harmonize.com/doc/doc.htm or give ticket chairman Tom Uicker a call at 248-559-7082.

Our 2001 Executive Board consists of: Herb Heber, president; Jim Kunz, VP of music & performance; Harry Jessop, VP of chapter development; Darl Wiley, program VP; Don Block, secretary; Tom Uicker, treasurer; and members-at-large Reed Abt, Bill Juchartz, Ray Konas, and G. B. Work. As for the new Barbershopper of the Year, that announcement will have to wait until next time.

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

Kalamazoo

By Brian Hall

The MALL CITY CHORUS is 50 years old and going strong! "You've come a long way baby." The chorus has heard these or similar words from more than one coach or judge. An impressive second-place finish in the fall convention and solid scores all around have convinced us that the hard work is paying off.

In addition, we've brought in coaches from both the Barbershop world and the traditional world of music. Noted Barbershop director R. D. Mathey and Dr. Miller from the music program at Western Michigan University have enhanced an already rich music program in the chorus.

We also want to recognize our music leaders including our versatile and knowledgeable director, Gene Hanover, who directed two choruses at the fall convention. The other was the new LIGHTHOUSE CHORUS of Niles. Gene has been instrumental in teaching solid vocal technique and inspiring us to sing our best.

Ed Fritzen is our assistant director, but did you know he directs the Battle Creek CEREAL CITY CHORUS and is a certified judge? Chris Fenner is a sophomore at Western Michigan University in the music program and he is concentrating on chorus directing! With such a great core of musical talent to lead us, we're looking forward to the spring convention with confidence.

In December, the chorus put on its second annual benefit show using the Society musical "What the Dickens" and raised \$2,000 for charity. We also performed at the annual Festival of Trees at WINGS stadium. And in addition to our second-place finish at the fall convention, the chorus can boast of having the Novice Quartet Champions, THE MAD HATTERS.

We are looking forward to the next few months. Singing Valentines will again be a big fund-raiser and a thrill for all of the guys who participate. We hope to sell over 100 valentines.

And of course, in March, we will celebrate 50 years as a chapter at our annual show and hope to welcome many past members.

Saginaw Bay

By Ralph Brown

We have been very busy this winter season. The annual performances at the local care facilities and Bay Medical Center were gratefully appreciated by everyone. We performed numerous "freebies," giving a lot of exposure to our hobby.

Thanks to Bob Winters and Tom Kren of our chapter, we also had a couple of paying gigs. It is always great for a chapter to have members feel good enough about their singing abilities to sell their services to their friends and their member organizations.



One of our recent highlights was the opportunity to sing at Bangor John Glenn High School during the intermission of the student's presentation of "Music Man." It is great to expose our style of music to the community and especially young people. We had a

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Chapters in Action

Saginaw Bay

(Continued from page 23)

quartet in the play consisting of a former member of our chapter and three current members: Bob Winters, lead; Randy Meldrum, bari; and Paul Ward, bass. They performed marvelously and received extended applause, particularly after singing the classic "Lida Rose." Great job, guys!

We are looking forward to the chorus coaching in Lansing. I know it is going to be great; where else could we get such a package for the money? We hope to see a large turnout for this event because the more who participate, the better the results. Wouldn't it be great to produce a chorus from our district that finished at least in the top 10? I noticed that Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo are planning on attending, just to mention a couple.

By the time this is in print, we will have held our show at Saginaw Valley University featuring quartets CHORDIAC ARREST and MOTOR CITY MIX. Our next concerted effort will be directed toward the spring competition.

We wish everyone the best year ever and hope to see all of you in Battle Creek.

Huron Valley

By Darrell Richmond

On the first Saturday in November, the Huron VALLEY HARMONIZERS, in conjunction with the COUNTY CONNECTION SWEET ADELIN CHORUS, presented their cabaret-style show "Side By Side" at UAW Hall 735 in Canton, Michigan.

It was a full day of Barbershop harmony featuring both matinee and evening performances. It was the first time that our chorus did two shows in one day.

Individual chorus and combined chorus dress rehearsals were held before each show and a buffet-type lunch was served to us between shows.

We sang two songs including the show title song with the ladies. Working and performing with the COUNTY CONNECTION CHORUS was a lot of fun.

We held our fall guest night on November 14. Although not nearly as successful as the last guest night,

we had a great time greeting, singing with, showing off for, and getting to know new people. Quartet ONYX performed for us and they were awesome. We want to thank them for taking the time to come visit with us.

On Tuesday, November 19, we performed Christmas concerts at the Hillside Terrace Apartments (our adopted senior home) and at Ann Arbor Hospice. The mother of one of our chapter members was recently moved into the hospice. Originally we were going to sing only a couple of songs at the hospice, but one song seemed to lead to another. "Silent Night" brought some tears as we finished our informal concert.

On Sunday, December 10, we visited five Ann Arbor-area senior and nursing homes to deliver Christmas concerts. Doing several concerts on a single day worked well as we had 25-30 members at each location.

After each concert, we individually and warmly delivered holiday wishes and greetings to audience members. It was a heartfelt and rewarding experience.

We are planning another concert marathon early in 2001.

Grand Rapids

By Pete Westers

Greetings from the Grand Rapids Chapter along with the hope that everyone in the Pioneer District had a most blessed and joyous holiday season.

The GREAT LAKES CHORUS proudly presented its annual Christmas show in conjunction with the GRAND RAPIDS SWEET ADELINES CHORUS to two sold-out houses on December 8 and 10. The shows were a great success. It seems that we have generated a following as we are finding that we are drawing in large numbers of the same patrons for this show year after year.

Regardless of this success, we are back at work preparing for our annual Great Lakes Invitational, which will be on March 24. We are pressed to learn several new songs, and to bring those songs to a level that we can be proud of. There will be a 3:00 p.m. show and an 8:00 p.m. show. If you are interested in tickets, call our hotline at 616-447-8338.

We have been having some trouble installing our new officers and board members due to the inclement weather in our area. Our new president is Jack Schneider. Jack has been chapter treasurer for several years and has finally made the decision to take a step up. We're behind you all the way, Jack!

Our VP of programming is Jim Russell, VP of special events is Fred Conklin, VP of music is Curt Struyk,

VP of membership is Dan Casamatta, secretary is Derek Hatley, and treasurer is Corry Dekker. Our board members at large are Jeff Chesnut, Ralph Mueller, Bob Ramlow, Paul Slack, and Don Strong. This has the makings of a great board, and we're proud to have these guys represent us.

Our Barbershopper of the Year for 2000 is Dan Casamatta. Dan worked very hard the entire year as the membership VP, and held many successful membership drives throughout the year. You may know him better as the lead in the quartet FOOLS' GOLD. Dan has made the decision to stay on as our membership VP and we are truly grateful for his dedication to the chapter and to the Society.

The fun just continues as we will carry on our preparation for Nashville. We hope to increase in numbers and improve in quality. There is a certain feeling of being so fortunate to be a part of this Society, and we should treat it with respect. I remember what the late Larry Ajer once told me when he came to coach our chorus: "No person in this Society is better than another as a person. There are varying degrees of skill and talent, but if we let that dictate how we treat one another, then the fun is gone."

Come one, come all, and enjoy being a part of our craft.

Grosse Pointe

By Nick Piccione

Planned by Chorus Manager Al Cole, our annual Christmas show, performed at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial Theatre, was preceded by a beautiful dinner in the adjoining ballroom overlooking Lake St. Clair. Both dinner and show were sellouts. We must give a good portion of the credit to the amazing talents of the EASTPOINTE SWEET ADELINE CHORUS, who added charm and grace to our stage. They are perennial district champs and international competitors.

Our Christmas pub crawl netted over \$3,000 for Charities Chairman Frank Fortier's fund ... and a lot of fun for all participants.

The Grosse Pointe spotlight this issue falls on "The Pioneer District Hall of Fame." It was established in 1974 to recognize individuals who have been of exemplary service to their chapter and to the Pioneer District. The election process involves nomination and full approval in writing by the nominee's chapter board of directors. It is then forwarded to the district Hall of Fame Committee, which has three years in which

evaluation and ultimate election or rejection must be accomplished.

Thus far, Grosse Pointe has been especially honored to have five successful candidates. They are deceased members Mark Roberts (charter recipient in 1974), Ben Landino (charter recipient and international quartet champion trophy designer), and Wally Joure (1976). Current members are Russ Seely (1990) and John Wearing (1995).

Russ and John are very active in both chapter and district events as they have been Barbershoppers for a total of over 80 years between them. They have been in district champion quartets and, in recent years, district senior champion quartets.

There is not enough space here to recite their impressive accomplishments, so I will just end with this thought:

*As you see we can hardly complain,
Having two men who bring us such gain.
Their singing's always a treat,
Strong lead and tenor so sweet.
How much luck can one chapter attain?*

Macomb County

By Russ Dyer

Not a single chad was found hanging nor was a vote recount necessary as Macombsters recently elected their new chorus officers for the year 2001.

Replacing Dave Anderson as president is Gary Washburn, a nine-year Barbershopper, an ordained Church of Christ minister, and a certified investment counselor. I guess this means Gary will be eminently qualified to furnish guidance and advice to us on any number of matters. I would be happy if he just told me how he learns new music so quickly and well.

Rick Anderson took over the position of music & performance VP from Chuck Hatch, and Jerry Boman became our new chapter development VP, Gary's previous position. John Szewc replaced Jeff Dix as program VP and your humble scribe was honored to become the new member-at-large, Ed Conn's previous position.

Re-elected for second terms were Mike Holland, secretary, and Fred McFadyen, treasurer.

My first official duty, I learned, was to attend COTS (Chapter Operations Training Seminar), held each year at MSU's Kellogg Biological Station near Battle Creek.

(Continued on page 26)

Chapters in Action

Macomb County (Continued from page 25)

After checking in, the first order of business was lunch at the cafeteria, where it became quite obvious that Barbershoppers like to eat nearly as much as they like to sing.

Next, we each picked the series of classes we wished to attend during the two-day event. After reading course description information, it didn't take a gypsy and a teapot full of leaves for me to figure out that, as member-at-large, I didn't belong in classes for presidents, secretaries, treasurers, chapter development VPs or chorus directors. It appeared my logical option was the marketing and PR syllabus. Sounded good to me.

What followed was a series of extremely informative class sessions, presented in a keenly professional manner by Reed Sampson, public relations specialist from the head shed in Kenosha. The outcome was a laundry list of projects I intend to pursue in the coming months in an attempt to make the Barbershop sound and the HARMONY HERITAGE CHORUS more visible in our marketplace.

I had been shocked in recent weeks, while selling ads for our upcoming program book, to learn how little is known by Macomb County merchants of our chorus or even Barbershop music.

You know the drill. You ask a friend, neighbor, or man-on-the-street if he is familiar with Barbershop music and the answer invariably is, "Oh, you mean like a quartet or something?"

Armed now with COTS information and ideas, at the very least I want to establish a Web site, make contacts in local media outlets, design a chapter brochure, and learn more about the Singing Valentines and Young Men in Harmony programs.

Meanwhile, we're now in the final rehearsal countdown for our February 3 program at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts. Those of us who have never had the pleasure of seeing and hearing FRED are especially excited about appearing with the 1999 International Champs.

And it will be great to hear POWER PLAY again.

Wayne

By Son of Needa Reporter


Our RENAISSANCE CHORUS had its usual busy Christmas season singing at St. Mary-Mercy Hospital, the Sisters of Mercy in Farmington Hills, several area malls, and even Metro Airport! And it looks like we picked up a new member or two along the way.

Our leadership team for 2001: President Ed Bax, Past President Bob Wolf, Membership VP Larry Radley, Program VP Don Bohnwagner, Music & Performance VP Mark Pritchard, Secretary Len Piggott, Treasurer Hal Reid, Charities Coordinator Bill Ure, PR Chairman John Vamplew, and Member-at-Large Gary Simon.

Our holiday season was saddened by the death of Hil Andrews on New Year's Day. Hil was a long-time Wayne Chapter and Redford Harmony Club member. His fine bass voice and warm personality will be missed. He was 86.

We're getting ready for our second annual participation in the Singing Valentines program. We're hoping to expand on last year's inaugural success with some new songs and by offering our services in a larger area of the community.

Finally, check out www.WeSingBarbershop.com. Scott Casey has done an outstanding job of creating a chapter and chorus Web site. Some of you who go back a ways at Wayne will enjoy the historic (?) photos. ■



BILL
DAN

A BARBERSHOP QUARTET

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

JOEL
MARK

Two new tools for chapter YMIH programs

1. Barbershop Harmony: A Tool For Musical Excellence (video, stock no. 4023/\$7)

The YMIH Committee and Society staff have completed work on a new video entitled "Barbershop Harmony: A Tool for Musical Excellence." Designed for the non-member music educator, this 10-minute video explains some of the facets of the Young Men In Harmony program, and features interviews and testimonials from teachers and students alike.

Performers on the tape include the MBNA AMERICA COLLEGIATE BARBERSHOP QUARTET CHORUS, FOUR VOICES, PRIME CUT, THE CLASSICS, THE VOCAL MAJORITY, and PLATINUM. The intent is for chapters to purchase the video to

show to music educators as part of an introduction to the YMIH program.

2. Harmony Hits (CD, collection of songs for music educators, stock no. 4882/\$5). The Harmony Hits CD (D. J. Hiner does all of the singing) is a performance of and voice part predominant tracks of the following songs:

"The Star Spangled Banner"
 "Oh, Canada"
 "Jingle Bell Rock"
 "Let Me Call You Sweetheart"
 "I Believe"
 "Under The Boardwalk"

This CD can be another tool for chapters to provide as a service to the music educators in their communities. ■

Want to host a district convention?

By Events VP Larry Parker

At the October 2000 District House of Delegates meeting, I announced that the District Convention Committee would begin taking applications for chapters wanting to host one of the six district conventions in 2002, 2003, and 2004. Lansing is the site for spring conventions of 2002 and 2003; Battle Creek is the site for both fall conventions in those years. As for 2004, neither of the convention sites have been determined.

If you need an application, please send a request to me by e-mail and I will forward a copy to you. The deadline for submitting an application is April 1, 2001. ■

The Holland Windmill Chapter Welkoms You:

BARBERSHOP ON PARADE

Friday, May 18, 2001, at 7:30 p.m.

Christ Memorial Auditorium

595 Graafschap Road, Holland, Michigan

FEATURING

PLATINUM

2000 International Champion

Fools' Gold

Grand Rapids Comedy Quartet

And the HOLLAND WINDMILL CHORUS

TICKET BARGAINS FOR BARBERSHOPPERS!

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Best Front Section Tickets

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OR Show & Afterglow Combo

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Afterglow Only

_____ Afterglow @ \$10 _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

(*Glow at Holland Chapter's Park Theater, 248 River Ave., Holland)

Make checks payable to Holland Chapter, SPEBSQSA. Send with stamped, self-addressed envelope to:
 Box 1403, Holland, MI 49422. Questions? (616) 394-0364. Thanks!

... New edit #10

Meditation is not what you think.

Never pass a snowplow on the right.

It begins when you sink into his arms and ends with your arms in the sink!

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a cash advance.

How many college football players does it take to change a light bulb? The entire team! And they all get a semester's credit for it!

George Washington's brother was the uncle of our country.

"Children today are tyrants who contradict their parents, gobble their food, and terrorize their teachers."

Socrates (470-399 B.C.)

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

"There is no feeling, except for the extremes of fear and grief, that does not find relief in music."

George Eliot

Upcoming Events

2001

Feb. 2 - Saginaw Bay Show. Contact Paul Ward: 517-686-8336

Feb. 3 - Macomb County Show. Contact Allen Holmes: 248-542-3564

Feb. 16-17 - Detroit-Oakland Show. Contact Tom Uicker: 248-559-7082

Feb. 24 - Chorus Coaching Day in Lansing. Contact Dan Bezaire: 519-727-5842.

March 3 - Lansing Show. Contact Larry Parker: 517-372-SING

March 10 - Kalamazoo Show. Call 616-345-7227 or visit www.harmonize.com/mallcitychorus

March 17 - Grand Rapids Show.

April 7 - Sault Ste. Marie Show.

Apr. 27-29 - Pioneer District Spring Convention in Battle Creek.

May 6 - Flint Show.

May 19-21 - Harmony Round-Up at MSU.

May 18 - Holland Show. Contact Steve Foster: 616-281-9389; or Jack C.

Onk: 616-392-4794

June 8-9 - Traverse City Show. Contact Jeff Belanger: 231-933-9900 or tcidoughboy@hotmail.com

June 30-July 2 - SING! An *a cappella* celebration in Nashville, Tenn.

July 3-8 - SPEBSQSA International Convention, "2001 - A Barbershop Odyssey" in Nashville, Tenn. www.spebsqsa.org

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

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

Oct. 27 - Rochester Show.

Nov. 3 - Pontiac-Waterford Show.

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

2002

Jan. 20-27 - SPEBSQSA Mid-Winter Convention, Riverside, Calif.

June 30-July 7 - SPEBSQSA International Convention, Portland, Ore.

2003

Jan. 19-26 - SPEBSQSA Mid-Winter Convention, Albuquerque, N. Mex.

June 29-July 6 - SPEBSQSA International Convention, Montreal, Canada.

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