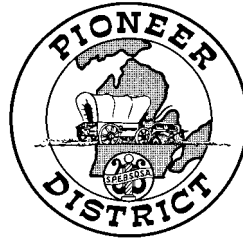


Pioneer Troubadour

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

Volume 52, Issue 3



June/July 2001

What a weekend!	3
Literally a breath of fresh air	4
Grant-writing class	5
PR, bulletin editor awards	6
House of Delegates highlights	7
A very Perry moment	15
Pontiac-Waterford Woodshedding	17
SPEBSQSA Charitable Mission	25

Power Play joins Great Lakes Chorus as Pioneer reps to Nashville; Gentlemen Songsters win district

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

International fifth-place medalist POWER PLAY again will be representing the Pioneer District in international competition, this time in Nashville, Tenn., in July.

Old news?

Well, look again: This is the 10th time, a historic first. No quartet has represented our district at International more often, said quartet lead Mike Slamka. "This makes us very proud. We are obviously thrilled to be representing this fine district once again."

Team Slamka (with tenor Don, bari Mark, and bass Jack) won the district prelims in April in Battle Creek with a score of 2,045, one point from its score last spring. Scoring, and singing, was extremely consistent: The range of scores per song per judging cate-

gory was only five points — 168 to 173.

But more telling than the numbers was the response of the audience. "This is the first time we've ever gotten a standing ovation in prelims, let alone multiple SO's,"



said Mike. As the Slamkas took their bows, they exuded friendliness past the proscenium and well into the balcony. Mike said later: "Thanks to all of our supporters. We love you all."

One of the ovations, in the semifinals, followed Jack's bass note in the tag of the bouncy "Play That Barbershop Chord," as deep

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

Go back to spring 1987. Detroit #1 and Oakland had recently merged. Detroit-Oakland wins its first district chorus championship, in Battle Creek. Steve Sutherland is director.

Roll forward to this spring. Detroit-Oakland wins the district chorus championship ... for the first time in 14 years, in Battle Creek. Steve Sutherland is director.

This was unexpected. Many had thought the winner would be the HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS, which missed the top by just nine points, or Kalamazoo's MALL CITY CHORUS, 21 points back in third. They were followed by Traverse City's CHERRY CAPITAL CHORUS and Grosse Pointe's LAKESHORE CHORUS.

DOC's dark-horse GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS chorus had competed 27 times since its last title, laying off only twice, placing third through eighth. This spring, it scored 796, its highest since judg-

(Continued on page 18)

(Continued on page 19)



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2. Mail file(s) on floppy disk.
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What a weekend!

By Steve Sutherland,
musical director of the
Gentlemen Songsters

We had a district chorus contest on Saturday, April 28, and Detroit-Oakland Chapter's GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS came away with the victory. I knew we'd been making steady progress, but I didn't realize how much. It wasn't supposed to happen until next year.

Sue Gleason has been our stage presence coach for almost as long as I've been the director. The material she invents enhances the message of the music and matches our abilities. Sue has always been able to push us further than other choruses might accept. In spite of the music being the most important thing in our hobby, I've always said the audience can stay home and listen to a recording.

In the audience, several people told me they had us in first place. It surprised me a little since these people went out of their way to talk to me. I appreciated the words of encouragement, but didn't really believe them — probably for fear of disappointment later.

When the contest was over and the final placement announcements began, they covered the plateaus first and we weren't the winners in any of them. My spirits were dropping. I so much wanted these guys to have something to show for all their work and improvement.

When they announced the champs as the GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS, you could have knocked me over with a feather. I'd forgotten that the plateau winners aren't the contest winners. I was in shock. One of the guys sitting

next to me said I kept muttering words of disbelief and asking if I'd heard the announcement correctly.

We're an odd collection of men, probably like all other chapters in the district. I have tremendous respect for each and every one of them. They put up with a lot of physical stress because I keep them on the risers longer than some of them would like. No one ever complains. They work very hard.

Of course the pressure is on for fall competitions now. To quote words Matt Coombs likes to use, "Oh, well. Life is tough! I'm trying to keep my feet on the ground." ■



Our improvements began with Jim Stephens working with us until his retirement and move to Arizona. Matt Coombs has picked up the baton and continued providing excellent vocal coaching. The music team and assistant directors have all been working hard to improve our performance level.

We've gotten new members, which has helped a lot, and that has been VERY encouraging. We put 10 more men on the risers than we had last fall. And we have four brand-new members who didn't sing with us this time; they're anxious to take their place on the risers.

They came to be visually entertained, too.

The goal set by the music team was to steadily "raise the bar" on our performance. I was not willing to exclude any current member, so we have been working in sectionals to bring everyone along and keep the performance level rising. It's been working.

I was hoping to gain 10 points per song and maybe have a shot at making a run for district champs in 2002. We exceeded the points by quite a bit, improving our score by 68 points! When we left the stage, it was the first time I knew we had done everything we worked up to in rehearsals.

Literally a breath of fresh air

By Guy Hissong, Flint Chapter

As Barbershoppers, we all have been taught by our music coaches to get down deep for that breath of air that supports our musical sound. In the words of the renowned Fred Kienitz, "Reach down and grab those buckets of sand."

Well, Carole Anderson, wife of Larry Anderson, bass singer for the FLINT ARROWHEAD CHORUS, literally had to do just that recently to save her husband's life.



While getting ready for a doctor appointment for herself, Carole heard Larry cough twice and then a loud thump. When she ran upstairs to check on him, she found him on the floor with his head back, not breathing. After calling 911, Carol was instructed by Genesee County Dispatcher Christa Plante how to properly tilt

Larry's head back and breathe two breaths of air into him each time.

Carole said she followed instructions until the police arrived and began CPR. A short time later, a paramedic unit arrived and had to shock Larry twice in an attempt to get his heart beating again.

When Larry arrived at the hospital, there were still no life signs. But after continuous efforts by the staff, he was brought back.

Larry required triple bypass surgery to correct the heart problem and was home two weeks later in good condition, ready to sing again.

After speaking with the medical staff from the hospital, they concluded that if it hadn't been for Carole being there and breathing that fresh air into Larry, he would not have survived.

Carole says she was definitely in a panic as any of us would have been, but had to grasp as much composure as she could to try and save her husband. "I owe it all to the Lord and team effort with the dispatcher, po-

lice, paramedics, ambulance attendants, and staff at Genesee Hospital," she claimed.

When concluding the interview with Carole, this writer failed to ask if she was familiar with the term "buckets of sand." I don't think she would have been; however, she was definitely familiar with its method! ■

Sponsorship creates unique opportunity

From update, news from SPEBSQSA headquarters

Harmony Foundation is charged with developing grants and sponsorships for SPEBSQSA programs and events. We need your help in this endeavor, however.

There are some excellent sponsorship opportunities that would not only help our Society, but would be a wonderful opportunity to bring a corporation some very fine exposure to an important target audience.

If one of your chapter members has well-placed connections with a national or international corporation, we'd like to talk with that person about these opportunities. Sponsorship is a two-way street where each side benefits. Because of the unique demographics of Society members and their well-defined lifestyles, we can offer a very attractive audience to a potential event sponsor.

Please call Gary Stamm at the Harmony Foundation office, 1-800-876-SING x-8446, if you have a sponsor prospect or if you would like to know more about this subject.

Also, if your chapter is considering seeking a sponsorship or grant, remember that it must be coordinated through the Harmony Foundation office. ■

**Ever growing ...
Or nothing
else matters!**

Grant-writing class held for Barbershoppers

On Friday-Saturday, April 6-7, Dr. John E. "Jack" Greenfield of the Tampa (Florida) Chapter led two grant-writing seminars for Barbershoppers in Pioneer District chapters and regional Sweet Adeline chapters at Trenton High School in Trenton, Mich.

The focus of the seminars was the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs grant programs which Jack had thoroughly researched. The seminar was aimed at enabling the attendees to write effective grant requests to obtain money for chapter needs.

The seminar was attended by more than 50 Barbershoppers representing 32 SPEBSQSA and Sweet Adeline chapters. Because

which they might be competing. Additionally, Jack provided copies of successful grants and gave ideas for other projects that the participants could use to develop and hone their own projects.

When asked if the seminar fulfilled its objectives, a survey of the attendees after the seminar rated it a 9.3 out of 10, and an 8.9 for fulfilling their personal expectations.

Overall, both seminars combined received a 9.0 rating. When Jack asked the group if they felt they would apply for grants, virtually everyone raised his or her hand.

Pioneer District Executive VP Al Bonney, who facilitated the event, felt the sessions were valuable learning tools for the attendees. "The event was an unqualified success. They left with not only an understanding of what they should do and how to do it, but also where to get help if necessary.

"In October, I will go back to the attendees and ask if they have applied for a grant and if they were successful and what their comments are now that they have some experience. We may find an op-



of the great interest, the seminar was split into Friday evening and Saturday sessions.

Prepared handouts were distributed, leading the attendees through the details of actual grants for

portunity to make this an ongoing event, thus providing support to those who are writing grants AND an educational opportunity for those who would like to get involved. Certainly I do not see this as a one-off or a stand-alone event."

Chapters attending were Battle Creek, Battle Creek SAI, Flint, Gaylord, Great Lakes Chorus SAI, Grand Rapids, Grosse Pointe, Holland, Huron Shores SAI, Huron Valley, Kalamazoo, Lansing, Livingston, Macomb, Michiana Metro, Monroe, Muskegon, Pioneer District, Pontiac-Waterford, River's Edge SAI, Rochester, Saginaw-Bay, Shoreline Chorus SAI, Spirit of Detroit SAI, Thumb Area SAI, Traverse City, Traverse City SAI, Water Wonderland SAI, Wayne, and West Shore SAI. ■

District PR, bulletin editor awards announced

Darrell Richmond of Huron Valley is Pioneer District's Public Relations Officer of the Year for 2000. Runner-up is James Hall of Holland.

The awards were presented at the district spring convention.

Judges were Doug Pearson, district VP for marketing who works in the PR field, and Jim Styer, district PROBE coordinator and retired newspaperman.

Darrell Richmond

Darrell, who earned second place last year, is also entered in this year's international PR contest. A retired Ford engineer and seven-year barbershopper, he began promoting the chapter three years ago when he became development vice president.

His "patient and persistent soft sell has proven to be a powerful marketing strategy," the nomination letter said. He developed relationships with the media that evolved into partnerships, resulting in positive coverage and "the opportunity to reach out and make a difference in our communities."

Darrell's work was called a major factor in the 100-percent increase in chapter membership. He organized a team that has planned several shows and guest nights based on plans and timelines he developed. Results have included several articles in five newspapers, a public-access TV show, a promotion in AAA's *Michigan Living* magazine, and increased ticket sales and public recognition.

Several months of effort before the 2000 annual show led to not only good advance coverage, but a reporter who became a Barbershop

fan.

Contacts with a reporter at another paper led to a quartet appearance at a high school and eventually to two chorus performances, a parade appearance, and a radio interview. All were covered by the reporter.



Huron Valley's Darrell Richmond and Tom Peirce proudly show the awards they received at the spring convention.

The nomination letter spoke of Darrell's "genuine desire for partnership, seeking to fulfill our chapter's mission of service to the community in exchange for the help and support of the media."

Darrell also was named chapter Barbershopper of the Year for two consecutive years.

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

James Hall

James has greatly expanded Holland Chapter's communications with members as VP of chapter development. He helps them "know what is going on, feel they are part of the chapter's activities, and feel good about what the chapter is doing," said his nominator, Art Lane.

A supporting letter said James is "Art Lane's clone." Art won a district and international PR award two years ago.

James began e-mail transmission of the weekly chapter newsletter, started an e-mail recap of chapter meetings, contributed heavily to the monthly bulletin, is substitute bulletin editor, used the chapter theater's marquee to recruit members, created and followed up on a successful membership program, filled in as music librarian, and led in the painting of a mural to brighten the chapter meeting site.

He also provided most of the documentation that led to two arts council grants, and developed a one-hour media presentation that helped the chapter raise \$80,000 to renovate the theater it had purchased.

This is the third consecutive district PR honor for a member of the Holland chapter. Last year's winner was Jack W. Oonk.

How to enter

You can enter yourself or anyone else in your chapter in next year's contest. The entry should include biographical information on the nominee; commentary on the PR efforts, including planning, execution and follow-up; and copies of pertinent documents (news releases, newspaper clippings, correspondence, printed programs, thank-you letters, etc.)

The PR effect doesn't necessarily depend on the success of the PR itself; rather, it is judged on the amount of actual PR (spreading

(Continued on page 28)

House of Delegates meeting highlights

By Staff Writer Jim Styer

The Pioneer District House of Delegates met at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, April 27, 2001, at the McCamly Plaza Hotel in Battle Creek. The following is a synopsis of that meeting.

Pioneer District officers are seeking ways to improve communications with chapters and members. One way would be making the House of Delegates meeting at spring and fall conventions more productive, said Al Bonney of Traverse City, executive vice president.

"Some are here for information only and don't have a feeling of being needed," Al said. "Joe Barbershopper doesn't have any knowledge of what goes on at this meeting, or what goes on in the district. We need to open lines of communications."

Every chapter receives an agenda and written reports from district officers, and is to appoint a delegate to the meeting, held the Friday afternoon of convention weekend. At the meeting, the reports are discussed if anyone has questions or new information, business is conducted, and any delegate may raise questions or issues. Each delegate also is expected to report back to his chapter on developments.

Some chapters don't have delegates at the meeting. "One key is, what can be done to get more chapters represented," said Roger Lewis of Battle Creek, Society executive vice president.

Some districts are experimenting with various ways to improve the meetings, he said. Included

have been small-group forums on issues of concern.

Also suggested were more active and creative uses of e-mail to improve district-chapter communications. The district has its own e-mail list, PioNet. Additional special-interest lists are possible.

"We will continue to explore," Al said, adding that the officers encourage ideas from members.

Al presided for President Don Bazely, who was undergoing medical treatments.

At a board meeting held before the House of Delegates gathering, officers discussed their contacts with chapters. "Chapters seem to appreciate the contact and the fact that the officers show an interest," Al said. "But some chapters don't follow through on responding to officer contacts."

Coaching grant sought

The district requested a \$30,000 grant from the Michigan Council of the Arts and Cultural Affairs for 11 coaching workshops in 2002 – three each for choruses and quartets, and four for chorus directors.

"We might get less, if any," Al said. "We would spend some of this money, anyway, through our budget or member fees, so this would cover some of our existing expenses. Because matching funds are required, we still would need to charge participants, but it would be less than without a grant."

District finances

The district "had some real concerns last fall," which resulted in approval of increased dues, noted Treasurer Stan Williams of Lansing. "It's starting to pay off slightly. But we're not feeling full

effect of the increase yet because only one quarter has passed."

"I urge you come up with supplemental forms of income," past board member Russ Seely of Grosse Pointe said from the floor. "It's everybody's responsibility, not just the district officers. I think it's a major, major issue. We should have enough in the budget so we could run for a year if, for example, a convention were canceled by a major storm. Looking for ideas for advertising and grants is a high priority."

In a report for absent President Bazely, Al said, "We're in business and we have a product, which is a membership opportunity that is fulfilling to our singers. But as a business, we also need revenue to continue to provide that product."

Convention sites

The district is continuing to look at potential convention sites for 2004. Bids have been received from Gaylord and Sault Ste. Marie. By this summer, a team will visit Gaylord to review facilities, said Larry Parker, convention chairman.

The site will be Battle Creek in fall 2001-2003, and Lansing in spring 2002-2003.

Chapter hosts will be Flint this fall, Kalamazoo in fall 2002, Huron Valley and Battle Creek in 2003. No bids had been received for a chapter host in spring 2002.

In other matters

- The board will study a proposal that a competing chorus be allowed to ask that its scores not be published. "If this is ap-

(Continued on page 29)

Here's the Society Pitch

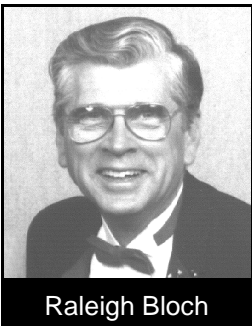
Raleigh Bloch, Society Board Member

Oh, oh ... my article is due!

Gosh, my article is due and I just finished summarizing that information I got from those guys at the House of Delegates.

What information is that?

Oh, hi! I didn't see you sneak in here.



Raleigh Bloch

Hey, you know I'm always around when you're writing an article. In fact, you can't do it without me.

Now that you mention it, I guess you're right. Well, let's get on with it.

So what is this information you were talking about from the House of Delegates?

Well, when I spoke to the House of Delegates at the Pioneer District Convention, I told them about how the Society's membership has continued to drop. I also told them that, if you look at the graph of the age of our members, the rate of decline is going to increase significantly if we don't start recruiting new members at an increased rate. A large chunk of our membership was born in the 1930s.

Wow, if you add 15 years to that, a lot of those guys are going to be gone, and you'll be one of them.

Hey, let's not go picking on me now, but you're right.

So what is this information you were talking about?

Well, I told them that the staff was frustrated because they have tried "... 1-2-3" and the McDonald's model and nothing seems to be doing the job to increase membership, or even hold it the same.

What's the McDonald's model?

You know, that's where they try to start up new chapters in each district? It's worked in only three districts. So I asked them, "What should we be doing about membership?" And then, "What are we missing?"

What did they say?

Well, I handed out 3x5 cards and they wrote responses to those questions.

And what did they say?

I got 93 responses!

WHAT DID THEY SAY?!

Gee, I thought you'd never ask.

- 40 percent said we should continue or increase our efforts in YMIH. This came in efforts involving the teachers or directors, providing good quality demonstrations at schools by local chapters and quartets, more emphasis on recruiting young men, change our style or music to attract them or set the hook, and survey them to see what it would take to get them to join.

- 22 percent said we need a lot more PR. This referred to our image, to the fact that we are still a well-kept secret, more

marketing help from Kenosha, more quality performances, and national advertising campaigns.

- 14 percent said improved membership recruitment programs. This included looking at other organizations, outreach to minorities, getting rid of the guest nights and really using membership drives, and reducing membership costs for new members.
- 11 percent felt we needed better chapter meetings. This referred to the two-song contest rehearsal, more fun, more quartet-ing, better organized meetings, better organized guest meetings, no time for guests because of contest or show, and variety.
- 10 percent said that our music quality must improve. They felt that many groups drive people away because of their poor quality. We should require our groups to be at a certain level before they are allowed to perform in public. They need better music leadership, better education of older members, to put entertaining packages together, and to recruit singers — not warm bodies.

Boy, that is interesting. There is a lot of stuff we can do right at the chapter level.

Right, but the district and International have some things to look at also. I plan on passing this information on, and I hope you will use it at your chapter as well.

Hey, I will. See yah next time.

Still have to get the last word in, don't you?

Yup.

Hmmm.

Hmmm to you, too. ■

Here's the District Pitch

Brian Dunckel, Member Services VP

What does Barbershop mean to you?

There are many answers to that question. To some it is the thrill of ringing a chord, to others



Brian Dunckel

it may be the rush of being on stage, while still others treasure the fellowship they share in our fraternity.

Whatever it was that brought us to Barbershop harmony has a

special place in our hearts.

But what does Barbershop **REALLY** mean to you? By this I don't mean learning vowel shapes or diphthongs or even words and notes. (Although I'm sure all directors would love it if everyone did that.)

What I mean is much like in the Budweiser commercial that asks, "What are YOU doing?" to preserve (remember, that's part of SPEBSQSA) our hobby? Are you actively involved in your chapter? (I didn't ask, "Do you participate?" but rather are you an integral part of its activities?)

Do you sing at performances, sell show tickets and ads, serve on committees or the board? Are you a source of positive PR? Do you attend conventions, COTS, Harmony Round-Up, or maybe serve

as a delegate to the House of Delegates?

Even on a personal note, have you done **your** part? Have you "replaced" yourself? If every member attracted just one new member every seven years, we wouldn't be worrying about growth.

Have you given someone else the opportunity to experience the thrill of our hobby? It is sad as I look at the chapter rosters and see men with 10, 15, 20, or even 25 or more years and no Man of Note awards. Does this hobby mean that little to you? Oh, I know, I've heard it before "I've asked everyone I know." Maybe just asking isn't enough. Have you offered to stop by and pick them up or, better yet, just done it?

When we started our school improvement process a few years ago, one of the first things we decided and agreed upon was that if we keep doing things the same way, we would keep getting the same results. So try something different!

Instead of asking those you know, ask someone you don't know. There are LOTS more of them! Sure it takes some nerve, but as you do it you will find it gets easier.

Is this hobby worth saving? Is it

worth working at a bit to ensure it for the future even if it means going out of our comfort zone a bit? Personally, I can say "YES" for I am, or should I say was, quite a reserved person. Friends can't believe how much I have changed.

We all sing the words "carry your part" each week. Are **YOU** doing it? We all must, not just in song, but in preserving our craft and precious hobby by passing it on to someone else. Remember: dreams **DO** come true, so if you're gonna dream ... dream **BIG!** ■

You'll have the time of your life this summer!

Where can you rub elbows with the man who put the "master" in master of ceremonies, Carl Hancuff? Where can you spend a week learning from the Society's "best of the best"?

The answer is Harmony College/Directors College, which will be held July 29 to August 5, 2001, on the campus of Missouri Western State College in St. Joseph, Mo. Tuition, which covers airport transportation, room, meals, and classes, is only \$425 for members, with a special tuition of \$262.50 for full-time vocal music educators, and half-price of \$212.50 for students 23 and under.

Attending this year's college is 1994 international quartet champion GAS HOUSE GANG.

For more information, visit the Society's Web site at <www.spebsqsa.org/hcdc>, call Lani Dieter at 800-876-7464 x-8551, or send an e-mail message to <HCDC@spebsqsa.org>. ■

Public Relating

Doug Pearson, Marketing & Public Relations VP

Calendar of events can help measure PR success

In that wonderful wide-open world of Barbershopping, public relations is generally keyed to our chapter events. The success of our efforts is predicated on the PR results we reap from the many programs, performances, activities, and overall events that involve our chapters throughout the year.

With those morsels of unsolicited wisdom in mind, let's venture a quick look at the upcoming 12 months and see what events your chapter can participate in and how they can be translated into good public relations. This event calendar is certainly not all-inclusive, but it serves as a functional focal point.

JUNE

Flag Day — It epitomizes patriotism which has a natural flow into Barbershopping. Any patriotic events going on in your community? If so, contact the people in charge and let them know you have a chorus or quartet willing to participate.

Baseball — Arrange for your chapter (or a chapter quartet) to

sing the National Anthem at one of your community baseball games. The Lansing Chapter did this last year at a Lansing Lugnuts game. Other chapters have done the same.

JULY

International Convention — If your chapter has any kind of a tie-in via chorus or quartets, be sure to let your media know.

AUGUST

County Fairs — This is an excellent opportunity for the "strolling musicians" venue that Barbershop quartets — with their built in flexibility and mobility — can do so well.

SEPTEMBER

Labor Day — There are usually lots of activities that Barbershoppers can connect with.

Bush League Contest — Our PATCH CHORDS quartet won this contest a few years back. If you're interested in finding out about the type of publicity that can be generated by competing in Bush League, I'd be more than happy to tell you!

OCTOBER

District Convention — Is your chorus competing? Are quartets from your chapter competing? Then let your media know.

NOVEMBER

COTS — I am assuming that some key individuals from your chapter will be attending. Right? This could be worth a squib or two in your local papers.

DECEMBER

Mall singing, holiday chorus, chapter banquets, BOTY. Enough said about the potential here.

JANUARY

New officer announcements.

FEBRUARY

Singing Valentines — Probably our single biggest event during the year as far as PR possibilities are concerned. But you know all about that, don't you?

MARCH

Show Season — Maybe this is the month for your chapter's annual show. Maybe it isn't. At any rate, your show affords a multitude of publicity potential.

APRIL

District Convention — See October.

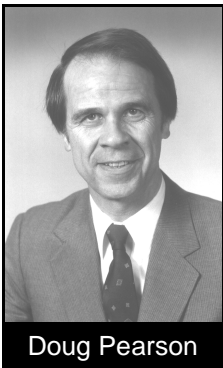
MAY

Mother's Day — Repeat Singing Valentines format.

Memorial Day — Take advantage of your community activities.

If this PR events calendar is to have an impact, you need to check it closely and periodically. How is your PR measuring up with the events? Could you be scheduling more events that lend themselves to good public and community relations?

By using this type of calendar, you can make a quick analysis and evaluation as to your PR success at the end of the 12-month period. ■



Doug Pearson

Chapter Coaching

Doran McTaggart, Chapter Support/Leadership VP

Chapter coach helps make your chapter the best it can be

Most of our chapters have been contacted by their chapter coach and they have a good positive relationship. Your



Doran McTaggart

chapter coach is well-trained and can access both material and human resources that can help make your chapter the best it can be.

He is the conduit, the facilitator, the resource that can help your chapter board make things happen.

You, the member, deserve to get the most out of your membership in our Society. Your chapter coach can get assistance from our district VPs, our Society committees, and our Kenosha staff. What a resource and it's all free! What a deal!

There are a few chapters that have not had an on-going working relationship with a chapter coach and, in my report to the House of Delegates, I promised that every chapter would have a chapter coach contact during the second quarter. Remember that communication is a two-way street.

Does your chapter need help with a membership drive? Do you want some coaching for your cho-

rus? Do you have questions about competition? Put your chapter coach to the test. Use his skills and talents to your advantage.

Our district really needs men who want to make a difference by becoming applicants in the chapter coach program. The next training session will be at COTS in December. Successful candidates will be assigned several chapters and get a feeling of euphoria knowing that they helped make a difference.

What type of people are we looking for? A Barbershopper of five or more years whose decisions are respected by others. A person who has been involved at the chapter or district level. A self-starting, risk-taking individual who is a good listener and will gather the resources together to assist the chapter in making meaningful decisions. I could go on, but I'm sure you get my drift.

If you would like to be involved in supporting other chapters, let me know quickly. I will communicate with you and answer any of your questions. I trust that our chapter coaches, district officers, and chapter leadership teams will search out and recommend capable men for this rewarding program.

I am waiting for your response to serve your district. ■

Bulletin editors can get mentors

For many years, PROBE has offered encouragement and critiques by certified bulletin judges for chapter editors who enter their district's annual Bulletin Editor of the Year contests.

For editors who want to develop their skills, but fear a low score being made public, they can enter for critique and encouragement without a score announced.

But what if you're a start-up editor, off cycle for contests, and would like encouragement and suggestions for improvement, not just once but on a continuing basis? For that matter, what if you've been an editor for a while, but still want suggestions?

That's the charter for the Bulletin Editor Mentor Committee of PROBE, the Society's association for PR Officers and BEs.

The editor will be matched with a well-qualified volunteer mentor, at minimum a certified judge with extensive experience in Barbershop journalism. The editor and mentor will have a one-on-one relationship with advice and encouragement given as long as the editor and mentor agree that continuing exchange of ideas would be helpful.

If you think a mentor could help you, contact Grant Carson, Chair, Bulletin Editor Mentor Committee, 9030 Drumcliffe Lane, Dallas TX 75231 or e-mail <wmgcarson@aol.com>.

There is no charge for this new PROBE service.

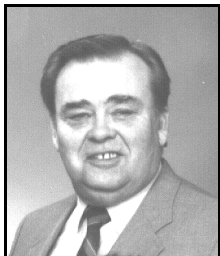
For more information about PROBE or to join, visit <www.harmonize.com/PROBE>. ■

Take Note

Fred Kienitz, Chorus Director Development VP

Changing directors can be traumatic

I have had a wonderful time being a part of the Pioneer Board and sending all of you these articles in the hope that you will glean information that you will be able to use in the future.



Fred Kienitz

My usual bi-monthly tidbits are meant to stimulate you who are front-line people and also you who have set a goal to become a chapter director of note.

In that I am getting older and more senile, I also am getting to the point of stepping aside and making way for a new and more enthusiastic VPCDD who will continue to bombard you with all kinds of information to help you become more proficient as you continue on in the capacity of chapter director.

I have only one piece of advice for those of you who are currently FRONTLINERS. You are there because you have studied and prepared for this prestigious position and, if you are as smart as I think you are, you will continue to study the art of directing and, as you grow, so will your chorus.

As I progressed through this job, I was, on many occasions, approached by various members

from Pioneer chapters who had been blessed with one of these new leaders and taken aside in a confidential way to tell me that this guy (or gal) had a lot of growing to do.

I have always tried to remain confidential and never respond to the individual with any kind of a remark that could be construed as a positive or negative answer.

I tend to agree that the changing of directors can be — and in some cases is — very traumatic and will take a great deal of time and effort to build back up to the previous level. However, I have never asked this question. But in leaving this post at the end of this current business year, I feel it may well be a most appropriate comment.

That question is, “What are you doing to help this chorus develop into a highly competitive, accurate, and beautiful ensemble capable of winning or scaring the devil out of those who did win?”

Let us begin with an established chorus and a brand new director. If you are a typical chapter, you will do one of two things: You will work hard and diligently to show the “new kid” how to do it, or you will start looking for a new chapter with potential.

The only thing you are most unlikely to do is to sit down and develop a plan on how to become better singers who will eventually

attract good directors without your having to ask.

This degree of singing in Pioneer is not always evident. Just look at your scores in district and International competition. Why is this happening to us? I’m not sure that there is a single answer. But I am sure there are some things that may be true about most of our Pioneer choruses that might result in lower scores.

Think like champions and answer these questions:

Do you know your parts to both of your competition songs? (NOTE: 60 percent, 70 percent, 80 percent, or 90 percent.) That is a big spread and the truth is that too many of your fellow singers are in the 50 and 60 percent level.

Do you have weekly section rehearsals for notes, actions, and footwork?

Do you have section tapes and use them for 100-percent accuracy of your notes?

Are you aware that words are composed on one or two or multiple sounds, all of which must be sung together? Example: “FOREVER AND A DAY.” In Dallas, this is sung “foh-re-vuh ran-da dahe.” Every voice sings it the same way.

IT IS THE SINGERS DOING THIS, not the director!

I am leaving you with these few thoughts, but I hope you all are now beginning to understand that championship singing is the responsibility of everyone from the director to the guys in the last row.

Keep in mind that “CHAMPION” is a word made up of lots of different components and each of you are indeed a part.

As for me, I’m proud to be from Pioneer, and collectively we can go out and KICK BUTT! ■

Yours 4 A Song

Dan Bezaire, Music & Performance VP

Let's learn to sing better

We have just held our annual spring convention and contest and, though it was a great time with lots of good singing, a couple of things occurred to me.



Dan Bezaire

Out of all of our registered quartets, why did only 11 compete? Of all of our 30-some choruses, why were only 14 competing for district championship? (Hooray, GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS!)

There are always reasons that an individual quartet or chorus cannot make a particular contest, but we should be able to put a lot more guys on stage.

There are plenty of reasons to enter a contest, and probably the worst of them is to win. You shouldn't even enter a contest to see whom you could beat, win or not. So why compete, if not to win?

Contests provide a focus for all those weekly rehearsals we all have. We are trying to improve our craft — not to win contests, but to sing better. We are performers, and we owe our audiences the best performances we can deliver.

When we learn contest songs,

we are going way beyond words and music; we are learning to *perform* a song, but it doesn't end there. When we learn different ways of bring contest song "A" and contest song "B" to life, we are also learning how to put more music into any of our repertoire songs. We are learning to sing better!

Contests are really a musical snapshot of our whole Barbershop experience. They are a measure of how we are progressing at a specific point. We rehearse every week, we polish, we learn to tune and balance chords, and we learn how to turn the lyrics into musical phrases.

At the contest, we find out how successful we are at doing those things. If you think of it that way, it doesn't really matter where you place. The judging panel will tell you how successful you were in doing all of those things, and they usually will suggest ways to improve. Again, we learn to sing better.

President Bazely has an idea of choruses going to contest and not having their scores published if they so choose. Maybe that would bring more competitors and raise the level of performance in the Pioneer District.

That's what we all want, isn't it? ■

Harmony Explosion Camps spark young singers

Harmony Explosion Camps bring male high school students and their teachers together for an intense choral music learning experience. Society music staffers and outside faculty serve as clinicians for the camps.

The camp nearest the Pioneer District is held at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, July 12-15. Tuition for the camp is \$125.

The goals and objectives for the camp are:

- To assist the teacher in the performance of male choral singing, including Barbershop style.
- To provide the students with an educational and performance opportunity.
- To establish a positive working relationship between the chapter and the music teachers in the community.
- To create a positive image in the community for the chapter's support of music education.
- To increase participation in the Young Men in Harmony program.

Chapters can help a student attend Harmony Explosion Camp by sponsoring the tuition. This sponsorship can be for students from a local school, or a contribution can be sent to Harmony Foundation designated for Harmony Explosion Camp.

Young Men in Harmony

Al Bonney, District Chairman

Grants and YMIH

While I am certainly not an expert in the area of grant writing, I know a lot more than I did a few months ago. One of the things I have learned is that there is **MONEY OUT THERE** for good projects — and especially for projects that involve youth and the arts (and that's us!).



Al Bonney

Many of you know about (and some attended) the grant-writing seminar the district sponsored early in April.

Over 50 people came, representing 32 Barbershop and Sweet Adeline chapters from all over Michigan, to hear Jack Greenfield from Tampa, Fla., speak about his grant-writing experiences (He secures \$60,000 a year in grants for his chapter!), his suggestions ("Make it your business to get into grant requests."), and his descriptions (specifically researched for us Michiganders) of where to find money in Michigan. I think we all came away feeling moderately confident about where to go and our abilities to write a grant that might get our chapters some funds.

Jack had several great messages for us. One of them was that projects involving kids and the arts are looked at very favorably. The

reason for this is that granting agencies know several things:

- School budgets for the arts have been cut dramatically and any help coming from the arts community ought to be supported.
- If we are to have a flourishing arts culture in the future, our children need all of the exposure they can get right now.
- One of the major contributions that amateur organizations like ours can make is in the schools and with the children.

If our friends from Canada will forgive me for a moment as I speak of the Michigan part of our district, the state of Michigan gives more money, per capita, to the arts than any other state in the Union! The Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs is the state agency tasked with distributing these state grant monies, and they have several programs available to arts groups.

One program particularly is of interest to chapters. It is called the Regional Regranting Program or the Mini-Grant Program. This program provides grants of up to \$4,000 for arts projects responding to local arts needs. (Do you hear YMIH in that sentence?) Mini-grants are administered for the Council by regional regranting agencies throughout Michigan.

You should contact the regional regranting agency in your area for deadlines and other information.

What is even greater about this program is that there are three cycles for these grants each year; so you can apply three times and you can be awarded money in two of them. So you can get up to \$8,000 a year from this program!

I have the list of regranting agencies and the counties they cover if your chapter did not attend the seminar. Send me an e-mail or give me a call and I will tell you whom you need to contact in your area to apply.

You will need to take action soon because the next cycle begins on June 1, I think (maybe July 1, and that reminds me that I need to get going for my chapter!).

The real message here is that there is money available and **ANYONE** can get it. All you need is a good project idea and enough commitment to write the grant request!

The **OTHER** message is that the regranting people you call to get information and an application **ARE THERE TO HELP YOU!** Really, that is their **JOB**. They **WANT** you to write a successful application and, while they won't write it for you, they will advise you, suggest changes to the project to make it more competitive, and will read your document and make helpful suggestions as well.

The reason I put this in the YMIH column is that frequently chapters are a bit strapped for cash. The message here is that not having extra money is not a good reason not to get into YMIH projects!

Give me a call if you think the Mini-Grant Program would help your chapter (231-223-4064). ■

HELP WANTED!

Grant writers for the Pioneer District

Got a bit of time and some writing skills? Looking for a way to help Pioneer reach her rightful position of preeminence in the Barbershop world?

Objective: We can add beneficial programs to the district agenda, serve our member chapters better, and improve the district financial picture (without taking all our funds out of the member's pocket) if we can become an effective grant-writing organization.

We need a group of men interested in becoming a grant-writing committee to move forward toward this objective. The district has had some success in 2001 at receiving grants. We received over \$6,000 to fund the "A Cappella Blast!" YMIH festival. We have also submitted a \$30,000 grant proposal to the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs to fund a series of coaching clinics for choruses, quartets, and directors in 2002. Now that we have some experience, we need to make grant writing the way we do business in Pioneer and we need three or four good men who want to make this happen.

Interested? Call Al Bonney at 231-223-4064 or e-mail <AlBonney@pentel.net>.

A very Perry moment

By Jim Stephens

Lou Perry, esteemed Barbershop arranger and coach and lots more, died in February. The following memory by Jim Stephens ran in the March issue of the Tucson (Arizona) Chapter's Sunshine Sayings:

I was a budding arranger of Barbershop music back in the 1970s. At Harmony College in Oklahoma, the class assignment was to work with one of the society arrangers on an arrangement in progress that needed new ideas.

The faculty member assigned to work with me took one look at the title and proclaimed, "That's not Barbershop!" He walked out of the room and left me there on the verge of tears and wondering if I really wanted to be a Barbershopper.

Devastated, I was contemplating leaving and flying home. Well, who should walk in but Lou Perry, the head honcho of the arranging class that I was taking.

"What's the matter, Jim?," he asked, looking at my face. I re-

lated what had just happened and he responded by asking me to play the arrangement for him. He suggested a few substitute chords to use in a language that I understood. (I was a music composition major in my college post-master's program.) How easy he made it seem.

As a result of this "memorable moment," I continued as a Barbershopper and eventually served the Pioneer District as their DME and permanent site backstage chairman for more than a decade.

I take great pride in having won four consecutive senior quartet district championships, all with different members. (The tenor and I kept changing the other two parts.)

One of these senior quartets competed here in Tucson in January '95, so I had occasion to relate this incident to Lou Perry, who was working backstage. He remembered! He gave me a great big Lou Perry hug as he broke into tears. What a wonderful, caring man. He saved my Barbershoppin' life! ■

Help Wanted

An energetic individual to join the Pioneer District Convention Team as **Coordinator of Registration**.

His duties would include, but are not limited to, coordinating registration procedures with the host chapter and overseeing the functions at the convention registration desk.

Persons interested in applying or wanting more information may contact Vice President for Events Larry L. Parker at: (517) 372-8389 or LParker437@aol.com

We need your help!

Quartets Champions Association

Al Fisk, Secretary

Spotlight on Norm Thompson "Notes from Norm"

By Norm Thompson
as submitted by Al Fisk

A heartfelt hello and good wishes to one and all.

Having just read the *Troubadour* article by my long-time friend Ken Gibson, I am prompted to share some revived memories.

The exact dates have long since evaporated from the gray matter I'm afraid, but my beginnings are a little like that of Ken's. So with this as a backdrop, let me first say that I, too, cannot remember a time when I didn't enjoy listening to vocal harmony. Some names that do come to mind are THE MILLS BROTHERS, THE FOUR LADS, and THE FOUR FRESHMEN, but not necessarily in that order.

My appreciation of music began while sitting next to my father at our upright player piano. I really got a kick out of making the roll speed up/slow down as he pumped the foot pedals; my legs were too short to reach them!

At different times, he would try to teach me a little background ditty and when I got it (it was VERY simple), he would start singing something he called "Cowboy Jack."

At other times, we talked of how he had played trumpet in college and in the "CCC." That led to my taking up the tonette, which led to the cornet (a relative of the

trumpet) and six years of junior/senior high band.

I joined the Milford Chapter at the urging of my then father-in-law, with whom I sang in church choir. The promise was some GOOD harmony. I had no idea what was in store.

I'm not sure if it was the first or second meeting that my ears were pinned back by the likes of the MERRI-MEN and the CURBSTONE SERENADERS. What a beginning! I said to myself, "That's for me!" I was hooked.

Within a year or so, I had gone to the Roostertail (a Detroit restaurant) to see and hear the BUFALO BILLS and to the Greenville, Mich., show/glow for the recent International champs, the TOWN AND COUNTRY FOUR, along with some other district talent.

At this point, the memory fogs over, but the name RAFTER RINGERS does come to mind — no slouches they.

One more outstanding memory of Greenville is the blinding snowstorm I had to drive through to get there. The state police had warned against travel, but that didn't bother Linda or me in my '65 Mustang! (Kinda sounds like a country song, eh?)

Well, a country boy's gotta do what he's gotta do, so before my chapter quartet was named, I had

crossed paths with Tony Scooros, Ron DuMonthier, and Gene Bulka. On to bigger and better — enter the CLOSE CHORDERS.

I'll never forget the first contest the CLOSE CHORDERS entered. The "pre-Bush League" contest took place at the Rochester Country Club. I thought "Here I am in front of, well, God knows how many of 'the experts' that will know by the smell how nervous and afraid I am before I ever open my mouth, or they'll see my pants quivering as if on a clothesline in a 40-mph summer wind!" I know I hyperventilated. To this day I do not recall if I sang a note!

Well, the judges must have taken pity on Gene, Ron, and Tony because, as I recall, we came in second out of three quartets.

It was all fun.

The memories include singing on the Bob-Lo boat, wandering while singing at an old-car festival at Greenfield Village, and driving across the country for the Los Angeles International in 1967. We were the district alternates for that contest.

Well, I've rambled on enough for now. But who knows, the mind works in strange ways sometimes, so maybe memory will conjure up another installment of "Notes from Norm" somewhere down the road.

Until then, keep the rubber on the road and your pitchpipe handy.

Later, my friends.

<SnapshotNorm@yahoo.com> ■

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

P-W Woodshed contest results

On Friday evening, March 30, the Pontiac-Waterford Chapter held its annual Woodshed Contest at the Pontiac Country Club.



Pontiac-Waterford Musical Director Chris Miller (left) awards the honorary Big Chief Trophy to DOC Musical Director Steve Sutherland.

Fifty-one singers representing six chapters participated in the contest. The judges were the BORDER CROSSING quartet, representing Windsor and Macomb chapters (Dan Bezaire, Rob Grimmell, Roy Gurney, and Matt Tipton). Here are the results:

The coveted Woodshed Badges were won by the CORN HUSKERS singing "Let The Rest of the World Go By": tenor John Noteware (Flint),

lead Lyle Howard (Clarkston), bari Ron Gillies (Flint), Noteware, Ron Gillies, Lyle Howard, and Jim and bass Jim Dugan

(DOC).

Star Singer Ribbons went to quartet NO NAME singing "My Gal Sal": tenor Marv Wilson, lead Jerry Spitler, bari Pete Peters, and bass Jim Dugan (all DOC) and quartet KEY RHIMENEES singing "Love Me and the World Is Mine": tenor John Noteware (Flint), lead George Bartlett (DOC), bari Steve Sutherland (DOC), and bass Chris Miller (Pontiac-Waterford)

The evening was highlighted when special guest of honor Steve Sutherland was honored for his many contributions to the Pioneer District. Pontiac-Waterford's BIG CHIEF CHORUS director, Chris Miller, presented Steve with the honorary Big Chief Trophy and read Pioneer District President Don Bazely's personal congratulatory message.

To close the evening, Bill Pascher presented the Bennington Trophy to DOC for best chapter representation. ■



The CORN HUSKERS won the highest awards of the evening, the Woodshed badges. (From left) John Noteware, Ron Gillies, Lyle Howard, and Jim Dugan.

Golden Anniversary Club adds three

Three members of the Pioneer District were recognized as 50-year members of the Society at the House of Delegates meeting.

Albert "Doug" Beaver of Saginaw-Bay, Alan Davenport of Detroit-Oakland, and George Spidy of Windsor were presented their Golden Anniversary Club awards to acknowledge their many years of service to the Society and to their chapters.

Congratulations to Doug, Alan, and George. ■

Plan for a great Labor Day weekend at Harrisville

Mark your calendars now. Keep Labor Day weekend open for a great time at Harrisville, Mich., on Lake Huron.

There will be:

- Tons of Barbershop singing
- Camping
- Golf outings
- Kids' talent show
- Art fair
- Parade

Camping is available at the state park and KOA in Oscoda. There is a Holiday Inn in Alpena and one in Tawas. Additional motels and cottages are available locally.

For more information, e-mail Craig Pollard at:

<caponyx@entropytech.com>

Power Play

(Continued from page 1)

and penetrating as a tuba ... or a 32-foot organ pipe. Jack later said, "It wasn't that low; it was just that the other voices were a bit higher than usual."

Jack is Mike and Mark's dad and Don's uncle.

The semifinal companion to this was a POWER PLAY standard, "Time After Time," as the quartet was resplendent in black double-breasted suits and shirts with gold ties and sparkling buttons.

In the finals, dashing in blue blazers and gold ties and kerchiefs over black shirts and tux pants, they sang the emotive "Moonlight Becomes You," with Mike leading in gestures and emotional expression as the others supported him for a unified look and feel. Then Mark acted the foolish groom in a "My Fair Lady" medley.

"We felt great about both of our performances this weekend," Mike said.

Preparations for Nashville, he said, include "rehearsal once a week and coaching, coaching, coaching." As a result of a drawing in Kenosha, they will sing 30th out of 51 quartets.

One of their coaches, Society Executive Director Darryl Flinn, was at the district convention. Others are Society Music Education Director Greg Lyne and Cindy Hansen. Greg has directed the GREAT AMERICAN CHORUS, MASTERS OF HARMONY, and WESTTOWNS. Cindy has coached the VOCAL MAJORITY and MASTERS OF HARMONY.

POWER PLAY's district qualifying score ranks it fifth among all quartets that competed this spring,

behind MICHIGAN JAKE (Cardinal District), UPTOWN SOUND (Johnny Appleseed), RIPTIDE (Dixie), and BSQ (Mid-Atlantic). Last year going into internationals, POWER PLAY ranked sixth with virtually the same score.

Other competitors

Rounding out the top five in the district contest were PHILATOGA TOWNSHIP, WJBC (1999 district champs), FERMATA NOWHERE, and FOUR MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR (current district champs).

Before they switched places in the finals, WJBC had led PHILATOGA TOWNSHIP by two points in the semi-finals.

Of interest was the contrast in the FISHIN' TACKLE sets. In the semis, they again parodied the outdoor life with "Up a Lazy River" and "Four Phenomenal Fishermen from Michigan." But in the finals, they went formal from their hats to their spats, with tailcoats and grey vests, and showed their command of straight singing with "Basin Street Blues" and "Walkin' My Baby Back Home." Their finals score was 27 points higher than their parody round.

College quartet contest

In the college quartet contest, PRIVATELY FUNDED from Hillsdale College sang for the right to represent Pioneer District at the international competition. Their smooth and mellow renditions of "Love/Eyes Medley" and "Goodnight Sweetheart" garnered 751 points. That would have placed them seventh in the regular quartet contest.

This is the third spring that PRIVATELY FUNDED has competed, with significantly better scores each time. Its previous tallies were 604 in 1999 and 693 in 2000. ■

Power Play to appear on Grand Ole Opry

POWER PLAY, international bronze medallist from the Pioneer District, will appear on the Grand Ole Opry on Friday evening, July 6, during the Society international convention in Nashville, Tenn.

"The appearance is the result of some delicate negotiations with the Opry by the Nashville Convention and Visitors Bureau and the convention host committee," said Society Public Relations Manager Reed Sampson. "We received word at the headquarters that the spot had been approved."

"We're thrilled that the Opry has given us this opportunity," Sampson said. "It's an honor we're extremely proud of and a great PR hit for the Society. It provides us the chance to reach yet another segment of the American public that loves music."

Nashville radio station WSM broadcasts the Grand Ole Opry every Friday and Saturday night, providing a national airing of POWER PLAY's appearance.

The family Slamka will sing one song on the show. They hadn't yet selected the song, but Mike Slamka said, "We are very excited to be representing our family, the Pioneer District, and the rest of our great Society."

Tickets for the show are available by calling 615-871-OPRY. Tickets are \$25 plus \$3 handling fee. Seats in the "Golden Circle," the first five rows on the main floor (if available), are \$35 plus \$3 handling fee. The Opry staff recommends ordering now to be sure of a seat. Individuals are responsible for their own transportation to and from the Opry. ■

Gentlemen Songsters

(Continued from page 1)

ing was changed in 1994.

The victory is the journey

But Steve, who has been a director for 25 years, said, "It should never be about winning. You can only compete against your previous performances. That is the only thing you can have any control over. Keep raising the bar. Have fun; be among friends. Winning is just icing on a cake. It is nice to be recognized for your efforts, but having the guts to get up on a contest stage is the real prize. Most of the time you don't come in first place. Never give up. The victory is the journey."

DOC placed 47 men on stage to sing two old standards, "Let a Smile Be Your Umbrella" and "My Gal Sal."

"Funny songs are OK for a show, but give me a real message to sing about and I'm happy," Steve said. "I also like to keep it Barbershop. The new categories allow music that stretches beyond my ability to tolerate. There are many exciting songs yet to be sung that conform to more traditional Barbershop."

DOC scored highest in the presentation category, followed by the singing and music categories. Their presentation coach is Sue Gleason, who "always has been a wonderfully creative talent," Steve said. Vocal coach Matt Coombs "is helping us make tremendous improvements."

Looking back, the director added, "I can't forget the years Jim Stephens spent working with us. This all started with him." Jim is

retired district director of music education, now living in Tucson, Ariz.

But it's not just the director and coaches. "Ours is a team effort that starts with the board and music team and travels all the way down to the guy that handles the picture money," Steve said. "I have always felt the singers are the show, never the director. I usually tell everyone, I follow them well. I learn a lot from them." (Steve is also a junior-high teacher and is webmaster for the district's Web site.)

Other choruses almost there

Huron Valley has been on the edge of a first-place finish during the past year, and Kalamazoo has been performing strongly for a few years.

And they have been doing it with significantly fewer men than the first-place winners. Both placed just under 30 men on stage this spring.

Both also have benefitted from the experience of competing with other "almost-there" choruses in the summer Buckeye Invitational in Columbus, Ohio.

The HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS, led by Lynne Peirce, snapped their fingers to "Sweet Georgia Brown" and then slowed the pace with "My Buddy" to score six points higher than DOC in the singing category. They were only one point behind in the music category.

Kalamazoo's MALL CITY CHORUS nearly equaled Huron Valley's first-song score with "You Keep Coming Back Like a Song." Then it swung into a polka medley complete with two-stepping, clapping, and clanking mugs. That energetic effort, directed by Gene Hanover,

helped give the chorus the overall top score in singing and a second place in presentation.

While fourth overall, Traverse City ranked third in presentation and music. Fifth-place Grosse Pointe, with just one man fewer than DOC, was fourth in music.

Rounding out

Rounding out the top 10 were Saginaw-Bay, Battle Creek, Pontiac-Waterford, Windsor, and Michiana Metro. They were followed by Gratiot County, Flint, Rochester, and Muskegon.

The mike-testing JOE BARBERSHOPPER CHORUS fielded nearly 100 men, a near-record bolstered by members of the international-bound GREAT LAKES CHORUS from Grand Rapids. Director Jamie Carey led two numbers not performed before by the JBC in Pioneer: "Chordbuster March" and "From the First Hello" As a special treat, both songs ended with re-arrangements of the tags.

Lansing hosted the convention with a "Great State Rivalry" theme and many attendees wore college colors, including the judges. Reactions were as expected to judges alleging to be from Ohio State and Jackson Prison.

In a new convention event, Hank Hedges of Gaylord plunked the piano late Saturday afternoon for an old-fashioned sing-along. The honky-tonk sounds turned passers-by into participants for more than an hour.

On Sunday, about 30 Barbershoppers gathered to sing the National Anthem on the field at a Michigan Battle Cats baseball game. They also led "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" from the third base line. The 'Cats won the game in a hitting fest. ■

Pioneer District Spring Convention 2001



PHILATOGA TOWNSHIP, finishing second with 1,747 points, sings "The Story of the Rose": Tenor Tom McCoy, lead Larry Reinhart, bass Phil Haines, and bari Gary Nitz.



(Below) FOUR MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR, 2000 district champion, finishes fifth with 1,681 points. Here they sing a parody of "Up a Lazy River": Tenor Tracy Ulrich, lead Kurtis Busman, bass Neil Nugent, and bari Bill Woodbeck.



Finishing third with 1,721 points is WJBC (above) singing "My Mother's Eyes": Tenor Bruce LaMarte, lead Craig Pollard, bass Doug Morgan, and bari Brian Kaufman.

Fourth-place quartet FERMATA NOWHERE finished with 1,705 points. Here they sing "Bundle of Old Love Letters": Tenor Jeff Gougeon, lead Tom Conner, bass Pete Burns, and bari Steve Pauling.



Photos by Paul Howe
and Gary Simon.



Quartet THE THIRD COAST — tenor Al Bonney, lead Phil Knapp, bass Dan Decker, and bari Jim Mudgett — holds the Great Lakes Express Trophy, earned by donating the most money to Harmony Foundation in 2000.

In the College Quartet Contest, PRIVATELY FUNDED scored 751 points. (From left) tenor A. J. Siegmann, lead Jason Siegmann, bass Dan Simpson, and bari Dave Talcott.



Musical Director Lynne Peirce leads the HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS to a second-place finish, only nine points from first.

Kalamazoo's MALL CITY CHORUS, directed by Gene Hanover, finishes in third place with 775 points.



Pioneer District Spring Convention 2001



The CHERRY CAPITAL CHORUS, directed by Marty Chirgwin, finishes fourth with 758 points.

Grand Rapids' GREAT LAKES CHORUS, led by Jamie Carey, entertains the late-Friday night crowd, singing its International contest package.



Musical Director Steve Pauling leads Grosse Pointe's LAKESHORE CHORUS to a fifth-place finish with 743 points.

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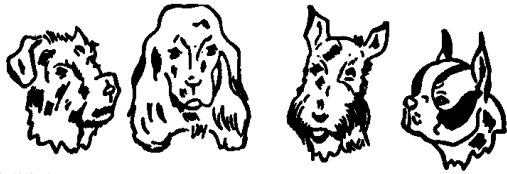
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The SPEBSQSA Charitable Mission

Submitted by Pioneer District
Affiliated Charities Chairman
Alex Willox

During the past 10 years, SPEBSQSA leaders have been seriously examining the SPEBSQSA Charitable Mission and our relationship with Heartspring (formerly the Institute of Logopedics). In November 2000, the SPEBSQSA Board of Directors unanimously adopted a resolution declaring that, "It shall be the Charitable Mission of SPEBSQSA to preserve our musical legacy through support of vocal music education in our schools and communities."

This change has created some confusion and we trust the facts presented in this document will help to educate the SPEBSQSA chapters and members on why the change had to be made.

- In 1949, the Institute of Logopedics was first brought to the attention of the SPEBSQSA leadership by the Wichita (Kansas) Chapter. Logopedics was this chapter's local charity and, at that time, a speech correction center which treated hundreds of children. Logopedics had plans to create local clinics or field centers across the nation. That plan never materialized and today Logopedics has evolved into Heartspring, where Barbershoppers have supported a residential school program with space for a maximum of 40 students.
- In 1964, when the Society adopted the Institute of Logopedics as its Unified Service Project, one of the major reasons

was that "music plays a major therapeutic role in communicating with patients." Today, Heartspring does not have a music therapy program. The Society has offered to help fund music research that could benefit thousands of children, but Heartspring has declined this offer.

- Logopedics was also selected as a Service Project so that SPEBSQSA, "could play a major role and not be merely one of many supporting organizations." Today, Heartspring has the support of six other patron organizations and operates at a substantial surplus.
- During the past 37 years, Barbershoppers have contributed more than \$16 million dollars through Harmony Foundation to Logopedics/Heartspring. Additionally, Barbershoppers have helped Heartspring pay for a state-of-the-art \$14 million dollar campus, a \$4 million dollar endowment fund, and the Shaklee Institute for research.
- For more than 10 years, SPEBSQSA leaders have been examining our Charitable Mission and evaluating the change in direction Heartspring has taken from the original intent of our relationship. This examination was conducted by the Society Board of Directors, the Society's Marketing Committee, a special task force in 1994, the Future 2001 Committee in 1995, and culminating with the Charitable Mission Task Force recommendations in 2000. Throughout this

process, Heartspring officials were aware of the considerations and, indeed, commended the Society's move to make our Charitable Mission more focused on vocal music.

If SPEBSQSA was an organization just being formed today and was searching for a charitable cause that would be closely associated with our musical fraternity, the preceding facts would not point to Heartspring as they did to Logopedics nearly 40 years ago. This, too, is based on many facts.

- Singing is disappearing from our culture. Choirs and choruses are shrinking in numbers or disappearing altogether. During the last several decades, many schools have experienced funding challenges and school music programs have suffered cuts, eliminating or severely reducing the quantity and quality of music education.
- In the past three years alone, Barbershoppers — individuals, quartets, and chapters — have supported 42 grants totaling nearly \$250,000 to community and school music programs all over the U. S. and Canada. We estimate that nearly 10,000 people, mostly young people, have directly benefited from the grants, and more than 50,000 parents and audience members have indirectly been touched.
- Barbershoppers have also funded 15 Harmony Explosion Camps that have given over a thousand young men and their

(Continued on page 29)

The Barbershop tenor's creed

By Earl McGhee

1. I will remember that I am a tenor and that tenors are unique among men. I will conduct myself accordingly.
2. During chorus rehearsal, I will allow myself to be shushed by the director; but at a performance, I will drive my high notes to the far corners of the room.
3. I will show a certain respect for the bass, for few men can sing with their knuckles dragging upon the ground. I will not get mushy about it.
4. I will always remember that the baritone really thinks that those strange notes are hauntingly beautiful. I will respect his intentions, but I will not get mushy about it.
5. I will not forget that all leads really wish they could sing tenor, but I will not let my pity for them become obvious.
6. I will be very selective about the lead, bari, and bass that I will consent to sing with in a quartet. I know that I will always be in great demand, for they are many and we are few.
7. I will practice until no one can tell when I go from natural voice to falsetto, for I know it drives others crazy.
8. When pickup quartetting, I will insist upon trying to sing the bass part, for I know it causes the real basses great pain.
9. Whenever my quartet creates an overtone, I will let a sly smile play across my face that says, "Yes, I really did hit that note."
10. I will hold my head high, remembering that I am a tenor and that humility is for those who cannot afford arrogance. ■

Spring convention raffle wrap-up

By Chairman Don Horton

I was chairman of the charity raffle at the district convention hosted by Lansing. I just want to report that the raffle was a success. We netted about \$1,000 for Harmony Foundation. Mike O'Donnell, (Grand Rapids Chapter and Muskegon chorus director) won the sound system valued at \$400.00. Congratulations to Mike and a BIG thank you to all who purchased raffle tickets.

Editorial

Olio

No, it's not another word for margarine. The word "olio" means a miscellaneous mixture; hodgepodge; potpourri. (You learn obscure words if you work crossword puzzles regularly.) That's what this issue's editorial column is: a miscellaneous mixture.

* * *

For those of you who quickly turn to page 2 when your *Troub* arrives (I would guess that the number of readers who fall into this category is fairly low), you may have noticed that my business phone number is missing. It's not a mistake.

As of June 1, 2001, I am officially retired from General Motors after 39 years.

I will now have more time to sing Barbershop, to research my family genealogy, and to do the "honey-do's" that have been piling up.

* * *

Over the last couple of years, Walt Quick, Wally Wolosiewicz, and (via Steve Sutherland) Maureen Wickstrom have given me old copies of the *Troubadour* and the *Harmonizer*. I now have a good collection, but it is far from complete.

If you have been collecting these publications for many years and are being pressured by your spouse to "get rid of them," please consider passing them on to me. I would enjoy adding them to my collection where they would be available to my fellow Barbershoppers.

Please don't let old issues of the *Troubadour* and the *Harmonizer* become landfill!

* * *

Lastly, but most importantly, you may have noticed that District President Don Bazely's column is absent from this issue. Don is currently undergoing treatments for cancer in London, Ontario. He is doing well and is in wonderful, positive spirit.

Please keep Don in your thoughts and prayers.

* * *

And remember: **WRITE TIGHT!**

Gary

New brew unveiled at Sault Ste. Marie afterglow: "Uptown Sound — A Premium Blend"

Sault Ste. Marie's NORTHLAND CHORUS is directed by Bob Shami, a man who also happens to be a brewmaster at the local brewery in real life. He is also the contact man and booking agent for the guest quartets invited to appear on the Sault show.

Among the flurry of back and forth e-mails between Bob and UPTOWN SOUND contact man Dave Calland, Dave asked Bob the following: "My question is ... can you prove to us that you really are a brewmaster? Do we get a tour of the brewery or at least your malt beverages?"

The gauntlet had been laid down! The challenge got Bob to thinking of how he could best demonstrate the veracity of his claim to being a brewer.

So he took the quartet's publicity photo, (which of course he had access to, being the quartet contact) and turned it into a personalized beer label for the quartet. He applied that label to an existing brew of his own design (Red Maple Premium Lager) and thus was born a new brand: **Uptown Sound - A Premium Blend!**

Bob then left a dozen bottles of the special beer in each of the quartet's hotel rooms for them to discover and had three more cases readied for the bar at the afterglow.

It wasn't enough!

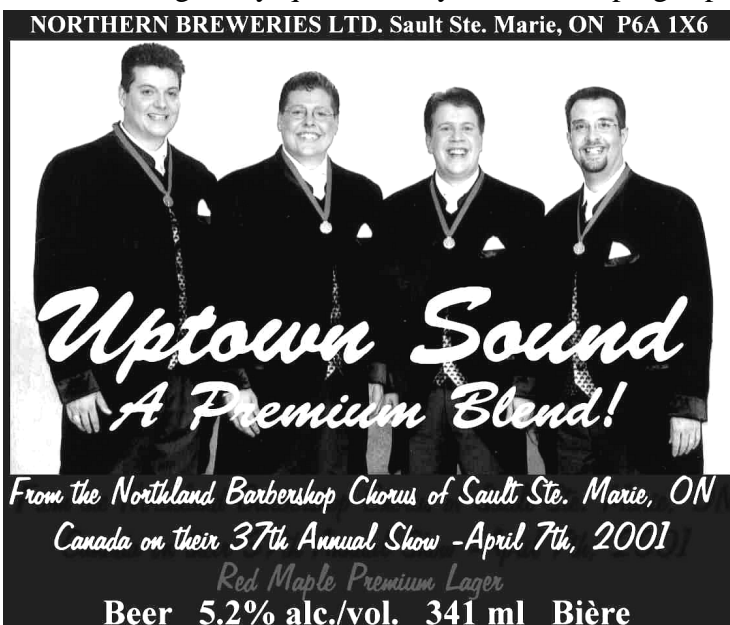
It led to the strange sight of the headliner quartet cleaning up all of the tables at the end of the 'glow. They were scooping up every empty bottle they could find to take home with them as souvenirs.

We were also witness to the equally strange sight of seeing UPTOWN SOUND sign autographs above their respective faces on the beer bottles. We have been assured that if the bottles survive the trip back to Ohio unopened in their luggage (or elsewhere!), that each member of UPTOWN SOUND intends to keep a full bottle on his mantle.

Perhaps we have started a new tradition of

"hospitality" here in the North for our visiting quartets. Come to think of it, we already have EXCALIBUR's publicity photo for our April 2002 show.

Hmmmm ... ■



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ACAPPELLA
QUARTET

Doug Morgan

PR, bulletin editor awards

(Continued from page 6)

the Gospel) that was accomplished.

Entries must be received by January 15, 2002. Send them to Jim Styer, 72 Allison Drive, Battle Creek MI 49017. You may e-mail any questions to him at <jimstyer@home.com>.

Bulletin editor awards

Elbert Ford, editor of *The Chorister* in Traverse City, has been named Pioneer District's Bulletin Editor of the Year for the second consecutive year.



Elbert Ford, first place winner in the district Bulletin Editor Contest.

Second place was awarded to Art Lane, editor of Holland's *Windmill Blade*.

The district awards were presented at the spring convention. Both entries have been submitted to the Society-level contest; winners will be announced at the international convention in July in Nashville, Tenn.

Placing third and fourth were

first-time entrants Paul Howe, editor of Lansing's *Woodshedder*, and Tom Peirce, editor of Huron Valley's weekly *Voice*.

Elbert scored significantly higher than he did in his first competition last year. He also scored highest in the district in two judging categories: content and layout. He was complimented for "a clean, well-organized bulletin." A Barbershopper for 27 years, Elbert began editing *The Chorister* in 1998.

Art set the high score in the district in grammar and style, the third judging category. A judge said the bulletin "presents a good appearance" and has "unusually good headlines."

A bulletin editor for nearly 10 years, Art has placed consistently among the top three in the contest in recent years. He is a retired weekly newspaper editor.

Paul, while third overall, placed second in the layout category and was told he has "potential for top honors." A judge commented, "I envy your ability to have so many photos, giving an afterlife to chapter events and life to your publication."

Paul has been a bulletin editor for three years and a Society member for six years. The chapter also has been publishing a weekly news sheet.

Tom's four-page weekly placed third in the content category. One of the judges wrote, "I am amazed at the volume of work you put out." A Barbershopper for 20 years, Tom is VP of membership & chapter development and has held several other Huron Valley Chapter positions.

Voice is the only weekly bulletin that has been entered in district competition in recent years.

Judges are bulletin editors and former editors in other districts who have gone through a judges' training program. Besides scoring the bulletins, the judges provide each editor with a detailed report and suggestions for improvement.



James Hall and Art Lane of the Holland Chapter won awards at the spring convention.

Next year's contest

The contest is sponsored by PROBE (Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors), a self-supporting membership organization within the Society.

All bulletin editors in the district are eligible for the contest; they must publish at least six issues in 2001. Eight published issues are required for a Society-level award. All editors, however, may submit bulletins for comment only, no matter how many or how few issues they publish.

To enter, save and submit three copies each of any three consecutive bulletins by January 15, 2002, to Jim Styer of Battle Creek, Pioneer District contest coordinator.

PROBE dues are \$5 a year, which can be paid by the chapter secretary. Details on signing up are on the Web at: <<http://www.harmonize.com/PROBE>>. ■

The SPEBSQSA Charitable Mission

(Continued from page 25)

fellow teachers a weekend of choral music and Barbershop harmony education and fellowship.

- Vocal music has turned many young lives from destructive to positive endeavors. We have received letters and testimonials from students, parents, and teachers thanking us for our help. We also know from nationally acclaimed studies that music builds mental and social skills in young people, and can also have therapeutic value.

Unfortunately, the leadership of Heartspring has recently chosen to try to divide our charitable efforts by soliciting direct donations from Barbershoppers and their chapters. This shocking and unauthorized attempt to divide the SPEBSQSA membership has forced the Society to direct Heartspring to cease and desist their solicitation of our members.

Society support of Heartspring has always gone through Harmony Foundation, and Heartspring can continue to request future assistance directly from the Foundation, but not from our chapters and members.

As we close one era, we open a new and exciting one. We have the opportunity to make a colossal difference in our culture. Working together, we can help thousands **Sing ... for life!**

Additional information will appear in the next issue of the Harmonizer. ■

House of Delegates


(Continued from page 7)

proved, maybe some choruses not as confident of themselves might come to competition," said Al. "Judges wouldn't know that a chorus score wouldn't be published, and the chorus would still get the numbers and critiques."

- District membership is 1,299, up six from one year ago. During that period, 12 chapters grew, three remained the same, and 16 lost members.
- The district will have a Barbershop display in January 2002 at the state convention of the Music Educators' National Conference.
- The board will consider 2002 budget proposals and convention site bids at a day-long planning meeting August 9.
- Candidates were being sought to succeed men who won't be

seeking elected board positions for 2002: Fred Kienitz, vice president of chorus director development; Larry Parker, vice president of events; and Doug Pearson, vice president of marketing & PR.

- District scholarships of \$450 to Harmony College were awarded, via drawing, to Ralph LeRoy of the LIVINGSTON COUNTY LAMPLIGHTERS and Dan Bezaire of Windsor. Also by drawing, a \$300 scholarship from a private donor was awarded to Lynne Pierce of the HURON VALLEY HARMONIZERS.
- Roger Lewis presented a new Pioneer District banner for the podium at contests. It was paid for by donations from district board members.
- Delegates sang "Rest in Peace" after Member Services VP Brian Dunkel read each name of 19 members who had died since the last convention, and then led a prayer for them. ■



BILL
DAN

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JOEL
MARK

Chapters in Action

Grand Rapids

By Chris Lewis

The Grand Rapids GREAT LAKES CHORUS is busily getting ready for its performance this July at International competition in Nashville. Along with choreography and music rehearsal for Nashville, we're trying to keep up with the current repertoire of music for other shows for which we have been contracted.

The rousing ovation from the crowd at Battle Creek definitely was an exciting send-off, and we are looking forward to the Windsor Send-Off on Friday, June 8. Also at Battle Creek, we were very proud of two of our local quartets who competed, PRIZM and HARMONY TRANSFER.

Another quartet from our chapter, FOOLS' GOLD, also has the wonderful opportunity to open for PLATINUM at Holland's show, which is a definite must-see.

It is a busy and exciting time, but we are excited about the opportunity of representing the Pioneer District at Nashville this year, along with singing with some great choruses from across our country!

Holland Chapter

By Art Lane

Fresh from its Tulip Festival triumph in "How the West Was Sung!" with PLATINUM and FOOLS' GOLD as guest quartets, the HOLLAND WINDMILL CHORUS is preparing for several summer performances. The risers ring these days as "Auditions for Admissions," organized by James Hall, attracts enthusiastic new singers.

We will join with two other chapters on June 16 to sing at the 30th anniversary celebration of Sandy Pines Resort.

On July 21, the 16th Annual Chester P. Oonk Memorial Tag Contest will unfold at Saugatuck RV Resort. Any Pioneer member who likes to sing tags is invited to participate. We form quartets on the spot, work on a compulsory tag and a tag chosen by the quartet, sing our best, and bribe the judges. For de-

tails, call President Jack C. Oonk, 616-392-4794.

The chorus and several quartets will sing in an old-fashioned bandstand August 17 on a "Fridays in the Park" program in Centennial Park in downtown Holland.

It's An-Chords Aweigh on Tuesday, August 28, as chapter members and their sweethearts set out for a three-hour cruise on Lake Michigan from Muskegon aboard the Port City Princess. Barbershoppers and Sweet Adelines from West Michigan are invited to join in this dinner cruise with music and dancing. For details or tickets, call Dale Bekker, 616-738-7455.

The Holland Chapter, seeking to renovate the Park Theater into a community performing center, plans to hold a fund drive this fall. In preparation, the chapter has hired a project administrator to identify other local arts groups interested in participation and management, and to set up a separate corporation to run the theater. The aim is to have a compelling proposal for donors and, when finished, a beautiful, useful, busy theater.

Saginaw-Bay

By Ralph Brown

It has been four days since we were on stage all nerved-up and singing our hearts out, and it seems like there are not enough hours in a night to recover



Young men from a local high school are entertained by a Saginaw-Bay quartet promoting A Cappella Blast.

the missed sleep. I still can't believe that my wife, Wendy, was roaming the lobby taking in every song from every quartet she could find. There is no doubt about it, Barbershop quartets are the greatest.

She was near an exit when a quartet was just leav-

ing. She said, "You aren't quitting, are you?" The quartet stopped in its tracks, regrouped, and sang a song just for her; thank you very much, PHILATOGA TOWNSHIP. Thanks also go out to PRiZM and WJBC for entertaining us in grand style at Demings Den.

We have taken a pro-active position regarding the "A Cappella Blast" and had a quartet sing at a local school: Paul Ward, lead; Bob Deming, bass; Doug Beaver, bari; and Josh Biggs, tenor. Carrol Baranik's music class enjoyed a few songs and antics performed by the quartet, and was given information about our fine organization, its beginnings, purpose, and hopes for the future of our special form of singing.

As a result of the visit, five fine young men of Carrol's class are going to attend the "Blast" in Lansing.

We also have 10 young men from Bangor Schools planning on attending with their teacher, Roxan Luty. That gives us a total of 15 participants, which makes us very optimistic about the future of Barbershopping in our area.

One significant highlight of our trip to Battle Creek was having a member of our chorus receive an award for 50 years of Barbershopping; Yes that's right, 50, fifty, five times ten, longer than some of us have been on this everlovin' earth, bari Doug Beaver. Congratulations, you old ".*."

Again this year we are the champions of our plateau, of which we are very proud, and thank all of our supporters, especially our wives and significant others. We want to put all choruses on notice that our goal is to add 10 or more good singers to our number and really kick some butt next year.

It is such a pleasure to compete against Barbershoppers because they always cheer for other groups and encourage them to do the best that they can, regardless of the outcome.

"It's Great to Be a Barbershopper."

Allegan County

By Donald Gutheil

I would like to report that the first chapter in the district listing of chapters (Allegan County) is alive but suffering from a lack of ACTIVE members and is presently seeking some new ones.

We are also in the planning stage for our first show in November. If our tentative plans work out,

we will need some help from some of our district talent (good, but cheap, we hope).

Congratulations to all who made the contest in Battle Creek so great — events like these fan the flames of competition.

Sault Ste. Marie

By Bob Shami

The 37th annual show of the NORTHLAND BARBERSHOP CHORUS of Sault Ste. Marie was held on Saturday, April 7, and by all accounts was a smashing success. The chapter presented a chapter-penned script entitled "Sing ... for Heaven's sake," an adaptation of the film classic "It's a Wonderful Life."

But instead of the film's George Bailey wishing he'd never lived, only to be set right by Clarence the Angel, our Bill Bailey wished he'd never sung. Charlie Angel showed him and the full house how life might be diminished in ways impossible to predict or imagine if music were not a part of it.

The show proved by example that singing and music is for everyone at any age and, that above all, children should be encouraged to sing out. As our angel character noted in reference to the unfortunate situation where a child might be innocently told that he or she should just mouth the words, or that they can't carry a tune in a bucket: "You don't need a bucket to carry a tune — just your heart!"

The emphasis on youth was evident in every facet of the show. Charlie received his Divine instructions from a God-like character's off-stage voice, which was that of a 9-year-old boy. That same boy (Chorus Director Bob Shami's son, Nathan) touched the hearts of many in the chorus and audience alike with a tender vignette during our presentation of "The Little Boy." His silent performance clearly illustrated the poignancy of the song, and the mix of emotions involved in growing up for both parents and their children.

The audience was further treated to an extraordinary duet featuring Assistant Director Bill Webb and his 7-year-old daughter, Claryssa, singing "Any Dream Will Do." Nobody onstage or off will ever forget the power of the love and trust and pride they so clearly expressed as they gazed at each other and gently sang with such sweet conviction. Dry eyes and

(Continued on page 32)

Chapters in Action

Sault Ste. Marie

(Continued from page 31)

arms free of "chicken-skin" (as our friend Fred Kienitz would say) were in short supply as the echo of their last notes faded into the darkness. Only music could have provided us all with the gift of such a positive lifelong memory.

The youth theme was enhanced further with the presentation by 18 grade 4/5 students from St. Bernadette School of "What Do You Do With a Drunken Sailor?" under the direction of their teacher, chorus member Art Fink. What a positive experience for those 9-11 year old kids to hear the response of the 850 in attendance to their efforts. They will long remember how much fun singing and performing can be.

The second half of the show featured the debut of chapter quartet GOOD INTENTIONS and, in another first, a set from CAMEO, a YMIH quartet all under 19 from Richmond High School in Richmond, Mich. The show was capped by a stunning set from UP-TOWN SOUND, certainly one of the Society's best young quartets. What a show, what a night!

Windsor

By Bill Strong

Another competition is now history and what a great one it was. Our SUN PARLOUR CHORUS placed just about where we thought we would be. We were thrilled just to be on stage and to be a part of the festivities. Many thanks go to all of those people who made the weekend what it was. Sometimes we overlook all the things that must go on in order to make a competition like this successful. It's no secret. Just a lot of hard work. Thanks to everyone responsible.

Congratulations to our own George Spidy. He received his plaque for being a member of our Society for 50 years. Best wishes for many more years of great bari singing, George.

Windsor Chapter is now embarking on our spring campaign to recruit new members. Let's hope that we

can increase our membership and share the wealth of our great hobby.

A tip of the hat to Grosse Pointe Chapter for their great hospitality room in Battle Creek. Lots of great quarteting in the back room and a parade of great quartets in the main room. Once again, guys, you really outdid yourselves.

A terrible rumour is being circulated in our chapter of late concerning the elimination the "Banana Boat Song" from our chorus repertoire. Could this be? Perhaps further deliberations should take place before a decision such as this is made. Stay tuned.

We now look forward to lots of performances and a whole list of summer activities as we joyfully sing our way into summer.

Gratiot County

By C. W. Kocher

Contest day surely went by in a hurry, didn't it? Twenty-four MIDSTATESMEN CHORUS singers and our director, Barry George, arrived at Battle Creek and went through the drill: march here for the photo, march there for the warm-up, march over there for the performance, march off. It was great, but over all too soon considering the months of rehearsals.

On the plus side, we sang in the seventh spot and we were able to listen to choruses in the eighth through 14th spots.

The MIDSTATESMEN ranked 11th of 14 choruses, but that was an improvement over the last time and a great incentive for more improvement for next time. We received a fine review from the judges and we intend to build on that experience.

One of the best things that happened was that we discovered the directing talents of one of our assistant directors, Barry George. When we decided we needed a director, we nominated Barry and he did a fine job. It's too bad he already has a profession, a family, and generally a life outside of the chorus. We are still looking for a full-time director.

Another of our assistant directors and VP of music, Mike Moyer, was elected 2000 Barbershopper of the Year, joining a stellar group. Mike's accomplishments were celebrated by MIDSTATESMEN and spouses at the Ladies' Night Out dinner and entertainment in March.

This week, we turn our attention from the contest to the October 6, 2001, show — new songs to be

learned, new skits to be practiced. The theme will be "The Midstatesmen Chorus Uncovers a Time Capsule." The combination of objects in the capsule and the songs and skits that go along with those items will be sad, funny, nostalgic, and generally quite entertaining. The featured quartets will be FOUR MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR and PHILATOOGA TOWNSHIP.

We were fortunate to have had the pleasure of the company of Clay Jones at a chapter meeting in April. Clay is a district chapter coach and we are one of his responsibilities. We treated him to a Board meeting, to a half-hour pre-chapter meeting session around the piano, to a regular chapter meeting, to our working on the contest songs, and to a session lasting another two hours, singing all kinds of songs and being coached by our contest coach, Pam Iacco. Then we let him drive halfway across the state to get home.

He apparently liked the experience because he showed up the following Saturday to help us sing the National Anthem at the opening of a women's varsity softball game at Central Michigan University and to sing at a local nursing home.

The MIDSTATESMEN are still in contact with one of the charter members, Leroy Lake, who received the quartet SUTABLE UNION at his home in April and sang some of the old songs with them.

The chorus is looking at a 60th anniversary in about five years and we are starting now to make that a big celebratory year.

Huron Valley

By Lynne Peirce

Contest is over, now it's time to GET BUSY! Doesn't that sound just like a director?

Huron Valley has a year of exciting activities planned. A joint board/music team strategic planning session immediately following Harmony Round-Up will provide us with direction for future growth. A patron program is being finalized, with 1,000 businesses being targeted.

Our VLQ (very large quartet) auditions are coming up, as is the formal kickoff of our own HVH extended Barberpole Cat program. Quartet promotion will be happening like never before, as will creative rehearsal activities and internal coaching involving many strong musical leaders in the chapter.

Throughout all of this, we are planning for our best show ever, a traditional vaudeville show on Novem-

ber 10 at Washtenaw Community College featuring FOUR MAN FISHIN' TACKLE CHOIR.

Our performance in Battle Creek was an accomplishment that brought us great pride. We faced some unusual challenges in preparing for this contest, finding ourselves unable to take eight of our very active and committed members due to family, work, and school commitments. Those who were able continued to rehearse with us every week, attended our weekend long retreat at Camp Storer with John Hohl, and every coaching session with John, Jack Slamka, and Linda Liddicoatt.

We felt their presence and spirit every step of the way, and there is no question they strengthened our performance even though they were many miles away. We were also strengthened by some former



Team building was done by a professional facilitator at Camp Storer. Here are the bari and bass sections working together at the island-hopping station.

members who rejoined our chapter just when we needed their support, friendship, and beautiful voices most.

People remark constantly that I seem so relaxed throughout the stressful periods of contests, shows, membership drives, and fund raising. It's no wonder, when you direct a chorus that somehow, no matter what the adversity, just "fixes" it. That makes it pretty easy to keep the faith.

Lansing

By Paul Howe

It was a lot of hard work and all too short a couple of night's sleep for many, but the spring convention was a highly successful event. Special thanks go

(Continued on page 34)

Chapters in Action

Lansing

(Continued from page 33)

to Bruce Fitzpatrick as host chapter chairman. Thanks also to all the special area chairmen and all the workers for a fantastic job.

While I'm passing out kudos, congratulations to all of the quartets and choruses for a great contest. Your hard work really showed in some outstanding and highly entertaining packages. You've certainly served notice that future contests will be very competitive affairs.

The Tuesday after the convention found the CAPITOL CITY CHORDSMEN in Okemos, as the ladies of the WATER WONDERLAND CHORUS (SAI) practiced for their international convention. They were kind enough to even let us serenade them and their audience with a couple of songs.

It's back to work for us as we prepare for singing the National Anthem at the Lansing Lugnuts game May 29, followed shortly by the Windsor Send-Off and then a performance in Owosso later in June. We're also working hard to learn several new songs over the summer.

However, we'll be without our director, Jeff Gougeon, for a couple of those months. Jeff insists that he's going to be working hard on an internship as a museum curator in New England. I'm sure that the fact that he'll be "working" in a prime seaside vacation/resort area never crossed his mind. :-)

We promise, Jeff, that we'll try to be ready for your return.

Grosse Pointe

By Nick Piccione

In March, the 56th annual Lakeshore Ladies Night was a resounding success. Dazzling in their tuxedos and gowns, the guests were treated to cocktails, dinner, and dancing to the Leo Tallieu Orchestra, all hosted by the ever-talented Mike and Donna Sullivan.

All present applauded with enthusiastic approval of the presentation of the Barbershopper of the Year

award to Chuck Wingard, long-time Keeper of the Mug and chapter enthusiast.

As I write this, an intrepid group of golfers are heading south to attend the 18th annual Grosse Pointe Golf Outing ... traveling deep into the heart of Dixie to Statesville, N. Car., the home of our recently retired Ray Starrette. Ray has presided over this golf event for so many years that it is right that we follow him to his new home back in his original hometown.

Battle Creek was fun, and not the least of which was "Harvey's Dinner" ... traditional Saturday night dinner at contest named for long-time host Harvey Burr, but now handled so well by Dan Felix. With a panoramic lake view, the dining room was packed ... great food, drinks, and comradeship. As always, Dan comes through and handles well the challenge of keeping Harvey's Dinner special.

Speaking of Battle Creek, the Grosse Pointe spotlight this issue falls on our director, Steve Pauling ... what a talent! With a degree in music performance, he learned well from his Barbershopper father, listening to his dad's quartet, and picking up the music at a very early age.

In competition this spring, Steve directed us to fifth place (teaching us one of the contest songs in only weeks). He returned to the stage on Saturday night as baritone with his quartet, FERMATA NOWHERE, with lead Tom Conner, tenor Jeff Gougeon, and bass Pete Burns. They finished fourth, only 42 total points out of second place.

We are so lucky to have Steve that I can't help but think:

*A master of melodious arts,
He can sing all four of the parts.
With notes oh so fair,
"From out of nowhere"
He brought us his musical smarts.*

Detroit-Oakland

by Tom Uicker

Needless to say, Detroit-Oakland had a great time at the district convention this spring. After a long winter, the weather itself was enough to put a favorable glow on the memories, but to be announced chorus champs was more than we had hoped. Yes, it was a goal to be sought; but we have been hanging between fifth and seventh for so long, it was a tremendous surprise to jump to first place.

As you may have guessed from the 47 we had on stage, we have been working (among other things) on increasing our membership. We haven't had the explosive success in recruiting demonstrated by some other chapters in the district, but we have had a couple of new faces at each of the last four district contests and we have had great success in retention of members. If we can just get the older guys to quit dying, maybe we can climb back up to a 75-man chapter.

The "Traveling Jugs" didn't do as well this year as in the past. The out-state jug only got to five chapters of the 12 we had expected it to visit. Perhaps I was lax on keeping track of it and keeping it moving. Anyway, by the time you read this, our "Jug Night" party will be over for another year. I hope you all saw the fliers we had out at the convention and had a chance to attend. If it's like last year, it will be another great night out.

The GENTLEMEN SONGSTERS are returning to the

Nardin Park Concert Series (Farmington Hills) on Wednesday, July 18. The concert starts at 8:00 p.m. and you are welcome to attend. We also have a chapter picnic set for Saturday, July 21. We would love to see our inactive members show up and renew acquaintances. And we have already started working on songs for next year's show.

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

Sing ...
for life!

The Traverse City Chapter of SPEBSQSA Seeks Musical Director

The 50-man Cherry Capital Chorus, located in Traverse City, Michigan, is seeking an enthusiastic, motivated vocal music director with experience leading amateur adult singers. Should be interested in the opportunity to teach and grow a joyful group of dedicated Barbershoppers in one of the most beautiful places in the world. The successful candidate will possess a warm sense of humor coupled with the skill, desire, and focus to effectively lead the chorus toward accomplishing its mission of

***"maximizing our joy as Barbershoppers by musically being all we can be,
while enriching our communities with great harmony and good works."***

Apply immediately to the Cherry Capital Chorus for the opportunity of a lifetime. It is truly great to be a Barbershopper in Traverse City!

Stipend: Negotiable. Consistent with experience and the situation.
Resumes should be sent by June 15 to:

Don Duff, P.O. Box 271, Leland, MI 49654
Fax: 231-386-5920

... New edit #10

I have enough money to last me the rest of my life (unless I buy something).

If it's not broke, let me take a crack at it.

There are three ways to get something done: do it yourself, hire someone to do it, or forbid your kids to do it!

Optimist: an accordion player with a pager.

Apparently advanced audio technology has completely by-passed the fast food drive-thru.

Always proofread very carefully to see if you any words out.

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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.

"You want something by Bach? Which one, Johann Sebastian or Jacques Offen?"

Victor Borge

Upcoming Events

2001

June 8 - Windsor Send-Off. Contact Doran McTaggart: 519-948-0637

June 8-9 - Traverse City Show. Contact Jeff Belanger: 231-933-9900 or <tcdoughboy@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.

July 11-15 - Harmony Explosion Camp, Ball State College, Muncie, Indiana.

Aug. 16-19 - Buckeye Invitational, Columbus, Ohio.
<www.SingingBuckeyes.org>

Aug. 31-Sept. 3 - Harrisville Harmony Weekend. Contact Craig Pollard: <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.

2002

Jan. 20-27 - Midwinter Convention, Riverside, California. 1-800-876-SING x-8462.

Feb. 15-16 - DOC Show.

March 2 - Lansing Show.

April 6 - Monroe North Show.

April 26-28 - Pioneer District Spring Convention.

June 30-July 6 - International Convention, Portland, Oregon

Oct. 18-20 - Pioneer District Fall Convention

Oct. 26 - Pontiac-Waterford Show.

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