

Pioneer Troubadour

Official Publication of the Pioneer District August/September 2007 Volume 58, Number 3

The Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America, Inc.

Sign up for Bush League today!

By **Erv Erickson**

It's not too late to register as a quartet for **Bush League 2007**.

Your quartet may register right up to the day of the Contest on August 25.

We are looking forward to another great weekend of coaching and fellowship. The Judging and Coaching panel is in place and I'm sure they are eager to pass on their

knowledge to new and up and coming quartets.

The Judges for this year are:

Contest Administrator – **Ron Eubank**.

Presentation – **Mike O'Donnell**.

Singing – **Ken Fisher**.

Music – **Al Fisk**.

Fermata Nowhere will present the Masters Class on Friday night and, along

with the Judges, will act as Coaches on Saturday, following the contest.

Fermata Nowhere will also be headlining the evening show which is likely their last performance prior!

Should you have a last minute question or concern, please feel free to contact me at (231) 348-3301 or marshonerv@aol.com.

Harmony Hounds 50

By **Roger Lewis**

The eight surviving **Harmony Hounds** reunited in June for an evening of entertainment.

Currently the second oldest registered barbershop quartet in the Barbershop Harmony Society, the **Harmony Hounds** continue to "howl" whenever encouraged and have spread "dog-gone good harmony" throughout the world.

They've "howled" at hundreds of Barbershop Shows, a USO Tour to the Far East, a tour of England, and competed in an International Contest in St. Louis.

In 2005, they were the Pioneer District's Senior championship quartet. For 50 years, 13 men have sung in the eleven "litters" of **Hounds**.

The current foursome have been together since 1982, still howling up a storm (or is that barking up a tree?).

The original members of The **Harmony Hounds** were **Ron Atkins**, **Lowell Wolfe**, **Bill Clark** and **Henry Brown**. They sang together from 1958 to 1962. In spring of 1962, **Roger Lewis** joined the Hounds, taking the place of **Ron Atkins** (litter two).

Later that year, **Dick Pancost** took the place of **Henry Brown** (litter three). In 1966, the fourth litter was comprised of **Roger Lewis**, **Lowell Wolfe**, **Dick Spear**, and **Bill Clark**.

They sang together until **Roger**
Please see **HOUNDS**, page 4

Party of Four tours schools



By **Pam Frucci**

As a barbershop wife and a former high school teacher, I heartily applaud the Barbershop Harmony Society's effort to get school boys to sing four-part harmony.

What better quartet to relate to boys in middle and high school than the 2005 Pioneer District Champs, **Party of Four**?

Barbershoppers since high school, **Toby Shaver**, **Mark Spear**, **Kevin Morey** and **Wally Krause** earned high marks when they returned to school last May.

The outfits they chose got the boys' attention as soon as they walked into the room. Their shirts were electric blue with splashes of bright colors.

The moment they opened their mouths to sing, they won

over their listeners.

I had arranged for **Party of Four** to appear at the Grosse Ile High School's boys glee club at 8 a.m. on that Friday.

For guys coming from a distance, (Mark from Battle Creek, Wally from Canada, Toby from Garden City and Kevin from Westland) it took some traveling to get on our island that early in the morning!

Their first selection, "Jump, Shout, Boogie" had the boys begging for more.

Party of Four rendered a couple more songs and then asked the boys to perform for them.

Since the glee club was getting ready for their concert on May 17, the boys gladly did their "Lion King" medley.

Then **Toby**, who was the spokesman for the quartet, got the boys to learn a tag.

The time went by too fast. After the bell rang, one eager young man followed the guys out into the corridor and wanted to know how to start up his own quartet.

Since **Party of Four** left their homes so early, I invited them over to the **Fruccis** who live near the school, for coffee and rolls.

Then we all went back to the high school to appear before their girls glee club. Same enthusiastic reception.

The band director heard the guys and asked them to stay and sing a song to his wind ensemble who had just won a 1(Superior) rating at the District Solo and Ensemble contest.

Our next stop was up at the **Detroit High School of Arts**, a brand new school attached to the Detroit Symphony's Orchestra Hall.

I had briefly met the teacher **Cheryl Valentine** at a concert her boys' glee club sang in Royal Oak, and when I asked her if she'd like a barbershop quartet to visit their school, she immediately extended an invitation to come by around
Please see **FOUR**, page 5.



September/October 2007 Pioneer Troubadour

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Address changes

Pioneer District members: **DO NOT SEND CHANGE OF ADDRESS TO EDITOR.**

Mailing data are furnished by the Barbershop Harmony Society, 7930 Sheridan Road, Kenosha, WI. Please furnish change of address to your Chapter secretary and the Society with your name, Chapter name, Chapter and member number, and your old and new addresses. Copies not deliverable at the time of mailing will not be forwarded,

Next copy deadline: October 31

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Quartet-size card (annual) \$55

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PioNet subscriptions

To subscribe to the PioNet at no cost, e-mail your name and Chapter name to **JimStyer@comcast.net**. Visit Pioneer District Web site:

www.harmonize.com/Pioneer/pio.htm

Interested in becoming the Pioneer District's Secretary?

Your district board is looking for an individual who would like to serve as the **Pioneer District Secretary**.

Yes, **Marv Skupski** has indicated that it is time step down. Marv as done a wonderful job and has prepared a document outlining the duties of this position. If you are interested in finding out more about this position please send me an email and I will be happy to send the document (pioneer doesn't accept attachments).

I know Marv would be happy to answer questions as well.

Bruce Smith
Nominating committee

Pontiac sweeps PROBE contest

By Art Lane

Men of the **Pontiac-Waterford Chapter** won both Bulletin Editor of the Year and Public Relations Officer of the year for 2006 in the Pioneer District.

The results were announced April 13 at the House of Delegates meeting during the spring convention at Traverse City. The contests are conducted by PROBE, the Association of Public Relations Officers and Bulletin Editors.

Jack Teuber, Vice President of Marketing and Public Relations of the Pontiac-Waterford Chapter, won the

district award for Public Relations Officer of the year.

The chapter president, **Zaven Melkonian**, said of Teuber, "His dedication and untiring effort on behalf of this chapter have been outstanding.... Through his public relations efforts, our chorus has not only achieved name recognition in our community, but is in constant demand for appearances."

According to Teuber's records, the Big Chief Chorus had 42 performances in 2006 and, with its quartets, 124 performances for the year. The total audience of the year was set at 47,774, which included an

appearance at a Detroit Tigers game.

After competing for several years in the bulletin contest, **John Cowlishaw** won the first-place plaque for his Pontiac-Waterford Smoke Signals. The judges said, "You are doing a great job in informing your chapter members." "Sure enjoyed reading your bulletins, as your members likely also do."

This is the first time in recent memory that members of the same chapter has won the district's top bulletin and public relations awards.

Second place in the bulletin contest went to **Art Lane**, editor of the Holland Chapter's Windmill Blade.

Lumen Bliss, 1949 champion

By Bob Dennett

Pioneer Barbershopper **Lumen Bliss** died June 17 at age of 97. Luman was the tenor in the **Interludes** quartet which won the district championship in 1949.

Luman was a founding member of the **Dow Male Chorus** in 1936 and continued with that group when it became the **Men Of Music**.

Luman continued to be active in singing with the **Midland Men of Music** and church choir until just a few years ago. He sang in his church choir from the age of 14 to 94!

With the Men of Music Luman encouraged the Barbershop style by personally paying for all the Barbershop arrangements the group used."

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT: New directors, new position, COTS 2008

By **Raleigh Bloch**

Pioneer District President

COTS 2008: The next COTS will be different. The society has decided to not fund travel for the 2008 COTS. As a result, each district will be developing their own COTS.

Past District President **Larry Parker** has agreed to be COTS Coordinator and will help **Jim Kunz** in establishing our next COTS.

We think this will enable us to provide for you a COTS that will be more relevant to our chapter officers. Jim Kunz will have more to say about that later on, so stay tuned.



NEW DIRECTORS As some of you already know, there have been some changes to the District Management Team.

Rick Anderson is replacing **Ralph LeRoy** as Director of Marketing and Public Relations. Rick has a wealth of experience in sales and marketing for the radio market. He has also been active in providing us with the sound system at our contest venues.

Brandon Mattson has replaced **Dave Anderson** as Director of Youth In Harmony. Brandon is a music teacher in the Paw Paw school system. He is already making an impact on our **Youth In Harmony** Camps. Along with the **Muskegon Chapter**, he was instrumental

in providing a very positive experience for 154 youth at last years Rock'n Barbershop Festival, in the Muskegon area. Brandon is the lead of **Moxxy**.

Jim Ryan is replacing **Dan Bezaire** as our Chorus Development Director. Jim held this position previously, and did a great job. We look forward to his enthusiasm in helping our director to be even better than they already are. For those of you who recognize the name, but can't remember why, Jim was in the District Champion quartet, **Detroit Sound Company**.

NEW POSITION: Quartet Promotion

This is a result of the over whelming interest shown by our membership, in the survey that we took of all members last year. The job description is as follows:

- Promote college, regular and senior quartet activity at the District and Chapter levels.
- Develop quartet programs at the District and Chapter levels.
- Coordinate all District wide quartet promotion and development with the Music and Performance Director.
- Coordinate quartet programs to assist Music and Performance Chapter VP's.
- Coordinate with the QCA, a program that places top quartets at every District function.
- Publish article in each Troubadour for and/or about quartets.

-- Be a resource for any individual in starting or improving a quartet.

Fun One of the other facts that our survey identified, was that our members want to have fun at their hobby. This not only means at the Chapter meetings but at extra curricular activities as well. Parties, inter-chapter activities etc., should be planned.

I'm encouraging all chapters to include fun in their weekly and yearly plan. If you don't have an activity VP, I strongly suggest that you establish that position in your chapter.

Society Planning Meeting I was selected as one of three District Presidents to attend the Society Board Spring Planning Meeting in Nashville, Tenn. During that meeting, we developed the Society's 2012 Goals. The Aims will be published soon, along with the objectives for each of the 4 Aims.

While at Nashville, all who attended the meeting had an opportunity to see the building that the Society has purchased for our new headquarters. The demolition is basically complete and renovation is progressing.

It will be impressive, for the thousands of visitors who come to Nashville each year.

Windsor Report

By **Bill Strong**

Once again, **Windsor Chapter** experienced a very successful **Send Off Show**.

Thanks to everyone who participated, this show was likely one of the more successful since its inception.

Doran, of course, was the main spark plug who encouraged our members to sell tickets and made all the phone calls to chapters to make sure their members did not miss out in this great event.

The best part, of course, is that the proceeds from this night are used to assist our competitors for expenses incurred at International.

Since its inception, this event has contributed over \$125,000 (US) in support of our competitors.

What a great cause. It's been mentioned in the past that this event could be the best "Guest Night" of the year.

What a great way to introduce prospective members to our great hobby. Never miss an opportunity to show people what we do.

A first has taken place in our Chapter. In preparation for our September 8 show, our chorus has had joint rehearsals with the **Heart of Essex Sweet Adeline** Chapter.

The theme of this year's show is "Return of the Music Man."

The Sweet Adeline's will join our Chorus in the finale, "Lida Rose/Will I Ever Leave You."

It's lots of fun to sing in a mixed chorus.

Our guys are spending a lot time on the risers because of the short time frame between our show and the fall convention. I'm sure we can handle it.

The Denver International is now history and our congratulations go to our Pioneer participants. You represented our District with pride.

HOUNDS

Continued from page 1

Lewis, Larry Swan, Dick Spear, and Ron Mell became the fifth litter in 1968. In the summer of 1972, the sixth litter was formed: Roger Lewis, Lowell Wolfe, Dick Spear, and Larry Swan.

Later that same year, Ron Mell took Dick Spear's place making it litter #7. Dorn Burrill and Dick Smith joined the Hounds in 1976; together with Ron Mell and Larry Swan, the eighth litter was born.

Three years later, Dick Spear rejoined when Ron Mell left making it the ninth litter. Later that year, Bud Burrill took Dick Spear's place and Roger Lewis took Larry Swan's place, bringing forth the 10th litter. In 1982, Dean Burrill took his brother Bud's place and another litter was formed.

For the past 25 years, Dean Burrill, Dorn Burrill, Roger Lewis, and Dick Smith have made up the litter #11. Dean yips the tenor part,

Roger barks the lead part, Dorn howls the baritone part and Dick growls the Bass part.

Being a comedy quartet, they often incorporate instruments into their humorous acts. Roger plays the ukulele, Dorn plays the guitar, and Dick plays the string bass.

Nicknamed as "Poor Papa," Dick has become a real crowd pleaser as he performs with his toothless smile and antics. The audience is entertained from the time the Hounds enter the stage to their last song as their humorous songs please all ages. Hello, Poor Papa, and Streak have become signature songs along with Taxes, "I Want a Girl," and "My Old Man."

Out of the 13 Harmony Hounds, eight are still members in the Barbershop Harmony Society.

Larry Swan lives in Florida, Lowell Wolfe lives in Virginia, and the rest of the surviving Hounds live in

the Battle Creek area.

Imagine a dentist (Dr. Bill Clark), a Federal governmental worker (Henry Brown), a commercial artist (Ron Atkins), a salesman and employee at Post (Lowell Wolfe), an owner and operator of a printing company (Dick Pancost), a worker at Post Cereals (Dick Spear), an owner of an electronic store (Larry Swan), the President of Marshall Brass (Ron Mell), a school administrator (Dick Smith), a Grand Trunk administrator (Dorn Burrill), an independent builder and contractor (Bud Burrill), a project supervisor for a building firm (Dean Burrill), and an employment service owner (Roger Lewis) all together with one common hobby.

All coming from different walks of life, and all married and raising families, they found time for their hobby of singing.

From the Society Boardroom

By Jim Lee

Society Board Member

Linda and I are back home after a wonderful week in Denver at the 2007 Society Convention, where we were proud to witness the performances of the great



Land O' Lakes and Pioneer District quartets and choruses that competed there. While the final numbers are

not in, it is estimated that total attendance in Denver was up from that of the last two years in Indianapolis and Salt Lake City.

The Society Board met on July 1st and 2nd. Here are some highlights of reports provided and action taken at those meetings:

-- The remodeling of the new Society headquarters building in Nashville is on schedule and is expected to be completed on August 15th. Moving vans are scheduled to leave Kenosha on August 24th and the Society is expected to be up and running in the new location immediately after Labor Day.

-- Action was taken to formalize a decision that the timing of

senior quartet International Prelims should be held in conjunction with the districts' Fall conventions.

-- An item to formalize a procedure for allowing choruses to compete out-of-district was tabled. A similar procedure exists for quartets seeking permission to qualify out-of-district.

-- A proposal from certain members of the Dixie District to divide into two districts was reviewed and tabled pending a review of all district boundaries. President Funderburg appointed a "District Delivery Mechanisms" Task Force to review this issue along with the larger issue of the optimal structure for the best delivery of the barbershopping program to members.

-- A task force was appointed to review the Society web page and make recommendations for improvement.

-- You may recall that a Buffalo Bills-style quartet contest, sponsored by the Society affiliate, **Barbershop Quartet Preservation Association**, was held at the January 2007, Mid-Winter convention in Albuquerque. Due to lack of continuing sponsorship, this

contest will not be repeated at the January, 2008, Mid-Winter convention in San Antonio, however, the popular "Pioneers" room will again be available for everyone to enjoy singing tunes in the "old style."

Something else happened at the Board meeting that, quite frankly, was somewhat "bitter/sweet" for yours truly. I was elected Treasurer of the Society effective January 1, 2008.

This means that after one year as your paired district Society Board representative, I will be stepping down from that post and another member will be elected at the November, 2007, Board meeting to fulfill the remaining two years of my term. LOL District President Chuck Koerner and Pioneer District President Raleigh Bloch will shortly be convening Society Board Nominating Committees to bring forth nominees for this position, in concert with the Society Nominating Committee.

While I look forward to serving as the Society Treasurer, I will miss representing both of our fine districts and attending district conventions as your Society Board representative.

PARTY OF FOUR Finds converts at area schools

Continued from Page 1.

After Party of Four's opening number the room full of black students stood on their feet and cheered.

The quartet sang a couple more songs and invited the boys to sing one of their favorite selections.

We heard some acapella gospel music with excellent harmony. The best part of the session was listening to the ring of singers, both black and white, singing together some good old barbershop tags and a rendition of "Good Night, Ladies," and "Aura Lee."

The vocal music class at the Detroit High School or Arts definitely expressed interest in learning barbershop. Toby left information with the each teacher we visited on how to reach him and how to add a barbershop harmony component to their repertoire.

Our final stop that Friday was to a middle school in Taylor. Their vocal music teacher **Dave Martin** had been a college quartet contestant in Pittsburgh in 1994 and already was acquainted with barbershop harmony.

He had a group of 30 middle school boys who call themselves **Men in Black** work with them as well.

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Gratiot County hosts Vocal Music Happening

By Woody Ely

The Gratiot County Chorus, once again, sponsored a spring "Vocal Music Happening," which featured late afternoon / evening musical activities consisting of rehearsals and presentations by three local high school choirs and the Midstatesmen.

This May 9 event, put together by our Ken Smith, which occurred at Masonic Pathways Doig Chapel was the third consecutive year the Midstatesmen Chorus has sponsored this activity. This program has become an annual event which the Midstatesmen and the high school students and directors enthusiastically anticipate each spring.

The participating high schools and

directors were: Alma, Georgia Fisher; Breckenridge, Liz Loyselle; Ithaca, Kevin Smith. (St. Louis, Kari Batcheller



participated the first two years but, sadly, high school choir was dropped from the curriculum this year.)

This entire event occurred over a three-hour time span. It commenced with an after-school rehearsal, by the entire ensemble, of two previously selected songs -- one "patriotic" and one "fun" number.

After this one hour en masse rehearsal, the entire group gathered in a large conference room for a pizza party / get-acquainted time where the students socialized with other musicians and listened to extemporaneous small group performances. Then we all gathered back in Doig Chapel and presented a concert to an enthusiastic

audience of Masonic home residents, as well as many parents and friends of the performers.

The concert format consisted of each of the high school choirs performing two selections, as well as any small vocal ensembles they wished to feature. This was followed by the Midstatesmen Chorus which presented our two spring contest selections, as performed at Traverse City.

The finale consisted of the combined high school choirs and the Midstatesmen Chorus singing the two mass numbers we had rehearsed earlier. The mature men's voices were complimented by the almost ethereal youthful voices, so that the resulting total sound was quite remarkable. The entire afternoon / evening venture took three hours of time.

This musical venture is one way the members of the Midstatesmen Barbershop Chorus attempts to support vocal music in our local schools. We also provide \$500 to each of these participating schools every year to help them purchase new music and we also provide vocal students complimentary tickets to our annual "Fall Show".

The Midstatesmen also encourage and sponsor young men to attend the Society's Harmony Happenings each year.

The Midstatesmen encourage all society chapters to work closely with school music personnel and students to help offset the seeming trend of our legislators to diminish the significance and support of the fine arts in our curricula.



Frank Fortier(Lead) Tom Smeltzer (Bass)
ENTERTAINMENT IN FOUR PART HARMONY

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Tom Conner Steve Pauling

fermata Nowhere
A Barbershop Quartet

Jeff Gougeon Pete Burns
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Pioneer
Troubadour



**2007 PIONEER DISTRICT
FALL CONVENTION
October 26-28th
Kalamazoo Radisson Plaza
Kalamazoo, MI
CONVENTION REGISTRATION**



This program was made possible in part with the support of the Michigan Council for the Arts and Cultural arts.

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**CHAPTER NAME _____

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All event passes may be purchased at the convention registration desk located in the Kalamazoo Radisson Hotel. Also, single event registrations can be purchased at the convention registration desk located in the Headquarters Hotel. Single events tickets are \$15 each. Children 12 and under are admitted FREE! Each member of a competing quartet or chorus MUST be registered for an all-events pass. Failure to do so will disqualify the quartet or chorus from the contest.

**REFUND POLICY: REGISTRATION FEES WILL BE REFUNDED TO PERSONS CANCELING IN
WRITING PRIOR TO THE 11:00am OPENING ON FRIDAY**

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

Cheboygan home to major Music Man celebration

In June, the **Huron Shore Chorus** from Alpena and **Harmonie Meisters** from Gaylord and the 2007 district championship quartet from downstate **Fermata Nowhere**, combined for a magical singing show at the Cheboygan Opera House.

By all reports the opera house show was a resounding success. The two choruses each sang songs from their repertoires including barbershop standards and contemporary tunes ranging in style from gospel to doo wop. They were thoroughly energized and entertaining.

Quartets from the **Huron Shore Chorus** called **Sunrise Edition** and **The Harbormasters** each sang beautifully. A quartet from the Harmonie Meisters, **Sonic Tonic** then did a medley of tunes from "The Music Man" to acknowledge the 50th year anniversary of that show including "Lida Rose" a barbershop favorite. The two choruses then collaborated with a rousing rendition of "76 Trombones," one of the tunes most identified from that show.

After intermission, Fermata Nowhere dazzled the audience with a series of songs that demonstrated their amazing vocal talent. They were inspired by the opera house venue and after the show, pronounced it as one of the best halls that they have ever preformed.

They said it is so intimate that you feel like you are singing in someone's living room.

The combined choruses then sang a series of songs together and the evening was closed when all barbershoppers in the audience were invited on stage to join in singing "God Bless

America."

It was a beautiful and moving way to end a delightful evening.

But the evening did not end immediately

Gazebo from 3:30- 4:00 in the afternoon to an enthusiastic and supportive crowd.

At the end of the day, show coordinator **Rick Buell** pronounced the event "a



after the show. Most of the performers and many of the patrons from the opera house reconvened at the Boathouse Restaurant for a cast party and afterglow. There was informal singing in a relaxed convivial atmosphere and a good time was had by all.

The three local quartets, Sonic Tonic, Sunrise Edition and The Harbormasters preformed as volunteers at the City Park

win-win situation for all concerned; the barbershoppers who participated the City of Cheboygan, the local business community, the patrons who attended the show and the Cheboygan Arts Council and art scene in our city.

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QCA Profile: The Ivy League

Let's feature one of our favorite Pioneer Quartets, the one and only Ivy League. Enjoy!

How the Ivy League quartet got started-From Brian Philbin's perspective:

I was a student at Eastern Michigan University from 1980 to 1986.

During that time, I was on a performance scholarship with the Drama Department, majoring in Theatre Arts. I minored in Musical Theatre and had become involved in the vocal music department - most notably the Madrigal Ensemble.

In 1982, in the late fall, I'd been out late with some friends and was returning home, when I was passing by fellow Madrigal member **Scott Turnbull's** apartment and noticed that his light was on. Even though it was about 2 a.m., I figured I'd stop up and see how he was doing. If he was actually asleep, I'd just give him the business anyway.

Scott was a sight when he answered the door, but invited me in, anyway. I had first seen his quartet from the Madrigal Ensemble, **The Victorian Principles**, during the previous school year, and once I'd joined up and realized he'd formed a new quartet, I told him that I would have been interested in singing in the group.

He said he'd keep it in mind. Well, it seems he did - we talked for a few minutes and then he asked if I'd be interested in singing in a barbershop quartet to audition for Cedar Point Amusement Park.

I asked about the time commitment and we agreed that it would prove a good addition to my activities.

Little did I know at that moment how much of my life that addition would consume...

My first rehearsal with the group was in late November of 1982. The folks I sang with were Scott (a portly, energetic musician, on Lead), **Bob Hartley** (a 5'6" smart-alec with a devastating wit, on Tenor) and **Paul Hansen** (a lumbering, 6'5" bartender, on Bass).

Scott and Paul had tried working with another baritone and tenor, but their recent departure had left them

to make other choices. The new combination gelled immediately and with little rehearsal, procured the summer job as the official barbershop quartet of Cedar Point.

We needed a name for the group and Scott had developed a list - being a rather preppy-type, the name **The Ivy League** appealed to me. It also appealed to our sense of being college students and the name itself was in reference to the four schools that made up the original league: Yale, Rutgers, Harvard & Princeton.

The Roman numeral IV, or "four", was the reason for the name, not the vine. It seemed evident as a perfect name for a college quartet. Following the commencement of the summer at Cedar Point, a young member of Scott's chorus, **Dave Drouillard**, became the bass of The Ivy League.

We picked up at full force when school started again that September, gearing up for our first District Convention. We had booked several shows during the summer that would commence in the fall, and had also been engaged to put together a series of performances for Eastern Michigan University at a variety of functions.

We worked very quickly to develop a tight show package (which ended up working to our advantage later on) and competed in our first District Contest in the middle of October, winning the Novice Championship. Our shows tended to be what we lived for - the freedom of a cappella performing lent itself to a very experimental period for us, which encouraged our creativity, but also reminded us that not everything we envisioned would work well in practice.

During the following years, the group members developed their stage savvy, garnered television appearances, radio spots, performed around the Midwest United States and generally had a great time. We'd skipped our next district contest in order to perform on the Ft. Wayne, Indiana chapter's 40th anniversary show and worked toward the next contest, in which we took a tremendous risk, developing a package in which we portrayed characters... the "nerds" package was our first foray into developing a contestable performance with characters.

We were a tremendous hit. Going to the following International Contest and seeing **The New Tradition** win with the same type of packages inspired us to continue to create the same kind of package for ourselves. The following District Contest became the first District Championship for all of us.

We'd spoken in previous months about a replacement for myself, as I knew I would be graduating from the University and following my desire to become a professional performer. The first person in all of our minds was a guy we'd seen in a VLQ (Very Large Quartet... composed of more than 8 members, anyway...) whom we thought could fit in quite well. As it turned out, **Jim Pollard** had always wanted to sing baritone in the worst way. Check out their website - <http://www.harmonize.com/iveleague> for some great pictures of their contest sets over the years.



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CALENDAR: Upcoming events

August 24-25

Bush League

September 8

Windsor Chapter Show

September 9

Detroit Princess Cruise with the Gentlemen Songsters,

October 6

Gratiot County Chapter Show

October 20

Rochester Chapter Show

October 26-28

District Convention, Kalamazoo

November 3

Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show

December 8

Macomb Chapter Show

February 22-23, 2008

Detroit-Oakland Chapter Show

Chapter Locations

