

# Pioneer Troubadour

Official Publication of the Pioneer District - October 2008 - Online Edition #10

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

## CHAMPS SOMETHING BIG!!

### 2008 Fall Convention Battle Creek MI

#### Sr Reps Resisting-A-Rest



*Tenor Bruce LaMarte, lead Tom Connor, bass Phill Haines and bari Steve Warnaar*

#### Chorus Reps Mt Pleasant



*MountainTown Singers directed by David Gillingham (yes, that's also Steve Warnaar on the right)*

#### Champs Something Big!!



*Tenor Don Terpe, lead Jason Kerschke, bass T R Gerard, and bari Steve Warnaar*

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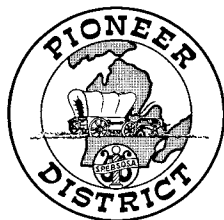
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## October 2008 Pioneer Troubadour

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

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# 2008 Fall Convention



*Raleigh Bloch Past President presents Chorus Rep award to Director David Gillingham*

## Chorus Competition Mt Pleasant International Reps

by Michael Baribeau  
Troubadour Editor  
Great Lakes Chorus Webmaster

Online Photo Album of Chorus Competition

<http://PioneerDistrict.org/Troubadour/online/2008/10/picschorus>

October 17th-19th 2008 McCamly Plaza Hotel and the WK Kellogg Auditorium Battle Creek MI.

I've often wondered about the chicken and the egg question if whether having a small

chorus can create a scoring disadvantage or if scoring disadvantages can create small choruses. But then comes along the Mount Pleasant Chapter's MountainTown Singers directed by David Gillingham with only 24 on the risers, about half their number as last year, and yet winning for the 2nd consecutive year, as Pioneer District International Chorus Representatives. They scored a 906 with an 89 point lead from the next closest chorus. They scored even higher than last year although the smaller chorus was still within the scoring range of their larger group's short 4 year history.

There was a total of 15 choruses competing including one out of district.

MountainTown Singers of Mount Pleasant Chapter County directed by David Gillingham won as 2008 Pioneer District International Chorus Representatives and Plateau 1 Champion scoring 906

Guardians of Harmony of Macomb County directed by Glen Hipple scored 817.

\*Valleyaires Chorus of South Bend-Mishawaka IN competing out of District for International Preliminary's qualifying score only and scoring 809.

Gentlemen Songsters of Detroit-Oakland directed by Steve Sutherland won Pioneer District Plateau 2 Champion scoring 785.

Holland Windmill Chorus of Holland directed by Kirk Wood won Plateau 3 Champion scoring 784.

Town & Country Chorus of Hillsdale directed by Don Slamka scored 782.

Great Lakes Chorus of Grand Rapids directed by Curt Struyk scored 766.

Lakeshore Chorus of Grosse Pointe directed by Steve Pauling scored 751.

Kalamazoo Barbershop Chorus of Kalamazoo directed by David Woolf scored 718.

Cherry Capital Chorus of Traverse City directed by Marty Chirgwin scored 706.

Lighthouse Chorus of Michiana Metro directed by Gene Hanover scored 704.

Capitol City Chordsmen directed by Steve Warnaar of Lansing scored 700.

Cereal City Chorus of Battle Creek directed by Rob Halsey scored 687.

Sun Parlour Chorus of Windsor directed by Dan Bezairé Pioneer District Plateau 4 Champion scoring 659.

Renaissance Chorus of Wayne directed by Scott Casey scored 655

Mic testers were the open volunteer Joe Barbershop Chorus directed by Ed Fritzen, Singing Judge of Northeast District



*Directors singing for their scores*



*WK Kellogg Auditorium*



*WK Kellogg Auditorium & large tv screens*



*Judges' Tables*





*Mountain Town Singers of Mt Pleasant*



*Guardians of Harmony of Macomb County*



*\*Valleyaires Chorus of  
South Bend-Mishawaka IN*



*Gentlemen Songsters of Detroit-Oakland*





*Holland Windmill Chorus of Holland*



*Town & Country Chorus of Hillsdale  
 photo by Anthony Dugal Photography*



*Great Lakes Chorus of Grand Rapids  
 photos by Lynn Weaver*



*Lakeshore Chorus of Grosse Pointe  
 photos by Karen Schaefer*





*Kalamazoo Barbershop Chorus  
of Kalamazoo*



*Cherry Capital Chorus of Traverse City  
photo by Anthony Dugal Photography*



*Lighthouse Chorus of Michiana Metro*



*Capitol City Chordsmen of Lansing*





*Cereal City Chorus of Battle Creek*



*Sun Parlour Chorus of Windsor*



*Renaissance Chorus of Wayne*



*Mic testers open volunteer Joe Barbershop Chorus*



*Resisting-A-Rest tenor Bruce LaMarte, lead Tom Connor*

## Seniors Competition Resisting-A-Rest International Reps

Online Photo Album of Seniors Quartet Competition

<http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/online/2008/10/picsprelim>

Winning the 2008 Pioneer District International Senior Representatives was Resisting-A-Rest of Grosse Pointe, Hillsdale, Mt. Pleasant, and Lansing Chapters with tenor Bruce LaMarte, lead Tom Connor, bari Steve Warnaar, and bass Phill Haines scoring 899 points. There was a total of 5 quartets competing in the Senior's with Resisting-A-Rest winning with a large 115 point lead. This is the 2nd year in a row this fledgling quartet will be representing Pioneer at the Senior's International, the Barbershop Harmony Society's Midwinter Convention. This Fall District Convention they beat their own last year's score by 36 point. At the BHS 2008 Midwinter Convention in San Antonio, Texas they took Silver missing 1st Place by 49 points so one has to wonder, could it be them grabbing the Gold in the 2009 Midwinter Convention in Pasadena, California January 27th - February 1st?

\*A couple weeks after this competition there was this announcement by Director Contest & Judging Ron Eubank, "Please join me in congratulating the members of Showtime! They have been invited to compete in the International Seniors Quartet Competition at our upcoming midwinter convention.

Jim Johnson, Tom Weidner, Wayne Hodgson and Allan Smith will be traveling to Pasadena, CA, to compete against 24 other senior quartets at the Pasadena Civic Auditorium on Friday, January 30, 2009."

Showtime was selected by Barbershop Harmony Society wild card process to also be competing in Pasadena detailed in this notice to Showtime by BHS Music Administrative Assistant Becca Box, "Congratulations! Based on your score, you are eligible to compete as a "wild card" quartet at the International Seniors Quartet Competition. Each of our 16 districts have chosen their representative and the next nine quartets with the highest score are being invited to complete our slate of 25 quartets."

Resisting-A-Rest of Grosse Pointe, Hillsdale, Mt. Pleasant, and Lansing won as 2008 Pioneer District International Senior Representatives scoring 899

Showtime of Grand Rapids (wild card drawn for Midwinter Convention) scored 784

Four To Go of Flint, Macomb County, and Pontiac-Waterford scored 726

Happy Our of Mt. Pleasant and Traverse City scored 724

Four Decades of of Wayne scored 633

\*Editor's Correction. In the Summer 2008 print edition of the Troubadour and the online unabridged version, Resisting-A-Rest was announced as having won as 2008 District Senior Quartet International Reps but was actually for the Spring Convention's District Senior Quartet Championship. However, as noted in this article they did still win as the 2008 International Reps at the Fall Convention.



*Resisting-A-Rest 2008 Pioneer District International Senior Representatives*



*Showtime of Grand Rapids (wild card drawn for Midwinter Convention)*



*Four To Go of Flint, Macomb County, and Pontiac-Waterford*



*Happy Our of Mt. Pleasant and Traverse City*



*Four Decades of of Wayne*



# District Quartet Competition Something Big!! 2008 Champs!

2 Online Photo Albums of District Quartet  
Competition Prelims and Finals

[http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/  
online/2008/10/picsprelim](http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/online/2008/10/picsprelim)

[http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/  
online/2008/10/picsfinals](http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/online/2008/10/picsfinals)

Fall Conventions include a quartet competition that has a special place in the hearts of quartets and audiences. Held each year, it can only be won once by a quartet, forever recognising them as District Champions. This year's 2008 Pioneer District Quartet Champion is Something Big!! of Lansing, Mt Pleasant, and Motor City Metro Chapters with tenor Don Terpe, lead Jason Kerschke, bari Steve Warnaar, and bass T R Gerard. As with previous years' close scores this competition was no exception with Something Big!! scoring 1646 points just ahead of Interstate Chord Company by 4 points. And wow were they smokin'! In fact there was an urgent investigation backstage trying to locate the smell of smoke. But there was much relief when it was determined that it was coming from a nearby neighbor burning leaves and the smell was being sucked into the auditorium ventilation system. Autumn time in Michigan. Windsor Chapter's Doran McTaggart showed why he was recently awarded the BHS 2008 International MC by entertaining the audience during those several minutes with his good nature, charming humor, and apparently endless supply of jokes.

Burning leaves weren't the only snag. The Moxi quartet had to be moved to the end of the competition lineup when all but their lead were trapped in a road construction traffic jam on i-94... backed up 2 miles before their planned detour exit.

On stage Something Big!! were presented with the District Quartet Champs trophy by the 2007 winners Chordiology who had it refurbished.

Jim Ryan, President of the District's Quartet Champions Association (QCA) announced on the PioNet newsgroup, "As is the practice

of the QCA, a member of the quartet (Something Big!!) is invited to serve on the QCA Steering Committee during their year as reigning Champions. We wish them a very exciting year. I encourage the Pioneer District Choruses to invite our new champions to Guest nights and performances as well as include them in your Annual shows."

This year's District Seniors Quartet Int' Reps and the District Quartet Champs not only have in common winning their respective competitions but that they also share the same bariton, Steve Warnaar. New to barber-shopping Steve has hit the ground running, a member of 2 quartets, interim director for the Lansing's Capitol City Chordsmen, member of the 2008 Int Chorus Reps Mt Pleasant MountTown Singers, and at this convention was inducted as a member of the QCA as are the rest of his fellow Resisting-A-Rest quartet members.

After the Friday night Prelims was the donations supported QCA Show. The chorus consisting of QCA members was directed by retired 2003 Int' Gold Medalist Power Play member Jack Slamka and by Grand Rapids Director and 2008 Int' Rep Wildcard member Curt Struyk. Performing QCA quartets were 1998 Pioneer District Champions Upstage Sound, 2003 Champs Infinity, 2007 Champs Chordiology guest starring MC Doran McTaggart from Windsor Chapter, Resisting-A-Rest 2008 Pioneer District Senior Quartet Champions, plus the 2004 Champs and 2008 International Reps Wildcard.

There were 17 quartets competing this Fall, 3 of which only competed in the International Senior Reps portion. The lineup also included the 3 unusual entry names of Iain-timology, Billchuckology, and Frankjeffology listed to compete "Friday night only for unpublished score with evaluations". This was the result of an experiment by 2007 Quartet Champs Chordiology called Contest Chordologist to encourage quartet formation and participation in competition. They posted an announcement on the PioNet newsgroup offering up to two of their members to sing with district members unable to assemble their own complete quartet. They based their learning and performance technique on the one developed by the 'extreme quartetting' of the Harmony Brigades. They all learned their music from learning tracks and scores and didn't have any real rehearsal time together until their warmup the day of competition. The participants performed admirably, enjoyed their opportunity to sing on the District competition stage, as well as

the judges were excited to be part of this novel experiment.

The Contest Chordologist experiment wasn't the first example of extreme quartetting on the Pioneer District competition stage. At the Spring 2005 Convention the Brigadeers first competed in Pioneer District. Each member was from different states and had met at Harmony Brigade Rallies. Using the music and same Harmony Brigade extreme quartetting format they worked hard on the Brigade learning tracks. They also didn't rehearse together for competition till the warmup at the District Convention. In 2005 they took 5th place and scored 1527 points. They didn't compete in Pioneer again until this Fall Convention coming in 4th place scoring 1576 points.

Competing without rehearsing with your quartet?! Extreme quartetting indeed!

Something Big!! of Lansing, Mt Pleasant, and Motor City Metro won as 2008 Pioneer District Quartet Champions with score totals from Prelim and Finals of 1646.

Interstate Chord Company of Michiana Metro, South Bend-Mishawaka IN scored 1642, missing 1st Place by only 5 points.

Moxxy of Motor City Metro scored 1624

Brigadeers of Frank Thorne, Central Carolina, Iroquois Valley, and Rocky Mountain scored 1576

Singing With Dad of Macomb County scored 1558

Showtime of Grand Rapids scored 1553

Small Town Sound of Kalamazoo won Pioneer District Novice Quartet Champion scoring 1503

Shades of Grey of Grand Rapids scored 1474

Semi-Finalists included Integrity, Border Boyz, and Four Decades.

Friday Night only unpublished scores quartets were Iain-timology, Billchuckology, and Frankjeffology.

Mic testers were the Semi-Finalist Quartet Integrity.

*(Continued next pages)*

# Pioneer Troubadour



*Something Big!! 2008 Pioneer District  
Quartet Champions*



*Interstate Chord Company of Michiana  
Metro, South Bend-Mishawaka IN*



*Moxxy of Motor City Metro*



*Brigadeers of Frank Thorne, Central Caro-  
lina, Iroquois Valley, and Rocky Mountain*



*Singing With Dad of Macomb County*



*Showtime of Grand Rapids*



*Small Town Sound of Kalamazoo*



*Shades of Grey of Grand Rapids*



*Integrity of Hillsdale*



*Border Boyz of Hillsdale*



*Four Decades of Wayne*



*Judges*





*Iaintimology Contest Chordiology*



*Billchuckology Contest Chordiology*



*Frankjeffology Contest Chordiology*



*Chordiology audio software class*



*Pick up quartet and QCA Chorus*



*2007 Champs Chordiology and Doran McTaggart*



*1998 Champs Upstage Sound*



*2003 Champs Infinity*



*2004 Champs Wildcard*

Audience Favorites by popular vote results;

Fav ten- Bruce Lamarte Resisting-A- Rest  
Fav lead- TC Conner Resisting-A- Rest  
Fav bari- Steve Warnaar Resisting-A- Rest  
Fav bass- Phil Haines Resisting-A- Rest  
Fav uptune- Good Luck Charm - Moxxy  
Fav swing- Birth of the Blues - Brigadeers  
Fav ballad- Something Big!! - What'll I Do  
Fav outfit- Border Boyz

Chapters hosted 5 Hospitality rooms including the Detroit-Oakland Chapter and District's on the McCamly's penthouse floor

So why is it called the Fall 'Convention' and not the Fall 'Contest'? According to Chordiology's Chordiology.com blog entry, Coaching Wayne Chapter, Round Two by Paul Ellinger, "Why do I say 'convention' instead of 'contest'? Because your time on the stage

for the 'contest' only lasts 6 minutes, but your time at 'convention' lasts an entire weekend with people singing with one another, exchanging handshakes and stories, and basically having a great time reveling in camaraderie."

2009 Spring 'Convention' is in Traverse city, watch here for more information and come join the fun!



## Thank You Pioneer Something BIG!!

T.R. Gerard  
Something BIG!!  
2008 Pioneer District Champs

Hello Pioneer!! Something BIG!! is still in orbit and may not land anytime soon. I woke up Sunday morning and looked at the desk in our hotel room and saw the trophy (beautifully refurbished thanks to Chordiology) and knew it wasn't a dream. All I can say to everyone is thank you! We owe so much too so many that I don't know where to begin.

I'll start with Chordiology. Great guys all, tons of encouragement, always positive, classy, and did I mention a great quartet? No district champ has ever done more in our district than our immediate past champs. Saturday night, they shepherded us through a maze of hospitality suites in two hotels. We never had to think of anything but singing. Chordiology declined numerous invitations to sing so they could get us to as many rooms as possible. I am proud to be able to call Paul, Cliff, Dave, and Rob friends.

I'd like to thank all our coaches and directors; Jeff Guegon, Larry Parker, Jessica Thompson,

Jeff Woodruff and the great Doc Gillingham for all they taught me. Jamie Carey and Donnie Slamka spent many many hours with us and gave us the encouragement, technique, and confidence to be better than we thought we could ever be. Al Fisk has always been a friend and coached us, even if we made him fall off the couch at Harmony Round-up a few years back on the last note of Lullaby In Ragtime. Al always handled the many requests to move us around when we were singing in multiple quartets and choruses. Thanks again Al.

Our coaching at Harmony University this year was outstanding. Joe Connelly took what we had and turned it into something bigger and better than it was. Rich Knight was especially helpful in getting us to SELL the song, EVERY time. We had a blast too.

How do you thank all the guys who sang with you both on the risers and in quartets? The Chord-agains was the first quartet I ever sang with. Reese Olger, Stan Williams, and Frank Richards took a chance on me and gave me opportunities to perform all over the Lansing Area (LA). I stole all of Stan's best jokes by the way.....both of them!

Don Horton, (yes, the infamous Don Horton) called me one September evening and said he'd been talking to Art Cardy and would I like to sing in contest with Doc Oliver and Sufficient Grounds? I said, "Don, did Artie and Doc really say they wanted to sing in contest in two weeks time?" Don assured me they had, so I was in. I later learned he used the same tactic with Art and Doc. Anyway, we competed several times, had lots of fun, and along the way, I was learning what barbershop was all about.

I was lucky enough to sing with the Lansing Chapter, Motor City Metro (Bachelorz of Harmony), and the Mountain Town Singers. I have met so many great people, stood on the risers next to some great singers and to you all, I want to say "thank you".

I want to mention the quartets we've come to know over the years and have always encouraged us. To the members of Border Crossing, Fermata Nowhere, Party of Four, Moxxy, the Patch Chords, and Resisting A Rest, I say, "thanks".

Did I tell you I sing with the best guys in the world? Seven years ago, Jason Kerschke and I would duet "The Masquerade Is Over" after chorus rehearsal when we first joined the society. We wanted to be in a quartet so bad. Believe it or not, Don Terpe used to be a bass, and a good one too. We stood next to each other in God's country (that's right, the bass section). He switched to tenor and I asked him join me in Sufficient Grounds. Steve Waarnar showed up at a guest night and joined the chorus the next week. I asked him join me in the Chord-agains after hearing how great a bari he was (and is). Something BIG!! first sang together as a quartet at a Christmas party in 2003 and felt that is was the start something big, and it was.

I am so overwhelmed with all this. This means so much to me. Thanks again to all of you. It's great to be a part of this society, and it's great to be a member of Something BIG!!







## Thank You Pioneer Valleyaires

Kerry M. Foley Co-Director,  
South Bend-Mishawaka, IN Valleyaires  
Bass, Interstate Chord Company,  
District Champ Runners-Up  
Bass, Upstage Sound,  
1998 Pioneer District Quartet Champions

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Pioneer for allowing the South Bend-Mishawaka, Indiana chapter to come to your

district this past weekend.

As many of you in the district know, I am a school band director and general music/choir teacher. Our chorus has been making great strides in the past two years, coming from a chapter that was barely surviving to a chapter with a common goal and purpose. Contest has been an incredibly valuable tool for us over the past couple of years. However, we would not have been able to compete without your graciousness.

I had two marching band competitions in two different parts of Indiana on the weekend of the Cardinal District convention. We had also sold our home and were moving to South Bend that same weekend. (THAT was a stitch...) Needless to say, going to contest in Cardinal was out of the question. I asked Mike O'Brien at headquarters, Jim Kunz, Al Fisk, and a cast of others if we would be allowed to keep our forward momentum going by being allowed to compete in the Pioneer District for points, since three of our members are active duals with Michiana Metro and my quartet would be competing in Pioneer anyway. (Our chorus's rehearsal hall is less than a mile from the state line.) Lo and behold, all parties (including Cardinal president Ben Geesa-thanks, Ben!) gave us their blessing.

We had a WONDERFUL time this past weekend, and found out that we are doing better than we thought we were, with a 5% increase in scores! The Pioneer District showed it's true colors by welcoming us with open arms, a fact that has not been lost on the 20 guys who came across the state line to compete. You truly made all of our members feel right at home, and the feedback we got from everyone in the district was so encouraging and heartfelt. You showed us the true meaning of class and grace, and we will never forget that. Our chorus has, in fact, fallen in love with the Pioneer District.

Whether or not some of you out there in PI-Oland realize it, this is truly one of the most friendly and encouraging districts in the Society. I have been a member of 8 different choruses in four different districts (budget cuts for the arts call for lots of moves-thank God that the South Bend/Benton Harbor area feels that the arts are an important part of a child's education), and I can honestly say that no one makes a Joe Barbershopper feel so at home like our own Pioneer district. Thank you so much for your hospitality. Hopefully the chorus can make another "field trip" to your district soon. (Although y'all are stuck with me and my quartet. :-)

Thanks for everything!!



## Extreme Experiment Becoming A Contest Chordilogist

This summer on the PioNet and in the Troubadour the 2007 Pioneer District Champs

Chordiology made the following offer.

"Did the last quartet competition have you all geared up about the future of the Pioneer District? How would YOU like to be a part of that future? Have you always wanted to get up on the contest stage (or get back on it), but don't have a quartet? Well, now you DO! Chordiology is offering to sing on the contest stage this October (2008) with ANY man that would like to, but doesn't have a quartet."

And with that they got 6 barbershoppers who were without a quartet willing to participate in their experiment.

They used the same extreme quartetting format used by the Harmony Brigade organization found currently in 3 states. They ordered excellent learning tracks and scores and practiced diligently with those alone during the summer. Except for the off chance meeting they wouldn't rehearse together as a quartet until warm up on the day of the competition. The competition stage can be intimidating for even a seasoned

quartet but imagine the excitement of walking out with just an interim untried quartet under the bright lights!

Although the Contest Chordilogists members were of various experience levels they received enthusiastically supportive applause from the audience and positive feedback from the judges as well.

Ed Fritzen, singing judge (and formerly of the Pioneer District) commented, "I first want to say when I first heard of this program, I thought it was a great idea. I wish I had thought of it! If I were still in Pioneer, I would've signed up to sing. Congratulations!! From a judges' standpoint, I think the program was well received. The important thing is that there were some men who had a chance to sing on the contest stage with some pretty accomplished singers. I'm sure they were thrilled. The only negative with the program is that we could not do evaluations on any of these quartets, and coach them just a little bit. It makes it pretty hard

*(continued next page)*

when the members of Chordiology are singing in two or more quartets. If you were to do the program again, perhaps you can talk with the judging panel and the contest administrators to arrange for a special group evaluation for all the participants. Overall I was impressed! Great program, and I hope Pioneer gets some new quartets as a result of this experience."

Here's some Chordiology.com blog entries by the Contest Chordilogists members themselves.



Monday, October 27, 2008  
frankjeffology (excerpt)  
by Frank Adams

Frank Adams singing Bass, and Jeff Spire singing Bari

For a 68 year old guy and one who has only been doing barbershop for a little under 2 years, when Paul Ellinger put out the call for "contest Chordilogists" back on June 25th, I couldn't believe my luck. I had been trying to get a quartet together with some of the guys from the Renaissance Chorus of the Wayne Chapter for a while now. All I wanted to do was get a quartet together to do a step-out quartet at some of our sing-outs. I never really dreamed about getting up on the contest stage and competing at my age. Here was probably my only chance to ever do something like this. Naturally, I jumped at the chance and sent an e-mail to Paul. I was probably the first person to respond.

I finally got together with my fellow quartet members for the first time. It was early afternoon on the actual day of the competition. How could four guys who had never sung these two songs together expect to actually get on the stage later that day and perform

together as a quartet? I couldn't believe that I was actually going to do this. After singing the songs together many times, we felt we were pretty much ready. Paul even implemented a suggestion I had.

Since I had never been to a convention, Paul and Cliff walked me through the presentation procedure. Then the call came. As I listened to our introduction, I tried to tell myself, "just relax and enjoy the experience". (Where have I heard that before?) We entered the stage and I was blinded by the bright lights, which actually made it a little easier. I was able to imagine that there were people out there just like at any of our chorus shows. Paul blew the pitch and we were off and running singing It's A Brand New Day. It was amazing! We really hit the tag and received a huge round of applause and some cheers. At least that's how it sounded to me. Song #2, I Don't Mind Being All Alone, went just as good and I was ecstatic. When we exited the stage I felt like I was 10 feet tall. Paul and Cliff were patting Jeff and I on the backs and congratulating us on a job well done. To come from these guys, it was really something special. We hurried into the auditorium to catch the last two quartets and everyone around me was congratulating me. I felt like a celebrity.

This was a great experience for me and one that I will treasure forever. C4 did a wonderful thing in providing this opportunity to me and the other Chordilogists.



Monday, October 27, 2008  
billchuckology (excerpt)  
by Bill Kocher

Bill Kocher singing Lead (instead of his usual Bass!), and Chuck Moerdyk singing Bass

Contest Chordilogist: Stream of Consciousness (dates and times are approximate)

Mid-August: "Interesting concept. Might be

a good challenge."

Late August: "Hooray! I made the program!"

Early September: Great pleasure: opening the Tim Waurick CDs.

Shortly after: trying to sing along with the CD: "Uh-oh."

Early October: Disaster, disgust and dilemma: listening to myself trying to sing along with the Tim Waurick Trio (learning tracks) after I thought I had learned the part.

Second week in August: hopeful: somewhat better.

A week before the contest: "I've made a commitment! I can NOT back out!!"

Thursday, the day before the contest: terror, deep depression, images of the stage manager crying "Get the hook! The hook!!"

1 pm Friday: bliss – singing in the lobby with Chordiology and most of the -ists.

4 pm Friday: Consternation: "Bill, could I look at your chart?"

7 pm Friday: Grim determination – thanks, Rob, for suggesting a polecat.

Ready to go on stage: "Just DO it!"

On Stage: Happiness: I particularly enjoyed boogieing into the swing section (chorus I, "I Don't Mind"), next to Cliff.

Off stage: DONE!! And it was a real hoot!



Monday, October 27, 2008  
iaintimology (excerpt)  
by Iain Willox

Tim Johnson singing Tenor, and Iain Willox  
(continued next page)



singing Lead! accompanied by c4 bass & bari

The announcement comes and out we stride onto the stage, feeling great! I take my bow and back up behind the mic, Dave blows the note and we take the chord. It was about that time I noticed the lights, the crowd and the microphone in front of me. My first breath was a little short, then my adrenalin shot through the roof and it became more difficult to breath. The rush was incredible, I find it difficult to describe. Ok, first song down. Feeling really warm, sweating, but

there is one plaguing question on my mind, what is the first word of the next song? Well as luck would have it I got it wrong. But I held my own and did not stop, I caught on and recovered quickly.

Off the stage we stride and it's all over. What seemed like an eternity took less than five minutes. I was high on adrenalin and was still soaring as we talked about the performance. That talk continued in my mind until the next day when I saw Tim and said "I could have done better" and "We could have done better". Everything else aside that is

the bottom line, I know I could have done better. That is the thing that has nagged at me since I walked off that stage. I need to get back up there and do it again.

Thank you to Chordiology for putting this together and all you have done above and beyond what was expected of district champions. You have put the itch in my heart, mind and soul, and that itch will continue until I walk out on that stage again. Success.



## Harmony Brigade Extreme Quartetting In Michigan?

The Harmony brigade is located in 3 states including neighboring Indiana which for over the last 6 years has drawn in several members from the Pioneer District. So there has definitely been an interest for their style of 'extreme quartetting' here in Michigan. Other examples are the 3 Contest Chordologist quartets (see Fall 2008 convention article and October Extreme Experiment article) and the Brigadeers in the Fall Convention. These quartets all use the Harmony Brigade extreme quartet model of rehearsing only with learning track recordings and scores and then not singing with the rest of the quartet until the performance warm up (except in the Harmony Brigade you also don't know who your quartet members are till warm up).

The quartet the Brigadeers <http://www.cs.indiana.edu/~sbogaert/brigadeers.html> competed in Pioneer in 2005 and this Fall 2008. They have members from all over with tenor Steve Bogaerts of Rocky Mountain NC, Bari Mark Ream of Central Carolina, bass Rick Mangas of Cardinal District's Iroquois Valley and lead Joe Queen of Frank Thorne from

Detroit. This makes rehearsing together near impossible so not only did they meet at Harmony Brigade rallies but using the same Brigade techniques allowed them to compete together without rehearsing together.

Their lead Joe Queen, so inspired by the excitement of the Brigade rallies along with Rob Halsey of lead of Motor City Metro's Moxxy, have been working hard trying to organize a Harmony Brigade for Michigan. An enormous undertaking it has proved to be a real logistics challenge and difficult to find time to spearhead such a project. Although their MIHB.org website says the first rally is May 2009 it will be necessary to delay a Michigan Brigade for yet another year. But hopes and enthusiasm is high for an eventual MI Brigade if the Fall District Convention was any indication.



## 2008 Indiana Harmony Brigade MI in IN

Online photo album

<http://pioneerdistrict.org/troubadour/online/2008/11/ihbpics/>

This was the 6th Annual Brigade Rally, members from over 20 states attended including our group from Michigan. Nov 7th Friday afternoon the Brigade participated in school sing outs performing at 5 different Indiana Indianapolis schools, Arsenal Tech High School, Pike High School, Ben Davis High School, Brebeuf Jesuit High School, and NBA Robin Run Village.

Then everyone met back at the Clarion Hotel and Convention Center for the Brigade rally. Everyone wore badges color coded for their part making it easy to grab 3 other guys from anywhere to sing the Brigade songs with you. There were pickup quartets singing through out the halls, in stairwells, doorways, and in any room the staff hadn't

locked. The enthusiasm was fun and contagious. I made the rookie move of blowing out my pipes early on but I just couldn't help myself. Then we were each assigned a pick up quartet and drew at random one of the 10 2008 brigade songs and after an hour of rehearsing together we sang in front of the Brigade and judges, ergo the term Extreme Quartetting. Some amazing performances including a memorable one with a bass dressed as Dorothy from the Wizard of Oz, pig tails, gingham dress, and all. 10 finalist quartets were selected to compete again the next day.

Saturday morning the new members gathered and sang a song to the rest of the Brigade. We met at the Chrispus Attucks High School to rehearse as the IHB chorus. There was a couple of hours to relax back at the hotel but many guys just kept on singing. A tag team quartet formed in the lobby where about 20 guys surrounded the quartet and would tap out a singer and take their place anywhere in the song. The morphing sound of the song as the quartet members changed throughout the songs was fascinating. When songs got near the end there would be a flurry of tapping out of singers

as everyone fought to sing the tag and even tapped out singers several times during a sustained post with hilarious results. That evening back to the auditorium for the concert. The show also included performances by high school students and the Indiana 2007 Cardinal District Quartet Champions The Edge.

Then Brigadiers met back at the hotel for the quartet finals. I missed this having to start on the long 4 and half hour drive back to Grand Rapids Michigan. But wow, what an amazing time!



*Center Neil Nugent Four Man Fishin' Tackle Choir bass of MI*



*Left Robert Ryan and son Patrick of Great Lakes Chorus Grand Rapids MI*



*Right Joe Queen of Detroit MI, brothers, and friends*



*Moxxy of Motor City Metro MI*



*Mike O'Donnell Muskeygon MI Director, lead for Harmony Transfer, and Judge*



*IHB practice*







## New President

## Brian Dunckel Pinch Hitter

Joe Serwach  
Secretary Pioneer District

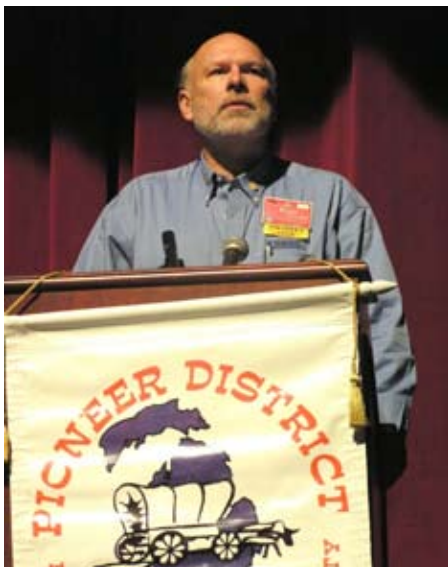
I regret to inform you that 2008 Pioneer District President Jim Kunz has stepped down slightly early as District President due to a heavy work schedule and other time constraints. We thank Jim for his service and will greatly miss him. Everyone who knows Jim knows that he is a true gentleman, the embodiment of DOC's Gentlemen Songsters.

Fortunately, Pioneer is filled with many great guys willing to lend a helping hand to their fellow singers. I am pleased to inform

you that our Executive Vice President Brian Dunckel, who has done so much to help membership teams throughout the district and to help build the Lansing and Mount Pleasant chapters, has unanimously been elected as our new District President.

Joe McDonald of Mount Pleasant has unanimously been elected to take Brian's place as our new EVP.

Please thank each of these great barber-shoppers for their hard work and great efforts toward making it easy for each of us to enjoy the Barbershopping craft.



## We Need You! Serve Our District

Brian Dunckel  
President  
Pioneer District  
517 339-3422

As you heard from the podium during several contest sessions at our recent Pioneer District Convention, the Pioneer District is "looking for a few good men." Men willing

to serve our district, and specifically on the Management Team as the Director of Financial Development. We also are looking for another individual to serve as the District Historian.

If you, or another member you know, might be willing to serve the Pioneer District in one of these capacities, please let EVP Joe McDonald know as soon as possible. It is important that will have all positions in the Pioneer District leadership filled and functioning, so that we can move the district forward!

Thanks for helping us locate the individuals that we need to fill these positions!



## COTS Jan 3-4

Brian Dunckel  
President Pioneer District  
517 339-3422


As you have already hear, the MOST POPULAR class at Harmony University, "Vocal Techniques," will be taught at our upcoming COTS/Leadership Academy in Okemos Comfort Inn Conference Center on Jan 3-4.

Also new this year, we will be offering several elective classes- to make your experience even better! The elective classes that will be taught are: What do Those Presentation Judges Want?, Successful Singing Valentines, Web Sites for Chapters and Quartets, Bulletin Writing and Creating a Successful Show Program.

These electives will be offered during the first "core class" session- one that many of you as a returning chapter officer could probably teach yourself. Rather than have you sit through the duties of the job, and other "basics" again, we are giving you the chance to gain some knowledge for yourself,

or to take back and share with your chapter to improve it in some way. Those "newbies" in a position, or others who desire to get the basics of their job, can still get them in that first core session. Hopefully this fresh experience will increase your enjoyment of the COTS/Leadership Academy experience.

Looking forward to another GREAT event in the Pioneer District. If you haven't registered or reserved your hotel room yet, don't delay any longer-the forms are on the web site.

Registration materials as well as Bios of the Faculty for the event are listed at the COTS button of the Pioneer District website. 

# Chapters In Action



*The Jesters Mike Cooley, Don Chamberlain, Ralph LeRoy, and Bob Kullberg Photo by Alan Ward Daily Press & Argus*



*Chordiology*

## Livingston County Chapter Fall Fest

Ralph LeRoy  
Lamplighter Director  
(810) 227-5322

Good Morning Gentlemen, congratulations to all of the participants in the convention weekend. I would like to invite you to the Lamplighter's Barbershop Fall Fest. It is this coming Sunday the 26th at 4:00 pm. The performance will be at the Chilson Hills Baptist Church located at 4440 Brighton Road, Howell, MI. Our guest quartet will be Chordiology and the performance will be spiked with Halloween humor and decorations. It's only \$10 and we hope you can take an hour or so and spend it with us.

by Paul Ellinger  
Chordiology  
Chordiology.com Blog

Friday, November 21, 2008  
the lamplighters light it up (paul)

I know that this is a rather tardy entry. There was just a LOT going on at the end of October (preparing to sing our Swan Song performance at convention; preparing to sing with 3 pick-up "ology" quartets in contest; preparing to teach not one, but two Audacity Classes; learning new music to sing with the Quartet Champions Association Chorus; preparing a set for Friday night at conven-

tion for "mic testing"; preparing for the QCA show quartet performance; and preparing for a show the following week with TR Gerard joining us on Bass for an October 26th show with our friends, the Livingston Lamplighters - WHEW!). But it was ALL worth it!

So now on to the much anticipated blog about singing with the Livingston Lamplighters. So who are the Livingston Lamplighters? Not a lot of people outside of Brighton know of them because they haven't been to a convention in years, but I'll tell you what, BRIGHTON knows who they are! They are a GREAT group of guys that really get what singing is about. FUN and giving back to the community! These guys do singouts all the time and I mean ALL the time. And they have a great chapter quartet, The Jesters. In fact, the Jesters just did two retirement homes the other day with 500 people in attendance for each show. Wow! --- I'm telling you the Lamplighters and the Jesters are a hit in their community! Before I forget, if you'd like to learn more about the Lamplighters here is their website: <http://groups.msn.com/thelivingstonlamplighters>

So how did we get the chance to hook up with the Lamplighters? Well, I had the pleasure of speaking with the director Ralph LeRoy (and Tony Byk) and asked how we could help the Chapter, if at all. I offered up some coaching for the chorus and for the Jesters and he took me up on it. We established a Monday night and I and man, did I learn a lot about what a great group of men these guys are. It is clear watching these guys sing that singing is basically a means for these real friends to get together and enjoy making music and one another's company. And they included me in their friendship like I had been there for years. I know I already

wrote a blog about coaching so I won't go into all of the details, but suffice it to say that I had a great time and we made a lot of progress. It was all very exciting for all of us.

So back to the Lamplighter's Chapter show. As a bit of background, the Lamplighters hadn't done a chapter show for years (four years to be exact) so we were excited about getting to sing on their first show in a while. Leading up to the show the Lamplighters sold ads galore, put together a great show program with all of those ads, put together a great show package, worked hard at refining their performance, worked to bring in the best guest quartet that money could buy (they couldn't get them, so they got us), and sold lots and lots of show tickets. I think the venue was filled to 90% of capacity. For not having done this for several years, they really had their act together.

So the plans had all come fruition and the day of the show had arrived. The Lamplighters went beyond thinking just about the show. They thought about the presentation of the entire event. For example, when you walked into the lobby you were soothed with the sounds of the Jesters serenading live in the lobby and it really added to the event, because that's what it was --- an event. The next thing you noticed were the biggest professionally made poster boards I had ever seen sitting on easels and advertising the show. These things had to be around 3 feet by 5 feet and looked fantastic. I remember seeing them and thinking, "Hey this is a top notch affair." It was like the theaters of old with the playbill easels out for everyone to see. The posters were bright, upbeat and rather nostalgic. And then keeping with the fall season there were  
*(continued next page)*



cinnamon doughnuts and apple cider and coffee. I don't remember how many I had, but I really don't think I want to remember either. Let's just say that I'm still working them off. People milled about and those that knew each other glad handed one another and those that didn't took the time to introduce themselves to each other. It was like I was back home on the farm where people took the time to take an interest in the people around them rather than just finding their seats and waiting for the show to start. When you walked into the venue you noticed that there were two huge flatscreen TVs ---and I mean HUUUUUGE; huge like "the tize that would force you to build an addition on to your house" huge; huge like large enough to give any man flatscreen envy" huge. These TV screens had photos scrolling through of the group in past performances and in more relaxed environments as well showing the behind the scenes stuff that was fun for the audience to see as well. We had done our sound check prior to the performance and their sound system and sound man were both exactly what the Dr. ordered.

So the stage had been set, and it was time for the show. Recall that this show took place just a few days prior to Halloween so the Halloween theme was adopted and well-placed into portions of the show. There was a very scary, but oddly polite, witch and her sidekick (a scarecrow if memory serves me) as the Masters of Ceremonies and there was the bubbling cauldron and other witchy amenities about. People had found their seats and Chordiology came upstairs to listened to the first song or two. After listening for a bit, it was clear that the Lamplighters had the audience in the palm of their hand. So we headed downstairs to our dress-

ing room to put the final touches on some songs and warm up.

Basically during this warm-up we realized that Dave has some very important information floating around in that head of his --- the pitches to our songs. None of us knew the pitches for any of the songs and we found ourselves guessing on them. And at the same time poor TR Gerard, filling in for bass, had to learn some of our schtick while standing in the basement just moments before hitting the stage. I think most people would have been nervous, but we were all having a lark and a great time just singing and laughing (at each other in some instances). Not that we weren't taking the show seriously, because we were, but getting nervous wasn't going to help anyone. So without even saying anything we all just stayed calm, went through songs, went through some schtick, created some schtick and had a great time doing each of those things in turn.

Not too much later, someone came down and told us that the Lamplighters had a couple of more songs and then we were on so we finalized warm up and put the finishing touches on our costumes and headed upstairs. I say "costumes" because we decided to go with the Halloween theme as well. Rob went as a computer nerd (and it was so hilarious), TR went as a country hick with a Huck Finn flare, I went as Clark Kent with my shirt pulled open exposing my big Superman "S" and Cliff went as a destitute hobo with missing teeth and that likely had access to a still within walking distance.

We were standing in the wings and could hear the Lamplighters giving the audience a real show. It was great to peer out and see

the guys giving it their all and seeing the audience rewarding their efforts with applause and appreciating every moment of it.

The Lamplighters sang their last chord on their last song and audience showed their full appreciation and Ralph started into our introduction. We popped out and sang the first song and wowed the audience. TR brought his A-game and we were off to the races! TR handled all of the schtick like a pro and played the part of a wife to a tee (this won't make sense until you see a Chordiology show). Actually, if we hadn't recognized TR during our show I'm guessing that a lot of people would not even have known that he wasn't our regular bass. We did have one false start on one song. Apparently the key that we guessed on for one of the songs wasn't quite right and about 3 notes in we all realized it and the audience laughed right along with us. Remind me to get those pitches from Dave. We finished to an applauding crowd with many of them standing. It's a great feeling when you bring people to their feet. I know that someone had emailed me a link to one of our songs that were performed that one of the audience members had recorded illegally. Here is the link. But don't go there, because it's illegal.

The Lamplighters came back out on stage to close the afternoon and we joined them on stage and joined them in soaking in the applause at the end of the show. Afterward we milled about and got to meet the audience over doughnuts and cider. People kept saying that they couldn't wait for the next show and I'm certainly hoping that the Lamplighters oblige their fans with many more shows to come.

Yep. The Livingston Lamplighters lit it UP!



## Director Search

Don Horton  
Director Search Chairman  
Lansing Chapter

The Lansing Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society is in search of a new chorus director. We have already contacted some potential candidates and now wanted to share our search with the rest of the Pioneer District. We are looking for a talented, energetic individual who can help us achieve our musical goals and help us continue to sing great barbershop harmony in central Michigan. This is a paid position and also includes

strong support from our music team and opportunities for director coaching/training.

The chapter has been actively singing and performing in and around the Greater Lansing area for over 65 years. The Capitol City Chordsmen participate in District Contests/Conventions and won the District Championship five times, the last of which was in the Spring of 2007 in Traverse City, Michigan.

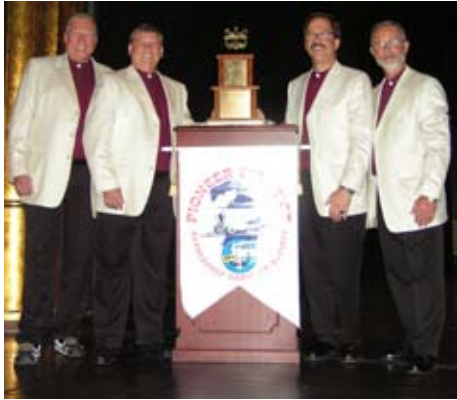
The chapter presents an annual show at the prestigious Wharton Center for the Performing Arts on the campus of Michigan State University- normally in March of each year. We also sing for many festivals and events in a 50 mile radius of Lansing.

We rehearse on Tuesday nights from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. just South of Lansing at the Great Lakes Retirement home in Holt- located on the corner of Holt Rd. and South Washing-

ton St.

If you are interested in the position yourself, know of someone else who might be inter-

ested, or simply would like more information please contact me on my cell phone at 517-202-1225 or by email at melodies1@charter.net Thanks!



## Singing With The Champs

TR Gerard  
Something BIG!!

This past Tuesday our own Lansing Capital City Chordsmen honored us with a "sing with the champs" celebration in the second half of our chorus rehearsal. Set up by Program VP extraordinaire Don Horton (yes, the Don Horton) members of Something BIG!! sang

with members of the chorus and former/present quartet members including Reese Olger and Stan Williams of Chord-Again, Roger Cuhaney, formerly of the Patch Chords, Bob Fox, bass man for Parts Unlimited, and Don Horton of Sufficient Grounds and Weekend Agenda. As a member of the Lansing Chorus, I can tell you that Something BIG!! would have never achieved the success we have enjoyed without the support and nurturing of the Lansing Chapter and it's members. To them we say "Thanks for everything, you're the best!!"



## Rochester Chapter

## Let's Celebrate The Holidays

Rochester Chapter's show "Let's Celebrate the Holidays", a week from this Saturday, October 25, 7:00 pm, at Rochester High School, corner University and Livernois in Rochester

Hills. You'll see Hot Air Buffoons, Something Big, a mystery quartet that you haven't seen elsewhere (no, it's not a chapter quartet), and your favorite emcee Doran McTaggart.

Seating is reserved, so don't delay. For tickets call Walt Kaupilla, 248-853-6622, wmarkau@yahoo.com.

DIRECTED BY Andy Brenz and Mike Hartrick

The HEART OF THE HILLS BARBERSHOP CHORUS Presents our 33rd Annual Barbershop Show LET'S CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS

Saturday, October 25, 2008 at 7:00 PM at ROCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM SW corner of Livernois and Walton

Featuring the HEART OF THE HILLS CHORUS And two great, guest quartets The Popular Comedy Quartet THE HOT AIR BUFFOONS. And fresh from International Competition The Pioneer District Silver Medalist Quartet

SOMETHING BIG !!

Plus everyone's favorite Master of Ceremonies DORAN MC TAGGART

TR Gerard  
Something BIG!!

Greetings Pioneer, Something BIG!! we sang for the Heart of the Hills Chorus in Rochester on their big show. Paul Anderson and George Schmidt were most gracious hosts who take care of our every need. The show, M.C'd by Dorn McTaggart, at Rochester High School was a huge success. The Hot Air Buffoons headlined and boy, were they a gas!! Great guys who hung out and sang with us (and all comers) at the After Glow. They even took my request for "South Rampart Street Buffet". We sang into the wee hours of the morning. I urge all Pioneer to check out the Heart of the Hills Chorus Show next time. Also performing were local quartets Harmony Preserve and Better Late Than Never.



Hot Air Buffoons



Something BIG!!





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**[www.harmonize.com/doc/doc.htm](http://www.harmonize.com/doc/doc.htm)**



Gentlemen Songsters Meet:  
Monday, 7:30 pm  
Starr Presbyterian Church  
13 Mile & Crooks Rd.  
Royal Oak, MI 48301



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## CALENDAR: 2009 Events

January 3-4 COTS  
February 27-28 Detroit-Oakland Chapter Show  
March 7 Lansing Chapter Show  
April 17-19 (Note different weekend!) District Convention Traverse City  
August 21-22 Bush League Quartet Contest and coaching, Gaylord Chapter  
September 12 Kalamazoo Chapter Show  
October 16-18 District Convention - Kalamazoo  
October 24 Rochester Chapter Show  
November 7 Pontiac-Waterford Chapter Show

## Chapter Locations

