



Westunes Vol. 70 No. 2

Summer 2020

WESTUNES



WESTUNES, established in 1951, is the official publication of the Far Western District Association of Chapters in the Barbershop Harmony Society

Like many other chapters, the Masters of Harmony are meeting each week on Zoom.

The Show Must Go On

INSIDE • Reflections on BHS • 2020 Harmony Camp • 2019 Chapter of the Year & President's Award



WESTUNES



Ray S. Rhymer, Editor • Now in his 19th year

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor in Chief

Ray S. Rhymer

westuneseditor@farwesterndistrict.org

Marketing & Advertising

David Melville

marketing@farwesterndistrict.org

Westags Newsletter

Jerry McElfresh

westags@farwesterndistrict.org

Arizona Division Editor

Cherie Kaufman

editor-az@farwesterndistrict.org

Northeast Division Editor

Roger Perkins

editor-ne@farwesterndistrict.org

Northwest Division Editor

Don Shively

editor-nw@farwesterndistrict.org

Southeast Division Editor

OPEN

editor-se@farwesterndistrict.org

Southwest Division Editor

Justin McQueen

editor-sw@farwesterndistrict.org

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A complete list of rates and specs appears later in this issue.

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Reflections on the state of the Barbershop Harmony Society

by John Krizek

Past District President

Past Society Board Member

61-year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society—alias the SPEBSQSA

Far Western District Hall of Fame 1994

We were a men's club that sang.

We relished the idea we were preserving an American art form. We were proud to be part of something special.

We were a social, as well as a musical, phenomenon. A singing fraternity. Carry a tune, come on in. We smiled, we laughed, we exuded the joy of spreading harmony, up beat entertainment, service to our communities, and good will.

Every town deserved a barbershop chapter.

We inherited an institution. We nurtured it, shaped it, grew it, matured it. In the process we became an educational machine, and to a significant degree, a savior of active choral music in schools and the world around us.

Now we have passed it along to a new generation.

We have become a highly refined art form, with discipline and performance techniques in our elite groups that inspire awe, respect, and admiration in the highest echelons of the music world.

We're still a brotherhood. But between the pursuit of artistic perfection, and the costs of getting together—and above all, the modern trends in socializing and communications—we're no longer the social engine we once were. We look with fear and frustration at declining membership numbers and shrinking convention attendance. We see old chapters dying, fewer and smaller choruses on our stages.

We used to be unique. We had requirements to belong. We were exclusive—to the degree, we were men of good character, who could carry a tune. As Lloyd Steinkamp used to say, they come for the music, they stay for the friends.

The needs of the society around us changed. To have "friends" today, one need not leave their computer screen.

We can savor our deserved role as a leading educational force in the vocal music world. In a sense we took on the task of re-populating the world with singers, who might become our future members and supporters. In the process we have become swallowed by the youth outreach wave we created. The needs of the educational world, and the needs of our elite groups to push the envelope of perfection, now preempt the fraternal needs of men who like to sing. To maintain organizational relevance, and survive in the new world, with its emphasis and pressures of inclusion, our institution has swung the doors open to all comers. The exclusivity of the past is no longer politically correct. Or, apparently, sustainable.

But the physical appeal of a barbershop chord is eternal.

We treasured the institution while it was ours. Now we have turned it over to the next generation. May its leaders help it thrive, and become the world movement they envision, thanks to that eternal ringing chord, and the love of sharing it.



Santa Fe Springs Chapter - Masters of Harmony

by Ron Larson

Successful Masters performances before the Start of an Era of Uncertainty

New Management for the “Young Men’s Harmony Festival”

Nearly 20 years ago, **Mark Freedkin** helped create a youth festival aimed at introducing young men and their choral teachers to barbershop harmony. That program has now been taken over by the Southern California Vocal Association (SCVA), a professional organization of vocal music teachers at elementary to college levels. It recently put our long-running event under its professional umbrella. This year, it held its second “Close Harmony Festival” at West High School in Torrance, California, and over 170 singers took part in the event. Throughout the day, the attendees received excellent coaching by **The Newfangled Four (Joey Buss, Jackson Niebrugge, Ryan Wisniewski and Jake Tickner)**. In the evening, the audience responded enthusiastically to the Festival Chorus, several high school quartets, The Newfangled Four, the **Masters of Harmony** and **The Westminster Chorus**. Congratulations to Mark and to his SCVA counterpart, **Antone Rodich**, former MOH member and current Westminster member, for keeping this excellent program alive!

Singing Valentines

Thanks to meticulous sales and logistics work done by the “Valentines Central” program of the **Orange Empire Chorus**, **Larry Icenogle, Mark Travis, Bob Hartwig**, and **Alan Greenberg** were able to take the love of Valentine’s Day music to a number of surprised and delighted recipients throughout Orange County.

First Concerts of the Year—Sun City, Palm Desert, California

For over a year, Sun City resident and former MOH President **Bernard Priceman** had been driving the 240-mile round trip to MOH rehearsals in Santa Fe Springs. He won the approval needed to perform in Sun City, and **Tim**

Truesdell's excellent advance promotional work brought in two very enthusiastic audiences, most of whom had never heard a Masters performance. Among the numbers were: '50s Medley with **Les Weiser** on sax, the contest set for the 2020 International (which has subsequently been canceled due to the current health crisis), "Unclouded Day," and "This is the Moment." Audience response to these shows indicates that Bernard should have more opportunities for future trips to the auditorium parking lot in his golf cart!

The Masters of Harmony—City of Hope Partnership

In late 2019, the Masters of Harmony established a unique partnership with City of Hope, one of the world's leading centers for cancer and diabetes research and treatment. The chorus offered to donate a portion of the proceeds from the November 30 Christmas Show to City of Hope. Between shows at Sun City, Masters President **Joe D'Amore** presented a check for \$2,000 to **Kevin Kate McQuhae**, Senior Director of Development in City of Hope's Office of Philanthropy. Hopefully, this is the start of a long, mutually beneficial relationship to both MOH and COH.

The Masters of Harmony and Santa Fe Springs Part Ways

For over 30 years, the City of Santa Fe Springs has provided an excellent, centrally located rehearsal and storage facility at its Town Center Hall. The ability to use this facility has been a major reason for MOH success over that span. In return, the Masters sang at the city's annual Tree Lighting Ceremony for 28 years and provided quartets for the nine days of the city's truly unique early December Christmas Float Program. During that time, MOH also contributed many thousands of dollars to various Santa Fe Springs organizations. However, the two parties recently disagreed over long-standing terms for facility usage. The MOH could continue to use the facility but at rates the Board felt the chapter could not afford so, sadly, the established partnership came to an end. However, the Masters left this excellent facility with enormous gratitude for the benefits our long-term association made possible.

A New Rehearsal Site

Leaving Town Center Hall in Santa Fe Springs necessitated a thorough search for a new facility that would meet MOH rehearsal and equipment storage needs. Pending resumption of open rehearsals, a search team found a temporary rehearsal and storage site at a church in nearby La Mirada.

Rehearsals in the Era of Lockdowns

Since the era of stay-at-home orders has ruled out even section rehearsals, over 80 Masters of Harmony members have been video conferencing regularly using the Zoom app. President **Joe D'Amore** and Director **Alan Gordon** have kept the members updated on ways they can learn new music, polish current repertoire, and do exercises to maintain vocal quality and stamina until such time as we meet again. Common reactions to the lack of the ability to do what we love so much have been shared in a kind of healing group therapy. One thing we quickly learned when we tried to end a session with "Keep the Whole World Singing" – Zoom is a terrible platform for that!

Kudos to Mark Hale's Sound of the Rockies

One of the lasting effects of the enforced stoppage of group singing is the rise of virtual choruses and choirs. **Mark Hale**, who led the Masters to four gold medals before moving on to direct the **Sound of the Rockies Chorus**, has helped create a virtual version of "Go the Distance." To produce this song, individual members recorded their parts which were then mixed and balanced to turn out a high-quality sound that is very moving in a way few of us have never experienced before. Here is the YouTube address for the song:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD4HS0_xN1I Congratulations to Mark and our SOR brothers!

Since the last issue of *Westunes*, **Harrison Cooke**, **Jim Kline** and **Evan Shyer** were welcomed into membership.

2020 Harmony Camp Lite

Fellow Barbershoppers,

As we shelter in place and continue to be bored out of our minds and looking for projects and things to do and things to think about, the subject of Harmony Camp came up and the realization that we should be out there raising funds to make Harmony Camp happen for our October date in 2020.

That fund-raising effort is Not happening and not going to happen for obvious reasons. No one is in any kind of place physically and mentally to contribute money to an event in October that might not even be viable.

Furthermore, the amount of money needed each year typically runs somewhere north of \$15,000, and recently even north of \$20,000. The Only way that happens is for Lots of chapters, companies, and individuals to join hands and each contribute as much as they can to the cause.

It is becoming a monumental task each year that Will in the near future be helped immeasurably by the Steinkamp Endowment Fund. But even that Fund will only provide about half of the needed funds cutting our efforts in the “field” by only half. Of course, at some time in the future, the LSEF will be able to provide most of the funding, but that day will likely be beyond my personal experience on this earth. But yes, we do have a “cushion” of Camp funds held in the FWD treasury, however planning to use these funds for an uncertain event, such as the “normal” Harmony Camp does not seem wise at this time.

An additional consideration is signing a contract with Sly Park. We are just not ready to do that at this point in time. Yes, we could wait and probably get the date of October 16 – 18, the staff at Sly Park loves the Harmony Camp weekend. But given the uncertainty of future approved activities this also just not seem wise at this point.

After a too long, but critical discussion about finances, let’s talk about what we see for Harmony Camp 2020. Some time ago, we realized that the multi-day Camp at Sly Park, whose cost is clearly prohibitive for 2020, is simply not going to happen. We then started thinking about what alternative “shape” might be a viable model for Harmony Camp 2020. Our over-riding goal in these daily thinking activities was to maintain the FWD Harmony Camp model and momentum.

How about doing a one-day event? How about doing one-day events in Sacramento AND the Bay Area? Sounding Good! Let’s keep going.

Wait a minute. One-day events are usually held at high schools and that means that we likely could not maintain an all-male model. High schools in California would almost certainly not allow such an event.

But the all-male model happens to be one of the cornerstone features of the FWD Harmony Camp and has been for its entire existence of almost twenty-five years. The leaders of Harmony Camp along with a large number of Camp supporters strongly believe that the current all-male model of Harmony Camp is truly valuable and maintaining.

If Harmony Camp 2020 will likely not be held on a high school campus, what is the alternative? We will need to come up with a location that is amenable to an all-male camp. We can do that.

Every year we have many inquiries from music educators from the Bay Area who are interested in camp. However, the drive on Friday evening then becomes virtually insurmountable. A Saturday morning event held locally in the Bay Area should have a great deal of appeal.

Thus, 2020 Harmony Camp Lite is born. Two one day Harmony Camp events – one in Sacramento and one in the Bay Area. WOW!! Let’s do it!!

Think about the advantages: 1) the cost is way lower; one-day means no overnight facilities are required and very little in the way of meals; 2) being local, Sacramento and Bay Area boys are close; boys (and their parents) are not deterred by travel difficulties; 3) the cost for each boy can be significantly lowered; 4) fall school activities held on Friday (homecoming) would not interfere with a number of boys’ ability to attend. These are truly significant advantages and, hopefully, will result in a significant turnout of local boys.

Of course, however, there are several significant challenges. Clearly, our usual focus on education when at Sly Park would be more difficult. All the craft and barbershop culture that is taught and experienced during the weekend at Sly Park would have to be condensed into a few short hours along with teaching the songs that the boys sing at the Saturday night show. All of which will be a major challenge.

We hold down costs even further by inviting a local quartet – I can think of three terrific candidates. We maintain the multi-clinician model but cut down to three - again to cut cost.

In short, Harmony Camp Lite for 2020 is a viable alternative to our regular multiday Camp at Sly Park and morphs it into two-day long events in the Sacramento area and the Bay Area. Thus, we take a Very Challenging situation that is global in scope and modify it to suit the needs of the times!! 2020 Harmony Camp Lite.

Comments and suggestions are welcome. This is all open to further thought and improvement. NOT cast in stone. Our two main goals are to maintain the model and momentum of twenty-five years and create a modified version that will accomplish much of what we normally do and pave the way to our weekend Camp in 2021.

Richard Lund, Director FWD Harmony Camp

Jim Sherman FWD Hall of Fame

January 1939 - May 2020



JIM SHERMAN 2005

- Champion Quartets:
 - Executive Privilege '87, '88, '89
FWD Division Champions
- The San Francisco Storm Door And Whale Oil Company, 1975 FWD Champions & FWD Representatives to Int'l 6 Times
 - Sentimental Favorites,
1994 FWD Sr Champions &
1995 4th Place Int'l Sr Medalists
- Remember When The Doors Sang,
1996 FWD Sr Champions &
1997 3rd Place Int'l Senior Medalists
- Potluck, 1999 FWD Sr Champions
 - Vintage Gold,
2005 FWD Sr Champions &
2006 2nd Place Int'l's Sr Silver Medalists
- Served on FWD Board of Directors
19 years, 2 Years As Vice President &
17 As Treasurer and Financial Advisor
 - Continues As FWD Treasurer
- COTS Faculty Member, Treasurer, 1994-2005



**KEEP
CALM
AND
KEEP SINGING**



**FAR WESTERN
DISTRICT**

The Crescenta Valley Quartet Chapter

2409 Florencita Dr. Montrose, CA 91020 - Mondays 7-10
Announces A New Program in Barbershop Quartet Singing

What we DO! - Always! (almost)

1. Guarantee a chance to sing at least **FOUR** songs with an award winning (first place) quartet, every Monday 7-10pm



2. Welcome **ALL**, including women, who love to sing
Barbershop QUARTET Style
3. Sing tags and woodshed songs
4. Share singing tips and ways to **IMPROVE** our sound
5. Provide quartets as a community service and/or for **MONEY**
6. Eat healthy snacks (mostly) and drink pure water

What we DON'T do! - Ever!

1. Chorus
2. Sing on the risers (for three hours or three minutes)
3. Choreography that requires cartwheels
4. Beatle tunes or Rap "songs" requiring vocal percussion
5. Compete in BHS adjudicated contests
6. Pirate members from other chapters

Bob Saxe: 818-590-2423

robert_saxe@earthlink.net

David Kilpatrick: 213-215-4257

dkil@mac.com



Bill Rosica

Far Western District President
president@farwesterndistrict.org



What a beginning for 2020! With most of us “Hunkered down”, there isn’t much to talk about....Wrong! Even though we couldn’t meet face to face for our spring Prelims, your Board did meet via ZOOM and conducted our normal business and heard from most of our District Management Team Members. Kenny Rios, from Las Vegas/Santa Fe Springs Chapters became our new Youth in Harmony Manager and hit the ground running. The next day your House of Delegates met, again via ZOOM, to conduct our Spring meeting. With close to 60 members online, it was exciting to hear from some Chapters we rarely hear from. I felt that everyone became more comfortable as time went on. Not only did everyone get a chance to let their feelings known, but this meeting was better attended than our normal bill of fare.

I have tasked each of the Division Vice Presidents to set up ZOOM meetings with their assigned Division Presidents on a quarterly basis. Arizona with Adam Kaufman and Chuck Roots with the Northeast Division were first out of the box. Although I sat in on both meeting, I misread the Arizona invitation and only caught the last 15 minutes of the meeting. Now I owe Arizona a batch of cookies because that’s what I was doing instead of attending my call-in.

My reasoning for requesting our DVPs to hold these meetings is simple. In my 38 years in the Society I have seen many Chapters come and go. We talk about what could have been done or what should have been done but wasn’t done. We found that by the time a Chapter calls the DVP, they are down to four or five members and ready to close their doors. Our methods must change. By reaching out to our Chapters on a quarterly basis, I’m hoping that we don’t wait until the last minute to attempt to help them. By inviting all the Division Chapters, one of them may have the answer to an issue because they may have faced the same dilemma. I have left the subject area for each meeting up to the individual DVP. They should know what issues are out there and should know what subject matter is best to talk about. So far, I am very pleased with the effort and am anticipating the DVP Reports at our Summer Board Meeting. BTW, it will be a ZOOM meeting as well with the DMT meeting hosted by Nick Papageorge followed by our regular Board meeting the next day. This will save the District the

expense of traveling, hotels and food.

I hope that your individual Chapters are keeping in touch with each other during this tough time. My Chapter is still holding “Rehearsals” each Wednesday night - virtually. We discuss current music and how to keep our voices fresh. Our Music and Performance VP puts out a PowerPoint presentation on how to read music. For people like me, who have tried to learn a few things with regard to reading music, this is a great tool. Now when Alan says that’s a dotted half note, I can at least find it on the chart. We will sing again. This setback is just temporary, so let’s make the best of it by continuing to practice our deep singer’s breath and reviewing our music.

Many have asked the question, “Is the Cruise still a Go?” Yes, we’re still planning on doing a great cruise for our October Contest and Convention. If you are signed up but aren’t sure that you still want to go, please wait until July to make your final decision. If the Cruise Line is forced to cancel our event, everyone will receive a full refund. If you opt out now and they cancel, you’ll lose your deposit. Most likely, if the ships don’t sail, hotels will be closed as well, so if we are allowed to have a contest and convention, it will be at sea. The Cruise Lines are well aware of the potential of a ship-born virus reappearing. We are keeping our eye on what will be best for our group and will fall on the side of Safety when making our final decision. We know that the ships will all be conducting tests for elevated temperature prior to letting anyone aboard. Carnival’s other items of safety are still being written. We’ll let everyone know as soon as we are made aware. Donna is still taking reservations for this cruise. If you and your Quartet and/or Chorus are interested in competing, let Donna know and get your spot reserved. If the 2020 Contest and Convention does get cancelled, we may look at moving the whole Fall Event to October 2021. We’ve done most of the legwork. Stay Tuned!

Some of our members who have underlying issues won’t go no matter what Carnival does. We understand that and will do whatever we can to lessen the monetary loss. Maybe we’ll look at a complimentary registration to the next land-based contest for those at-risk members. We’ll see what we can do.

As you can see, our early 2020 has been full of Events but Not Events. We're learning new things and working on opening our "Hobby" once again under Safe Conditions. In the meantime, keep practicing your music and let me and your DVPs know your thoughts regarding our quarantine-stay-at-home-time.



Hello to all of my Far Western District friends and family! In the last article I let you all know how I got "hooked" into the Far Western District, and thus into SPEBSQSA. And I wish I could tell you all that I am settling in to the role of Executive Vice President, but with all of the craziness that has been going on the last few months, I have not had a chance to get rolling. For most of you, that won't matter, but I'm sure you have had the same feelings! In case you don't know, the EVP is in charge of the oversight of Youth in Harmony, Membership Recruitment and Education, and Chorus Director Development. Russ Young and I have been working on re-starting the FWD Director's Guild which held a Director's School every year. And, oh yes, I oversee what David Melville does with Marketing and PR. But I am very confident with David's work in that area. I encourage you all to look online and see what he has done for us all! Thanks, David!

Remember that you can always email me with problems that you may be having in your Choruses or Quartets. However, there are FWD Officers, and or, committee chairs that can help you too. But do not hesitate to email me if you think that I can help you! I look forward to seeing you all on the Ship for our Fall Convention.

Until then,

Remember, I am merely an email from you!



"May you live in interesting times". It is an ancient curse and never more appropriate than what we are living through right now. However, rather than focus on the negative, I would like to focus on the ways that we all, even while being separated, have come together to support and encourage each other.

Zoom has become a household word, and people who never thought they would be able to video chat are being very successful doing so. Choruses are having online meetings, and a lot of new music is being learned for that time, in the hopefully not too distant future, when we can all harmonize together again.

The cruise is still on! I know that I am REALLY looking forward to joining all my brothers and sisters in harmony to have one heck of a party! I also have some ideas about events I would like to do in Arizona in the fall when the weather is cooler, and to get together for a good old-fashioned Barber-shop hootenanny!

As we all know, the Spring Contests were cancelled so we were unable to have the AZ Division contest. I would however like to tell you about the person who was honored as the convention dedicatee: **Randy Bingel**.

A 30-year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society, Randy sang in five quartets, three Chapters, and achieved five Persons of Note. Randy had been a Chapter Treasurer, Chorus Manager, and Member-at-Large, was a founding member of the **Pride of Phoenix**, and was the Arizona Events Coordinator for eight years.

In the time that Randy served as the Arizona Events coordinator, the Arizona Division Convention became the Division that set the standard. The judges love coming here, and the contest administrators continually said just how well put together Randy's events were.

Randy was the kind of person to whom everyone gravitated. He demonstrated a quiet leadership. While some feel the need to always be the center of attention, Randy would come in, do the job, and let others shine. When you look at the record of Randy's leadership roles, they do not come close to what he had actually accomplished. Whenever or whatever needed to get done, Randy was there with a smile on his face ready to serve. He never said no, even when he

probably should have. Whether it was running registration for a Division or District Contest, being a show chairman for a Chapter show, or being the point person for Singing Valentines, Randy took it all on with a can-do attitude.

It is difficult to talk about Randy without including his family because when Randy was involved in something, his whole family participated. Randy's wife **Alisa**, and sons, **Jason** and **Josh**, could always be seen working, giving of themselves and their time, and never looking for recognition.

Randy was presented this award on March 21, 2020, by **David Melville** and myself. Randy was fighting terminal cancer, and we felt it was necessary that he know how much he was appreciated by everyone around him. Randy was called home on April 2, 2020. I miss him every day.

The summer meeting of the FWD BOD will be an online Zoom meeting. I am always willing to bring any of your ideas and comments to the Board, so please feel free to drop me an email a.kaufman@yahoo.com, or give me a call on my cell 516-770-3743.

Remember we know Barbershop is awesome, let's share it with the world!



Zoom! This seems to be one of those things that may very well change the way we do business as a result of the advent of COVID-19. Now, I'm aware that this method of group meetings through the Internet is not new, but many of us were still stuck in the conference room mode of engaging in business interaction.

It seems like the Coronavirus has presented us with some different ways to still accomplish the need for interacting in order to make sure we continue to network in all things Barbershop. For those of us north of sixty, this may still be a bit of a challenge. Even if using your desktop computer seems a bit daunting, you are no doubt adept enough to use a cell phone which can still connect you easily enough to a Zoom conference (or any other online meeting, for that matter).

In my contacts with the various Chapters in the Northeast Division, I'm discovering that most everyone is making the adjustment to such an electronic format. Just within my area of responsibility I have been attending Zoom meetings with both Choruses I sing with regularly: Golden Val-

ley Chorus (GVC), and Voices of California (VoCal). During the course of any week I am also engaged in meetings with other organizations I am affiliated with, all using this new meeting method.

The Chapter Presidents I have spoken with all say pretty much the same thing. Everyone in the Chorus is hunkered down at home, making the most out of mandatory home confinement. Some of our members are still amongst the gainfully employed who are also deemed "job essential," a term I find curious. If you work to provide for you and your loved ones, how could it ever be said your job is not essential? And don't let me get started on the group of Brainiacs who decide what is, and is not, essential! Sheesh!

I digress. Our Brothers and Sisters in Harmony throughout the NE Div seem to be hanging in there waiting for the all clear sign to once again venture into the world outside. No doubt, some will do so with a certain level of apprehension, such as COPD, asthma, heart disease, cancer, and so on. Some of us will boldly escape the confines of our domiciles, while others will refrain due to risk of either contracting the virus itself, or bringing it back home to a spouse or other loved one who may be more highly susceptible. Such decisions will, of necessity, be made by those most directly affected. Since our hobby is primarily made up of older folks, we may see a drop in our numbers, at least until this virus is deemed to be under control by the proper authorities.

You can bet that our Chapter leadership and Directors will want to hit the deck running once we've been given the green light. So, if you've taken these past two months as a break from the weekly grind of having to keep your voice and mind sharp, now is the time to get back in the swing of the weekly expectation of words and notes.

Above all else, please continue to take care of yourselves and your loved ones. We'll see you soon!

Editor note: Chuck felt the following article from VoCal President Tim Hunstinger should be included. So, here 'tis:

Voices of California (VoCal) was extremely excited for 2020 as it was marking our first decade as a Chorus. We entered the year with our most ambitious calendar to date: a tour of Europe planned after an invite was accepted to perform at the BABS (British Association of Barbershop Singers) convention in May; an International Contest invite; the beginning of the contest cycle; and our annual show. Most importantly to us, VoCal was invited to be part of two regional youth outreach events that would have introduced over 500 young men to our art form. All within the first seven months of the year!

VoCal spent the preceding 16 months fundraising, planning, and coordinating our efforts to tackle these milestones. It was truly inspiring to be part of this group and the work be-

hind the scenes in order to make everything possible. VoCal also welcomed our first ever exterior board member with the goal of focusing our efforts to the area schools and to help guide us in our communications with educators. And, we had the pleasure of welcoming a new Mixed Chorus into the Society as well under the California Delta Charter. It was all systems go!

Then we were introduced to a new challenge, one that did not care about the months of work, nor the excitement for the events ahead. It was to be, and has become, one of the most challenging situations in my lifetime. In a matter of weeks, we found ourselves coalesced as a Barbershop family ready to meet the goals we had set only to be forced apart with no clear timeline of when we can be together again. Then we watched helplessly as the events started to cancel. First our annual show, then the start of the contest cycle, Europe, International, and then the loss of the youth events. It has been deflating to say the least.

March 5 was the last rehearsal for VoCal. We wondered what the future would hold for our Chapter and how we were going to move forward. How were we going to stay connected? We were incredibly lucky in the previous year to have made the move to Slack. Most the members had made the transition to this communication platform. So, message delivery seemed to be checked off. Yet, how were we going to remain connected? How were we going to remain a family?

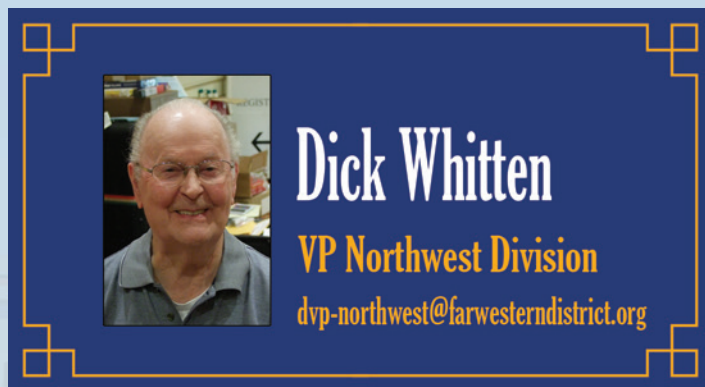
Once again, the spirit of Barbershoppers showed me why this is one of the most amazing societies on the planet. We watched as members that were never on the Slack platform appeared in our chat feeds. We started Zoom online meeting check-ins during the week just to stay in touch, and assure that everyone was o.k. Members started offering delivery services to each other and making sure we all had what we needed. The list goes on. While the music has been interrupted in some ways, the Family is STRONG!

The Society has done its part as well with increased social media presence, and free online Harmony University classes starting this week. Many of our elite Quartets have reached out with Facebook live events, virtual Quartet participation, and just keeping us in the loop as to how they are facing the challenges of staying home.

When we are able to get back to normalcy, we understand it is going to be a new normal. However, we are going to face these challenges the same as every Barbershopper has: with the goal of making music, being with our friends, and with harmony in our hearts.

Until that time - Stay well, Stay safe, and SING!

Tim Huntsinger, President, Voices of California



As I sat down to write my Westunes article this time I found myself thinking about what we were not doing. Because of the pandemic we are experiencing, most Chapters can't meet as they would be too large of a group. Most meeting places are no longer available anyway.

I belong to Chapters in both the Northwest and Northeast Divisions, so I know that many Chapters are holding virtual meetings every week using some form of electronic media. Either a Webex or a Zoom program is in use to hold these meetings. It isn't possible to make music together in these meetings because of the delays built into the speed of the machines used to transmit the information and a few other reasons. Some Chapters are sending tracks out to their members and asking them to record tracks while listening to the original, and then send them to someone in the Chapter to create one virtual Quartet or Chorus. This actually accomplishes a lot of good things. It allows each individual to hear where they need to work on things like blending with others or coloring their own interpretation to match the original track.

The other great thing about these weekly meetings is they allow the members to enjoy the camaraderie of others and the team of characters we all know and love. I was told a number of years ago that it is the MUSIC that draws us together, but I think it attracts people who share a lot in common and therefore we are very compatible. We all become good friends and enjoy one another's company. These media meetings allow that to happen for us and aid in our relaxation and enjoyment for an hour or two.

I am looking forward to the Fall Convention aboard the ship as a coming-out party and a rip-roaring festival of Barbershop music in all the places aboard the ship. We will experience our music and enjoy ourselves performing in pick-up Quartets, and I look forward to all of the contests and party atmosphere that we will have because of the time we have been away from singing.

"CHORD"ially,



I kinda took Mondays for granted...like the availability of toilet paper at the grocery store. I've been doing this Barbershop harmony thing for 45 years. Not to say I've done it all, but the experience has become sort of routine: Chapter Officer planning in January, Singing Valentines in February, a convention and contest in the Spring, maybe a sing-out or two, then the Fall show and Fall contest, and then it's the holidays and the many seasonal performances...and then we start again.

In the 82-year history of the BHS, there has never been anything like this. We've had several wars take our singers away, and we've seen the rise of various forms of distractions that compete for a singer's time. But a worldwide pandemic, with governmental orders to self-quarantine and avoid gatherings of people...! And with the recent meeting of choral minds combined with science, that seems to suggest we might not be able to sing together for one to two years!

Every day brings a new awareness of the seriousness of the situation. Like many of you, I was disappointed at the realization that we had to cancel the Spring Conventions and Contests and we probably should not meet that next Monday for Chorus rehearsal...in fact, no Monday meetings for the foreseeable future. We realized even the annual show, way out there in September, probably could not be staged with any probability of artistic or financial success. With sadness, that was cancelled.

So, while we cannot sing with each other in proximity, what can we do together? Most all our Chapters are embracing the latest in connective technology and having Zoom meet-

ings. (BTW, I found that webcams are the electronic equivalent of toilet paper. Took me two months to get one via Japan and eBay.).

Zoom meetings, usually held at regular meeting-night times, are great opportunities to check in with everyone, to be sure they are safe and healthy and dealing with the stresses of self-quarantine. At our **Rincon Beach** meetings, we always ask "Who has good news?" And in this way, we reaffirm that "life goes on" and look for glimmers of hope.

Some Chapters are singing. While the lag time in the available video meeting formats, does not allow us to all sing "together," some Chapters still have warmups, with the Director muting everyone and yet asking them to sing along.

Choruses are using their rehearsal time for weekly check-ins, happy hour, open mic night, educational classes, judging panel Q & A, viewing YouTube Barbershop videos, and some are finding ways to sing and work choreo. Reading the Harmonizer, it is amazing to see the creativity that has blossomed in this crisis.

Kathleen Hansen, the very talented Director of the **San Diego Chapter**, and **San Diego Women's Chorus** has a series of YouTube videos that is excellent. Go to KHansenMusic on YouTube and you'll see videos on producing free and easy sound, smart vocal warm-ups and why, tuning, overtones, and what are "cents." She has created a wonderful educational resource.

What other resources has your Chapter found? What is working for you? I'd like to know, and I will share...

Our Chapters are more than a bunch of people getting together to sing songs. Much more. We are a community of like-minded singers, who enjoy the personal interaction of other human beings, of smiles and reactions to conversations, and inquiries into each of our lives and genuine concern for each other. In this world of self-directed activities, it's so nice to take a break and be in active interface with other humans. And the ability to sing, to make music and express harmony with each other in song, is so incredibly special.

Maybe "normal" never comes back, and that remains to be seen. In the meantime, Chapters are to be commended on taking care of what's most essential: Our community. That is what keeps us coming back every week.

I have a new appreciation for every person in my Chapter and I so look forward to the time when we'll again be able to be together; to shake hands and hug and experience the wonderful joy of singing that brought us together, but more importantly, to experience the love of each other that keeps us together... I will no longer take that for granted.

Stay safe and healthy, and I can't wait to see you all again.





Scott Suwabe

Chorus Director Development
cdd@farwesterndistrict.org



Craig Hughes

Immediate Past President
pastpresident@farwesterndistrict.org

Hello from quarantine!!

I hope you are all doing well, please stay safe and healthy - I have heard that singing in a group is a surefire way for everyone to get sick, so please exercise patience and social distancing for your sake. We will all come back in the end and the harmonies will only be sweeter.

Plans for a Director's College are still in the works, possibly in conjunction with Harmony College West. It has been quite a while since something like this has happened in the Far Western District, and it is time to bring it back. Details are still in the works, though action plans have halted for obvious circumstances. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

For those Chapters struggling to find Directors, try to keep an open mind and contact your local collegiate music program for interested people. While we can say that we can always teach Barbershop to new people, it really needs to be experienced first to anchor it into their soul. Otherwise, bringing up from within is always a solid option due to the already inherent understanding of how you sing your repertoire inside of a member. There are plenty of resources online you can turn to, in order to familiarize yourself with directing your Chorus.

Thank you so much for all your patience, here's to seeing all of you out in the open!! Maybe on that cruise ship!



Greetings to all from my "shed" in Chula Vista.

I write this with love and concern for all. I hope you are doing well and ask that you let us know if there is anything we can do to support you during this unprecedented time.

I am blessed to be able to share my "isolation" with family. I am grateful but miss contact with my extended Barbershop family. Your friendship and support are constant and always there. Now that we are distanced it is still strong but different. Know that we continue to be a family and that I can't wait until we reunite.

I am singing daily and using all the digital tricks to harmonize and lock chords. I sing with my three Choruses and we have been "zooming". We haven't mastered the latency issue but singing to a track while muted is good exercise. I was on a Bass sectional for a digital choir called **The Collective** today. It is a group of 1500 singers putting together a video. The director, Simon, hosted today's session from his home in England with singers from the USA, Finland, Germany and Great Britain. It was great to share song with a wonderful group of singers. The world needs our harmony. Singing is my refuge and I continue to recommend it to my friends. I get amazing and heartwarming response when I post Barbershop on Facebook.

It was my pleasure to present the **2019 FWD Chapter of the Year** and the **2019 President's Awards** during our online House of Delegates Meeting in March. It was an honor to recognize The **Westminster Chapter** and our District Treasurer **Rich Owen** with these awards. The details are posted in this edition of Westunes. The fancy words don't begin to express the respect and gratitude I hold for these winners. The Far Western District is fortunate to have their ongoing commitment to expressing and supporting the passion for Harmony that makes us the best in the Society.

Please use this unique time to sing when you can, hug who you can and take care so, when we get back together, we can all join in song.

It is truly "Great to be a Barbershopper!"

Keep the Whole World Singing.

It is my honor as your 2019 District President to present the 2019 District Chapter of the Year Award. A chapter from each division was nominated for this prestigious Award.

Here are the nominees:

Division 1 – Southwest	Santa Fe Springs Chapter	Masters of Harmony
Division 2 – Southeast	Westminster Chapter	Westminster Chorus
Division 3 – Northwest	Palo Alto/Mountain View Chapter	Peninsulaires
Division 4 – Northeast	Fresno Chapter	Gold Note Chorus
Division 5 – Arizona	Sedona Chapter	Harmony on the Rocks

All five were outstanding in 2019 and very worthy of recognition but there can only be one District Chapter of the Year.

2019 Far Western District Chapter of the Year Westminster



The Westminster Chorus was founded as a “youth chorus” and, while that demographic continues, they have matured into an exceptional Barbershop Chapter with leadership and generosity that is of the highest standard. Their vision is externally focused and sets the example for other chapters.

The Westminster Chorus is an extraordinary ensemble that sings at the highest level and encourages youth around the world through their outreach and online presence. They are the BHS International Chorus Champions posting a record 97.9 average score. They were featured performers at the ACDA National Conference and the ACDA Western Division Conference. They hosted and provided leadership for the Southern California Vocal Association Close Harmony Festival. They laid the groundwork for their new mixed chorus placing them on the front line of Everyone in Harmony.

Presented in appreciation by Craig Hughes, Far Western District President
March 2020 – Torrance, California

Craig Hughes
2019 Far Western District President

It is an honor for the District President to recognize individuals for service “above and beyond” their normal duties with a President’s Award.

2019 Far Western President’s Award
Rich Owen



The Association of the Far Western District Chapters of the Barbershop Harmony Society hereby confers on **Rich Owen** the 2019 President's Award for his untiring service to the Far Western District where, as District Treasurer, the streamlined processes and procedures he implemented have greatly enhanced and stabilized control of District finances. His thorough attention to detail and meticulous oversight is mirrored in his contributions to the Bakersfield and Santa Fe Springs chapters where he is a highly respected member.

Presented in appreciation by Craig Hughes, Far Western District President
March 2020 – Torrance, California

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig B. Hughes".

Craig Hughes
2019 Far Western District President



Membership During a Global Lockdown

I am sure it will come as no surprise when I tell you that the FWD, BHS, and vocal music all over the world are experiencing possibly the biggest challenge we have ever faced. Being a group-singing-focused organization that cannot get together as a group and cannot sing for audiences. So, the big question, what do we do? Our options are limited, and yet unlimited at the same time. I have heard many people say things like “I joined for the harmony, but I stayed for the brotherhood.” The importance of the spirit of this statement has never been more critical. So, let’s talk about membership as it pertains to a sense of community.

How do we maintain our community when we cannot sing together safely? That depends on each Chapter. A great tool currently is virtual meeting spaces like Zoom, Skype, and Google Hangouts. These tools allow us to meet “face to face”, have conversations, and generally hang out with each other. Things like mass email threads and Facebook groups can help us stay in touch and have ongoing conversations, and I highly encourage Choruses to use these tools. However, the virtual meetings, in my recent experience since this all started, have been the biggest impact. So, let us talk about what impact virtual meetings can have on your Chapter.

The first advantage I have noticed is “routine”. Keeping your meeting time, having members show up consistently helps to keep people engaged and in the mindset that their rehearsal night did not just “free up”. Part of membership, numbers-wise, is retention! We want to retain members and keep them coming back through the lockdown, and into the time when we can safely sing in person again. It is even possible to invite guests and potential members to the virtual meetings. Allowing them into our culture, and hopefully getting them interested in eventual membership.

The second big advantage, an obvious one, is keeping the leadership engaged with the Chorus. It is easier to speak to your members and convey information if you can “look them in the face” and have a conversation. Having weekly updates, talking about the world, giving members a chance to talk to each other, and see how everyone is doing, are all good ways to maintain the feeling of community. After the “agenda” is done, let your members hang out like a virtual afterglow. We want to have as much fun as possible during this time since that is the reason we all keep coming back.

Thirdly, there is a chance to continue the music learning in the Chapter, but this one can be a bit tricky. Working on music remotely relies heavily on the members. As a Chapter, they must be given the tools to succeed. Quality learning materials, communication with section leaders, and work ethic from the singers are all key. My far better half sings with the Harborlites, a Sweet Adelines Chorus, and at the time of writing this, they have an international competition to get ready for in the fall. They have adopted a process of breaking off into virtual sectionals and going over the learning track and music with their section leaders. While they can’t actually sing “together”, they sing along with the approved learning track, played by the section leader to the group, ask questions, and then record themselves so the section leaders can work with the members. This is just one example of ways to keep a “rehearsal” mindset during the lockdown.

One last opportunity with virtual meetings I can immediately identify is to better ourselves as musicians and as members of the BHS. The Masters of Harmony has been putting out vocal technique aides, music theory tools, and other forms of learning to help to make our members better vocalists and musicians. This is done via emails, and then the members all come together for a virtual Chapter meeting where we have a chance to talk about what we learned, our thoughts, and for the leadership to expand on the lessons. The Westminster Chorus has been going through a history of Barbershop music with Justin Miller, including video examples of Quartets and Choruses through the years that have shaped the sound of Barbershop since the beginning of the Society. This past week we were honored to have Jim Henry join us as a guest speaker for a Q and A, where he talked about his Quartet background, and the origins and culture of the Ambassadors of Harmony.

Overall, I cannot stress enough the importance of maintaining a sense of community. The more active we are through this downtime, the better off your Chapter, the District, and the Society will be on the other side of all this. If you need help getting started with virtual meetings or want to talk about what to do with your ongoing meetings, please reach out to me or the other District Officers so we can assist. Thanks for reading this far, and I look forward to hearing from you and your Chapter.



Kenny Rios

Youth in Harmony

yih@farwesterndistrict.org



Dan Jordan

District Historian

historian@farwesterndistrict.org

Summer is upon us and so a “new” way of doing business for all Chapters throughout our Barbershop Harmony Society. For many of us, we discovered that we can still “see” each other as often as we like or even conduct modified, weekly meetings using video conferencing programs such as “Zoom.” Now is the time to take advantage of modern technology to keep your Chapter alive! What does this have to do with Youth in Harmony? Well...

Now is the time to involve the younger members of your Chapter. Most of them have a better skill set of the use of computers than older members...Take advantage of it!! If you are an “older” member of the Chapter, reach out to those younger persons in your Chorus! You don’t have to be a Chapter Officer to reach out to other members of the Chapter. With most schools using online teaching methods, see if any of your younger members will help the Chapter with a similar online method. Right now, inclusion is everything. And if you are a younger member of your Chapter reading this message, ask yourself, “How am I helping my Chapter at a time when they probably need me most?” Contact someone on your Chapter Board of Directors and offer your skills to your Chapter. You’d be surprised at how much your Chapter can use your help.

As we roll into summer, I still have the belief that we can fully support our Youth Programs well into next year. A careful look into how we, as a Barbershop Chapter, can contribute to our local school’s upcoming school year and music program will be an opportunity never experienced in our history. We need to think about how we can take part in the unique opportunity of helping our schools and youth move forward. I plan on meeting with some educators to discuss the idea and how we, as Chapters, can assist with the recovery process throughout the Far Western District. Do you have an idea or suggestion? If you do, just send me an email and let’s talk!

I am hoping that everyone is staying safe during these difficult times. Spring cleaning is a perfect time to donate some items to my Traveling Museum.

I’ve read a lot of stories about many folks sorting, cleaning, scrapbooking and donating things. It got me to thinking about all those collectibles that should be on display....not forgotten or buried away until they get lost or tossed.

PLEASE DONATE ITEMS TO THE TONSORIAL PARLOR REMINISCENCE SOCIETY...TODAY!

- Medals
- Lapel Pins
- Tie Tacks
- Trophies
- Rings
- Buttons/Ribbons
- Costumes
- Photographs
- Posters
- Show Programs
- Magazines
- Name Badges
- Audio & Video Recordings

A FEW REFERENCE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE ATTACHED.

Please contact me via Instant Messenger or via Email: dan-jordan1234productions@gmail.com to coordinate your shipment.

The Traveling Museum contains many unique items from my personal collection.

Your items will help others to learn and enjoy those individuals, Quartets and Choruses that paved the way for all of us.

If you have any questions, simply drop me a note and together we’ll coordinate the shipment.

Stay safe. Keep music alive.

Help Preserve these many treasures. Save me a tag.





The VELVET FROGS are an entertaining vaudeville barbershop quartet. We love singing the songs and doing the routines your audience eagerly anticipates, and we are proud to “look the part”.

We'd jump for joy to be on your show, and we will have your audience hoppin' in the aisles with our croakin' !

Contact CJ (our baritoad) at 562-425-2924 or email your request for information to: mcjsams@verizon.net

Visit us on Facebook at:
<https://www.facebook.com/velvetfrogs/>
We hope you will “like” us !



See some
of our
Velvet Frog
antics on
YOUTUBE

**Far Western District Senior
Quartet Champions**

**2-time International Senior
Medalists**

**Voted “audience favorite” at
past 5 district contests**

**“Top Performer” with
booking agency GIG SALAD**



Panning in on Zoom



I've had several people enquire about Zoom, so thought that would make for a nice, timely topic. If you are not familiar with Zoom and would like to enjoy time with your singing friends while still remaining safe at home, this article is for you. If you are already using Zoom, this article

is still for you, because I've discovered a few little-known features that might be quite beneficial to extend your online meeting possibilities.

Zoom is one of the leading video conferencing platforms, and it is the service that BHS, the FWD, and many chapters are using to hold online meetings and even rehearsals. The best part about Zoom is that in most cases it is totally free. You can host an infinite number of meetings with as many as 100 people; one caveat is that a meeting having greater than two people is limited to 45 minutes unless the person hosting the meeting has a paid subscription. So, what many chapters are doing is having one person with a paid subscription designated to set up and host the meetings, and all the other members can participate with free accounts.

In order to use Zoom you will need either a PC or Mac computer, a tablet, or a Smartphone. If you will be using Zoom with others nearby it is best to use either a headset or ear pods. While a webcam is not necessary it will certainly improve the experience for everyone attending the video conference – even if you haven't shaved in two months and desperately need a haircut. It should be noted that some features are not available on tablets or smartphones -- particularly Android – but none that would preclude their use.

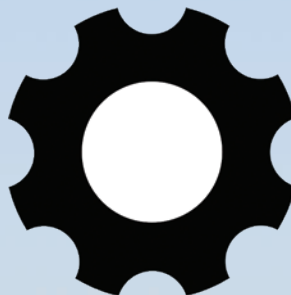
Getting started

1. Follow this link: <https://zoom.us/support/download> On your computer (Mac/PC) it will automatically start downloading the program, or it will provide

you with the correct link for your mobile device.

2. Follow the prompts and install the app.
3. Register with your email address or using Facebook or Google.

Setting up



Open the Zoom app by clicking its icon, a white video camera against a light blue background.

After signing in, go to the Settings/Preferences in the top right corner of your initial screen. It looks like a little cog wheel (which has become the universal standard for Settings) and only

appears on the Home screen. There are a number of options to set up prior to starting your first meeting.

General – these are settings to customize some of the basic application features.

Video – this allows you to set and adjust your camera.

Audio – use this to select your microphone and speakers and to test and adjust the volume levels.

Chat – various settings to customize the chat windows to your liking.

Virtual Background – this is entirely optional, but you can have some fun making it look like you are at the beach or anywhere but your home office; you can even use your own photos.

Recording – these are some of the options in case you want to record your meeting.

Profile – This is where you can set your name and a picture of yourself – preferably a headshot. As an added benefit, your profile picture will display in your box when your video (camera) is turned off.

Keyboard Shortcuts – while you can edit many of these settings, they are probably best left alone, so just treat this as documentation and learn how you can tap a few keys instead of using your mouse/trackpad to get some things done.

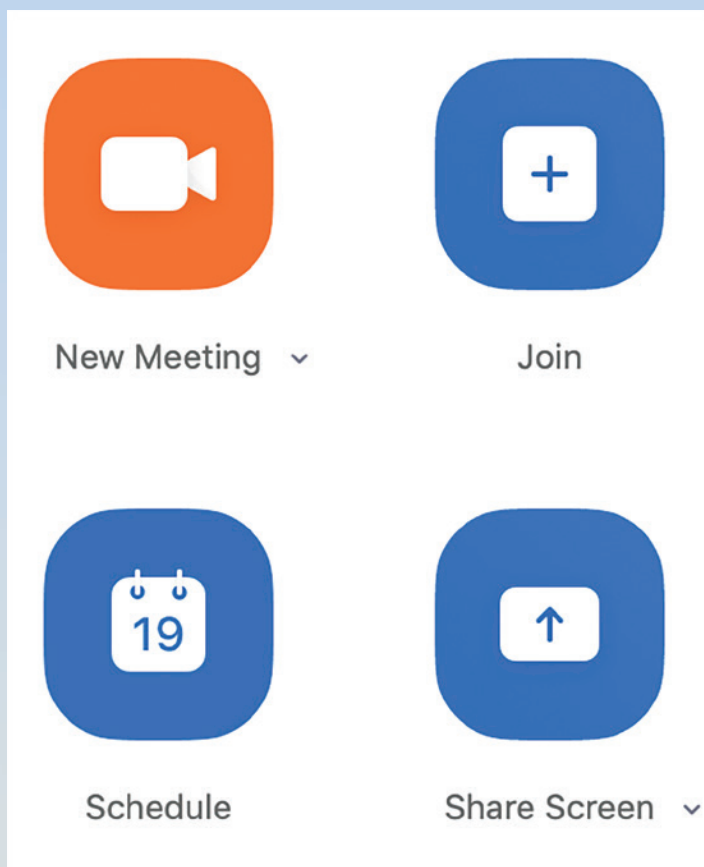
Accessibility – you'll find settings for Closed Captioning as well as text size here.

Home



There are four main functions in the Home screen: New Meeting, Join, Schedule, and Share Screen. Note that New Meeting and Share Screen both have a little down arrow next to the caption; those arrows indicate additional options are available by using

right-click/two-finger-tap.



New Meeting – initiates an “instant” meeting. Options include starting with video on, and using your personal meeting ID rather than one that is randomly generated.

Join – allows you to join a meeting to which you have been invited.

Schedule – allows you to schedule meetings in advance and send the meeting information to those who should attend.

Share screen – this is one way to initiate the sharing of your computer screen which could be the entire screen or a specific program window. One important option that comes into play if you are sharing something that itself has audio, e.g., an audio or video clip, is the ability for Zoom to use the computer sound directly rather than having it come through your microphone.

Contacts



To manage your contacts, click on the fourth icon at the top of the Zoom app which says ‘Contacts’.

Click on the plus sign and select ‘Add a contact’. Once you have your contacts set up you can click on their name to start a chat or meeting.

Create a Channel – Channels can be used to place your contacts into one or more groups, and you can use groups to easily start a group chat or group

meeting. Channels can be public or private.

Join a Channel – use this to join channels that others in your organization have set up.

Add an App – there are hundreds of applications that can be integrated with Zoom to further enhance your meeting capabilities. One such application is Trello which can be very useful for running your chapter board and committee meetings like clockwork. The best thing to do is explore and see what’s out there.

Chat



Zoom provides a chat feature that can be used during video meetings, but it also has chat capabilities that are independent of meetings. The latter can be initiated by clicking the second icon at the top of the Zoom window which says “Chat”.

It can be used to send messages and files to contacts or groups. You’ll want to spend a little time building your contacts before using this feature.

Meetings



The third icon at the top of the Zoom window is ‘Meetings’. This lists all of your upcoming and recorded meetings. If you are the host, you may edit the meeting options, copy the invitation to send to others, and start the meeting at the appointed time.

There is one additional option called ‘Join from a Room’. Most likely this is something you will not use unless you are in a physical conference room that is set up for Zoom Rooms, so for the most part you can just ignore it.

Security

There are several things you can do to ensure privacy and safety during your Zoom meeting. These are all controlled when you schedule your meeting.

Meeting ID and Password – by default Zoom will generate a unique message id and password to protect your privacy. If you prefer to use your own personal ID or not require a password you can disable these options as you set up the meeting.

The other security options are all hidden, and can be revealed by clicking the little down arrow under ‘Advanced Options’.

Waiting Room – when enabled, your meeting participants will automatically be placed in a waiting room. This gives you, as host, the option to select which person

you want to admit. From a security standpoint I can see where this gives an added layer, but in practical use I find it annoying and so disable it regularly. By the way, if you forget to disable it when you set up the meeting you can disable while the meeting is in session by clicking 'Safety'.

Enable join before host – allows others to join the meeting before you do. Since a meeting can run up to 24 hours it's not like the meter is running, so unless that bothers you I suggest setting that option to enabled.

Only authenticated users can join – this requires all participants to have registered for and be logged into their Zoom account before they are allowed to join. The way I see it, a hacker can create a Zoom account just as easily as you can, so I'm not sure what this buys you, so I suggest it be disabled.

Alternative Hosts

When scheduling a meeting it is possible to designate by email address one or more people who can host the meeting on your behalf. While this sounds great, the reality is that those persons need to have paid Zoom subscriptions. Although that's a bit of a bummer, it does not mean that you, the designated host, need to be at every single meeting. The workaround is to have the alternate host join the meeting with you a couple minutes early, select them from participants, right-click and choose 'Make Host'. Once that completes you may leave the meeting and let the alternative host take over.

In a Zoom Meeting

When you are in a Zoom meeting a control board appears at the bottom of the screen. If you are the host you will have more options than do the regular participants. The buttons are (left to right):

Mute – disables/enables your audio (microphone).

Stop Video – disables/enables video (camera).

Security – disables/enables various options participants have during a meeting (host only).

Participants – lists participants (host can manage).

Chat – opens a message box to send private or public (everyone) messages

Share Screen – introduces various options to display information from your device to the other people in the meeting. A reminder that if you are presenting anything with sound playback, during the share screen dialog be sure to check the box for 'Share computer sound' in the lower left corner of the screen. Other sharing options include a **Whiteboard** and sharing your iPhone/iPad via Airplay or by cable connection.

Record – initiates recording of the meeting. While this is typically done by the host and shared later in the cloud, visitors may also record, but can only store the file on their own device.

Breakout rooms – this allows the host to divide participants into multiple mini-meetings while still having the main meeting in session. Hey music team: that sounds like sectionals to me!

Reactions – places a thumbs up or applause emoticon on the meeting window to display for a few seconds.

Zoom in vivo



The cover for this issue of *Westunes* was created from screen shots taken while attending a weekly Zoom meeting held by the Masters of Harmony.

Conclusion

As usual, I've given you a lot to digest. But really the best way to develop expertise on using Zoom is to roll up your sleeves and dig in. Please keep in mind that Zoom, like most good software, is constantly evolving, so what I've described here may be a little different in the future.

If you still want to learn more about Zoom and all its potential, here are a couple of links.

Zoom support during the COVID-19 pandemic – more tips, training and resources. <https://us02web.zoom.us/docs/en-us/covid19.html>

Virtual meeting equipment – a small investment to improve virtual meeting quality for you and others <https://www.johnarthurbbooks.com/virtual-meeting-equipment/>



Central Arizona Quartet Chapter by Bill Kane

The **Arizona Quarter Chapter** had a dress rehearsal performance in late February for the show we'll be doing with a commission for public performing arts that the City of Phoenix has awarded us. The performances are now on hold, of course, until we all end social distancing. The show consists of a parade of up to a dozen different Quartets, singing popular songs of the 20th Century, from old classics of the early 1900s such as *Wait Till The Sun Shines Nellie*, to hits from the 60s such as Ricky Nelson's *Hello Mary Lou* to more recent music such as Eric Clapton's *Change the World*.

The Chapter's other major project in 2020 will be to perform at our FWD Fall Contest on the cruise. Since we will be singing a couple of the 2020 Platoon songs, we are inviting anyone part of the Platoon to join the Chapter and compete. Our most recent meeting was on Zoom to introduce a couple of new out-of-state members to the Chapter, **Dennis Brannon** from Georgia who is joining member **Ken Brannon** on the cruise Platoon, and California's **Logan Patrick-Miernicki** who will be directing the Chapter Chorus on the cruise. Several of our nine registered Chapter Quartets are also planning on competing at the FWD Fall Contest as well.

Greater Phoenix Chapter by Jerry McElfresh

The **Phoenicians** started off the quarter with a successful Cabaret Dinner show where we served up great food, music and fun for an enthusiastic audience. The menu included a fine Italian dinner prepared by Chef **Jay Bartley** and served by the **Phoenicians Singing Waiters**, and a full music program featuring the Chorus and several of our Quartets with music to brighten the day for our audience. That dinner show went so well that we planned a second one late in March at another venue, but the statewide shutdown forced us to postpone until the all-clear is sounded.

The position of Chapter Secretary was filled by **Eric Hertzfeld** after the previous office holder had to resign due to health reasons. Sadly, the Chorus had to suspend its weekly meetings in March, but the guys are looking forward to getting back together and performing for Phoenix-area audiences as soon as we are able.

Mesa Chapter by John Soper

The **East Valley Barbershop Harmonizers** completed another successful quarter, highlighted by our Annual Show *One Song at a Time*, held at Apache Junction High School auditorium on March 8, 2020, with about 500 guests in attendance. The show

featured the Harmonizer Chorus and two International Quartet Champions, **Masterpiece** and **High Priority**.

In support of Arizona's stay at home order associated with COVID-19, the Mesa Chapter ceased face-to-face rehearsals in March and began virtual online rehearsals via Zoom, allowing us to continue moving forward with our Chorus mission. New music for at-home learning has been introduced and members have been participating in weekly virtual tag contests. This is accomplished by introducing new tags each week. Members are provided with a recording of the Lead part of the tag, then asked to record and submit their own corresponding part, following the rhythm and interpretation of the Lead track. Director **Russ Young** then combines these into virtual quartet recordings that are presented to the Chorus the following week for evaluation, discussion, and selection of the weekly virtual quartet winner based on online polling.

We'd like to welcome new member **Brian Kelly**, who is new to Barbershop singing. He has a beautiful Lead voice and we are thrilled to have him with the Harmonizers.

We also say goodbye to long-time member **Randy Bingel**, who was called home to the **Chapter Eternal** on Thursday, April 2, 2020. Randy was a 30-year member of the Barbershop Harmony Society and a 24-year member of the

Mesa Chapter. In addition to singing with the **Lamplighters** and Harmonizers, he participated in several Quartets over the years, including **Hallmark, Brothers in Harmony**, and the 2018 Far Western District novice champions **Saucebox**. He also served as a Society Contest and Judging Administrator from 2011-2016, and served on the Mesa Chapter Board during 2019.

Once we return to singing as the COVID-19 pandemic subsides, we invite you to join us Thursday evenings from 7:00-10:00pm at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 322 N. Horne, Mesa, AZ 85203. You also are welcome to join us online until then. For more information, visit our website at <http://evBarbershop.com>

Prescott Chapter by Sam Stimple

It started with a party! The second Thursday of January is annually reserved for the Prescott Chapter **High Mountain Chordsmen** Installation of Officers and Award Ceremony. Nearly 40 members and guests met at Gabby's Grill in Prescott Valley. Following a delicious meal and formalities, the Chorus and several Quartets provided almost an hour of entertainment that could be heard in every corner of the restaurant. Suddenly a voice by the front door boomed, "There is at least three inches of slippery snow outside, and it's still coming down! We quickly sang a good-bye song while putting on our heavy coats, gave and received hugs, then searched for our cars in the parking lot. What a party!

Weekly rehearsals began in earnest to prepare for the upcoming show in late March. However, Chapter meetings were abruptly suspended and the March Show was cancelled due to the nation's new dilemma with coronavirus. To keep members from experi-

encing Barbershop withdrawal, Chorus Director Ed Roush is gifting the membership with daily Barbershop history lessons, tags, and jokes via email. Your Prescott Chapter is biding its time until the country is on the road to recovery. Meanwhile, we're keeping a song in our hearts by singing along with our CDs and DVDs.

Salt River Valley Chapter by Eric Bjornsen

A Cappella Syndicate got to catch its breath briefly, after a busy December holiday schedule. After a January gig at a private resort community in Scottsdale, the big Winter event was *A Cappella Del Sol*, a music festival hosted by A Cappella Syndicate in February. Several a cappella groups from around the valley attended and competed for cash prizes and bragging rights, including a group from Arizona State University, and the winning group, **C'est La Vie** Quartet. After the contest portion, the audience was treated to performances from the Syndicate, and **Vocalocity** Quartet. Overall the event was well received, and Syndicate leadership is making plans for its next festival, possibly to be held later next year.

In March, the Syndicate geared its rehearsals (and extra rehearsals) around the International competition in July. We also did a free lunchtime concert for Orangewood Presbyterian Church, who provided us with an affordable rehearsal location in their fellowship hall. Once the pandemic hit, our regular meetings shifted to online Zoom meetings, which have kept us in touch with one another, although everyone is eager to start singing together again soon.

White Mountains Chapter by Everett Peterson

The **High Country Barbershop Chorus** cancelled our July 11 Show at Blue Ridge High School Auditorium. We're planning to schedule the show *Broadway and the Big Screen - Barbershop Style* next July. We hope to have our ninth Christmas in the Pines Show in December, featuring our local high school choirs. We support these choirs financially by dividing the free-will door donations with the participating choirs. The High Country Barbershoppers are running a half page "We'll Be Back" ad in our local White Mountain Independent special magazine devoted to supporting our local health care, EMS workers, and police departments. Our three Vice Presidents and I participated in the Division 5 Meeting with DVP **Adam Kaufman** on Sunday, April 26, listening to other Arizona Chorus leaders and sharing ideas on coping with our current circumstances.





Northeast Division

Roger Perkins • Division Editor



California Delta Chapter by Blair Reynolds

When **Voices of California** unexpectedly received an invitation to compete at the Society's 2020 International Contest in Los Angeles, we thought how great it would be to create a gold medal moment for others as well, to share this opportunity with everyone who wanted it. After all, while most Barbershoppers dream of competing onstage at an International contest, not all that many actually realize that dream. So VoCal reached out and let it be known that *anyone* who wanted to join us onstage in Los Angeles could do so if they were willing to commit 100% to learning our contest songs at home and coming to a specified number of mass rehearsals. Wow!! The response was incredible!

A total of 63 men, not currently active in VoCal, answered the call. They came from all over, from our local Sacramento Area communities to as far away as West Virginia. They were returning VoCal alumni, members of other Chapters, and even men who had never before sung Barbershop. When combined with existing VoCal members who committed to be there, we would have put over 100 men onstage in Los Angeles.

We only had one mass rehearsal on February 29 before everything got shut down due to COVID-19. But what a sound was coming off the risers by the end of the day! Again, WOW!

This was never intended to be a membership drive. Some of these men

may continue their membership in Voices of California, many will not. It doesn't matter. They are ALL now members of the VoCal family and will be forevermore.

Central California Chapter by Miles Sutter

What a marvelous evening of entertainment, delicious food and fellowship at our installation dinner! The festivities began with the welcome and introduction by our president, **Roe Darnell**, followed by "THE OLD SONGS" and the Invocation by Roe. The usual awards ceremony followed: 2019 Director's Award, - **Dave Wallace** presented by **Zach Stillman**. 2019 Presidents Award - **Dave Fuentes** presented by **Roe Darnell**. 2019 GVC Shining Star Award - **Sharon DeMers** presented by **Cece Verner**. 2019 BOTY Award - **Roe Darnell**, presented by **Grady Williams**. The Installation was performed by **DVP NE Chuck Roots**. The evening's festivities ended with our Director Zach Stillman directing, "KEEP THE WHOLE WORLD SINGING".

The Novice Contest for the Northern California and Bay Area was held Feb 22 at the Centenary Church in Modesto. Six Quartets entered in the competition – four male groups and two mixed groups - plus the Mic Testers. **Richard** and **Patsy Lund** handled the logistics of setting up the competition. **Bill Cale** was the MC. It was good to see Bill back doing something with Barbershop. GVC was represented by a new Quartet **Good Neighbors [Roe Darnell, Greg Demers, David Fuentez, Marc Jantzen]**. This was their first pub-

lic appearance. The winner of the male competition was **Fourward Motion** from the Mountain View area. One of the members formerly sang with GVC, **Alex Driggers**. The winner of the Mixed Quartet competition was **Royal Flush** from the Stockton Portsman. Royal Flush will be singing with GVC at both of our Ice Cream Socials.

Nevada Placer Chapter by Roger Perkins

I'm sorry to say that when the coronavirus first started in California the Sierranaders Chorus was unable to get together for practice. We meet at a senior residence and it was immediately locked down as were all the other senior residences. We are looking forward to the Chorus singing again when this terrible COVID-19 is under control.


Stockton Chapter by Sue Atkins

Our **BOTY** for 2019 was **Joan Ray**. She is an 11-year member, a good singer and hard worker. Thanks, Joan.

Richard Lund submitted this information in the Stockton newsletter:

Six Quartets participated in the 2020 Novice Contest held at Centenary Church in Modesto February 22. The winner of the Men's Quartet Contest was **Fourward Motion** representing the Palo Alto – Mountain View Chapter. The winner of the Mixed Quartet Contest was **Royal Flush** representing the Stockton Chapter. The six participating Quartets represented seven Chapters. Contest administrators were **Chuck Hunter, Sr.** and **Ben Porter**.

Judges were **Paul Engel, Mike Cating** and **Jamie Bedford**. Golden Valley Chorus members provided the stellar manpower needed to put on such an event. Following the Contest an after-glow was held at the church with Quartets singing in addition to tag singing.



ROB MENAKER
TREVOR WAY
ERIC BJORNSEN
DAN DAVENPORT

480.259.6633

VOCALOCITYQUARTET@GMAIL.COM




Northwest Division

Don Shively • Division Editor

San Mateo Chapter by Tom Addison

Before sheltering in place, the **Fault-line A Cappella Chorus** had a successful Valentine's season delivering 55 Valentines to many happy recipients. **The Sound Judgment Quartet** supplemented by **Lance Mangano** at Bass and **Ed Sterbenc** at Lead delivered the majority of the sing-outs throughout

San Francisco and the Peninsula.

In place of our weekly Chapter meetings we hold a 7:15 Zoom meeting of Chapter members giving them a chance to share stories and coping mechanisms as we all shelter in place during this COVID 19 pandemic. A number of Chorus members have created individual part tapes of our new show songs, which are being assem-

bled into four-part harmony by our Director **Mark Fish**. Whether this will be successful or not remains to be seen! Not certain of when we will be able to get together again, we remain hopeful that singing and ringing chords will soon return to our little Chorus.

We hope that all of our Barbershop brothers remain safe and secure during these scary times.



Southeast Division

OPEN • Division Editor

If you are interested in becoming the Southeast Division Editor for Westunes, please email Westunes Editor Ray Rhymer at westuneseditor@farwesterndistrict.org or call me at 916-791-2134 to chat. It's an opportunity to donate a little time back to the FWD on behalf of your Southeast Division members and chapters. The task is not difficult, but does require a commitment 4 times a year in late Jan, Apr, Jul, & Oct.



Southwest Division

Justin McQueen • Division Editor



Rincon Beach Chapter by Steve Herman

Nothing puts a damper on “good close Harmony” like a six-foot social distancing rule. A Quartet in an open field with each masked member 6 feet apart and individually facing north, east, south and west just aint gonna cut it. Almost makes you want to drink fish tank cleaning fluid. (The aforementioned was an attempt at political humor. Do NOT do this.) So, please, take a moment to put your very best pirate hat on and let loose with a big AAR-RGGHH!!! That’s all the complaining you get to do because it’s time to endeavor to persevere through this mess because, after all, we are Barbershoppers; purveyors of perpetuating positivity in the world through the sharing of our harmonious music!

Utilizing the magic of Zoom, we at Pacific Sound Chorus are continuing to “rehearse” on Monday nights. Other new world technologies are also being implemented to record, send, and even combine voices. This particular child of the fifties is challenged by all this, but I am learning and participating, nonetheless.

This, by the way, is my first effort as the new Chorus jester, I mean digester, as I attempt to fill the ample shoes of the renowned **Bill Chase**, a long time Chorus member, who with his wife, Burma, are moving to North Carolina. They will indeed be sorely missed and we all wish them the very best. As I suffer from a mild form of lesdyxia, when I first saw this fact in print I read it that Bill and his wife Carolina were moving

to Burma. My muse is way out of control.

Pacific Sound presently has three guests who are in the process of becoming full-fledged members. I would warn each of them to give careful consideration as to what to put down as their nickname on the application form. I only mention this because I am now and will forever be listed as The Hermanator on all my official Barbershop documents. I am not making this up. Before this virus crept into our lives, the Chorus and one of our Quartets, Modern Nostalgia, were furiously preparing for the contest in Torrance, California.

Some of the more creative minds in our Chorus came up with the idea of putting together a musical play based on the story of an elderly gentleman cleaning out his attic with his friends. It will of course be wondrously cluttered (get it?) with four-part harmony. We were planning for a September 12 show, but due to the completely unrelated and juxtaposed occurrences of a virus and a baby, we have made the difficult decision to move the show, featuring the Quartet Crossroads, to Sept 18, 2021. If we put it on U-tube I’m sure it will go viral. ARGH!

We have registered for the cruise in October and will be competing. We are still planning our annual holiday season schedule including a ticketed show in Ventura, California on Sunday December 13.

And last but certainly not least, our lovely and talented Director, **Courtney Anderson Georges**, and husband

Bobby Georges, Lead Section Leader, Chorus videographer and all-around Mr. Gadget, are expecting a bouncing, and no doubt musically talented baby girl in early September. God-speed and congrats to all, including Grandpa Brent.

San Fernando Valley Chapter by Ben Marder

In just one month all our lives have been drastically changed due to the Covid-19 Virus Pandemic.

For the past three weeks the Valley Harmony Singers Mixed Chorus has conducted our Monday rehearsals on Virtual Zoom. Virtual Rehearsals on Zoom are a wonderful way for all of us to see and converse with one another without being in the same room. This is next best thing for retention at this time.

We learned early on that you can’t sing 4-part harmony on Zoom because of the delay. Therefore, our music team under the direction of **Tom Raffety** (Chorus Director) had to get creative.

First, we discussed what the lyrics meant to each person. Tom, a former Far Western District Presentation Judge had the Chorus lip sync to one of our new songs so he could observe our facial expressions as we were singing. The Chorus members were also able to watch each other perform. This is one thing we are not able to do while sitting in our chairs at St. Mark’s Church.

We also were able to conduct the Music Team and our Board Meeting on Zoom.

It's good to be living in the age of technology. Facetime is also a wonderful way to connect to family and friends. Just before we received the Stay at Home order the Valley Harmony Singers were preparing for our Spring Fling Ice Cream Social *The Lovely Month of May*. We were also learning nine new songs for our Fall Show on December 12, 2020. Then everything changed.

It is with deep sympathy that I announce the recent passing of one of our newest and talented Baritones, **Sean Goodman**. Sean also sang with the San Fernando Chorale. Sean did not recover after a bad fall where he sustained a fatal injury. Sean was laid to rest at Mount Sinai Memorial Park in Simi, CA. Sean will be dearly missed by family and friends who knew, loved, and cared about him.

All of us are trying to listen to the experts and make the best of this unbelievable tragic pandemic we never dreamed would happen. For all our seniors who are retired we are used to being at home. For the younger people who have lost their livelihoods, this is tragic. We all owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to all the nurses, doctors, first responders and everyone who are still working to serve and eradicate this pandemic. Let's all keep singing and praying for one another.

South Bay Chapter by Barry Waite

Hey, let's put on a play! We can use my dad's barn, and your mom can make the costumes!

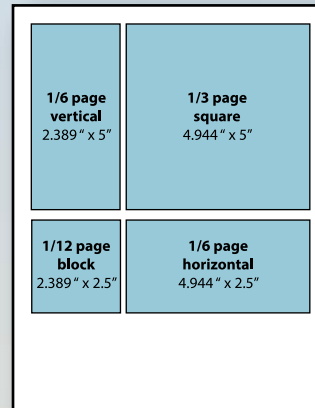
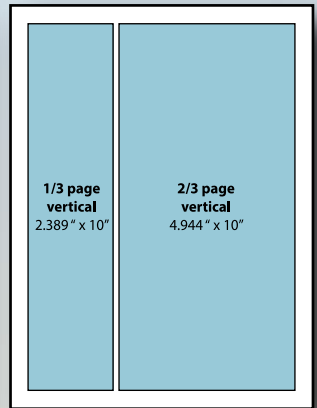
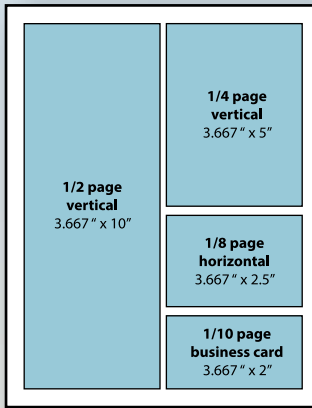
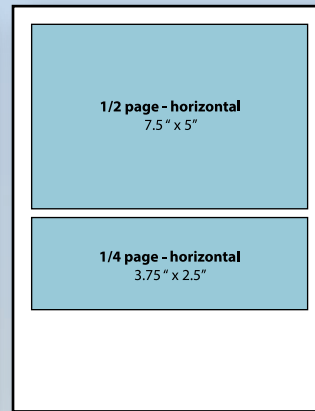
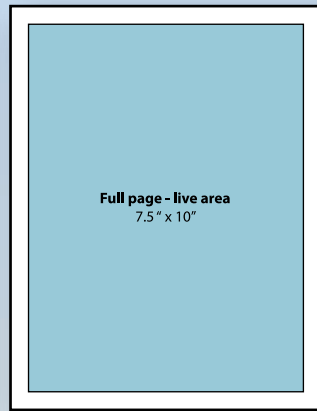
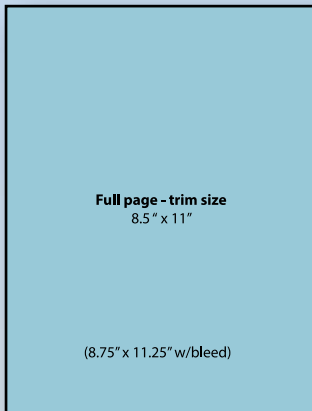
That's what the kids from "Our Gang" used to do, and we think it's a great idea. The Coastliners do a big show every year that is a mixture of melodrama, romantic comedy, Barbershop (occasionally with risers), band concert, dance show, and Greek tragedy. Maybe not Greek, but it's always a tragedy.

In recent years, we've done *Casablanca*, *The Not So Great Gatsby*, *The Great Train Robbery* with Black Bart



dressed in pink with Hello Kitty attire, *Scarface: the Musical*, and last year a WW II story called *1944* complete with spies from El Segundo. Trust us, it made sense. We usually rush to learn the music and get the script down, often with rewrites during the dress rehearsal. This year, we have lots of time. Lots and lots of time! By the time we actually do the show, the script will be so polished it will shine new penny in the sun. What's the show this year? *Crimea River* a filming of a film noir with a fabulous Faberge egg. You won't want to miss it. All the cool kids will be there – and so will we!

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- October 8-11, 2020 FWD Fall Convention, Cruise - Long Beach, CA
- January 20-24, 2021 BHS Midwinter, New York City
- March 11-14, 2021 FWD Spring Convention: Prelims, NE/NW Divisions, location TBD
- April 23-34, 2021 Arizona Division Convention, location TBD
- April 30-May 1, 2021 SE/SW Divisions Convention, location TBD
- June 27-July 4, 2021 BHS International, Cleveland, OH
- October 7-10, 2021 FWD Fall Convention, Mesa, AZ

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ARIZONA DIVISION

Adam Kaufman
dvp-arizona@farwesterndistrict.org

NORTHEAST DIVISION

Chuck Roots
dvp-northeast@farwesterndistrict.org

NORTHWEST DIVISION

Dick Whitten
dvp-northwest@farwesterndistrict.org

SOUTHEAST DIVISION

Kyle Williamson
dvp-southeast@farwesterndistrict.org

SOUTHWEST DIVISION

Brent Anderson
dvp-southwest@farwesterndistrict.org

Member Services Directory

AWARDS

Chuck Hunter, Sr.
awards@farwesterndistrict.org

CHORUS DIRECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Scott Suwabe
cdd@farwesterndistrict.org

ETHICS

Russ Young
ethics@farwesterndistrict.org

EVENTS

Bryan Forbes
events@farwesterndistrict.org

FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Roe Darnell
financial-dev@farwesterndistrict.org

HALL OF FAME

Bruce Sellnow
hof@farwesterndistrict.org

HISTORIAN

Dan Jordan
historian@farwesterndistrict.org

LAWS & REGULATIONS

Peter Feeney
lawsandregs@farwesterndistrict.org

MARKETING & PUBLIC RELATIONS

David Melville
marketing@farwesterndistrict.org

MEMBER RECRUITMENT & EDUCATION

Jeremy Loper
membership@farwesterndistrict.org

NOMINATING

Gordon Bergthold
nominating@farwesterndistrict.org

QUARTET ACTIVITIES

OPEN
quartetactivities@farwesterndistrict.org

WEBMASTER

David Melville
webmaster@farwesterndistrict.org

WESTAGS NEWSLETTER

Jerry McElfresh
westags@farwesterndistrict.org

WESTUNES EDITOR

Ray Rhymer
westuneseditor@farwesterndistrict.org

YOUTH IN HARMONY

Kenny Rios
yih@farwesterndistrict.org



Board of Directors

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president@farwesterndistrict.org

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evp@farwesterndistrict.org

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secretary@farwesterndistrict.org

TREASURER

Rich Owen
treasurer@farwesterndistrict.org

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Craig Hughes
pastpresident@farwesterndistrict.org

VP ARIZONA DIVISION

Adam Kaufman
dvp-arizona@farwesterndistrict.org

VP NORTHEAST DIVISION

Chuck Roots
dvp-northeast@farwesterndistrict.org

VP NORTHWEST DIVISION

Dick Whitten
dvp-northwest@farwesterndistrict.org

VP SOUTHEAST DIVISION

Kyle Williamson
dvp-southeast@farwesterndistrict.org

VP SOUTHWEST DIVISION

Brent Anderson
dvp-southwest@farwesterndistrict.org

VP CONTESTS & JUDGING

Brett Littlefield
drcj@farwesterndistrict.org

VP MUSIC & PERFORMANCE

Rob Menaker
music@farwesterndistrict.org