



WESTUNES

MAGAZINE



Volume 72 No. 3

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

Fall 2022

YA GOT TROUBLE



RIGHT HERE IN MUSIC CITY



FRESNO 2022

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WESTUNES MAGAZINE



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WESTUNES

Westunes is published quarterly by the Far Western District Association of Chapters in the Far Western District, Inc. dba Far Western District, and is distributed electronically at farwesterndistrict.org.

Letters to the Editor should be sent to:
westuneseditor@farwesterndistrict.org

Here are some Advertising Rates (per issue)

Ad Size	1 Issue	2 Issues	4 Issues
Full, Inside Covers	\$60.00	\$48.00	\$36.00
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A complete list of rates and specs appears later in this issue.

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Greater Los Angeles Chapter MASTERS OF HARMONY

by Ron Larson

The Masters of Harmony Preparation for the Charlotte 2022 Contest

The Chorus Weekend Retreat in Temecula

Before every international contest in Masters of Harmony history, chorus members attended a three-day “retreat,” often in a sylvan setting a mile high in local mountains, to focus on bringing that year’s contest set as close to perfection as possible. For the 2022 contest in Charlotte, the retreat was held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Temecula, California.

On Friday evening, the Masters of Harmony’s “Dream Team” of Director Alan Gordon, coaches Erin Howden and Tony De Rosa, picked up where they had left off in coaching sessions

weeks earlier. Both coaches worked seamlessly with Alan to help 77 Masters of Harmony singers go beyond practiced facial expressions and staged moves. By the end of the last session on Sunday morning, the chorus had made dramatic changes designed to create an inspirational performance in Charlotte.

The Masters of Harmony Celebrate the Life of Dr. Greg Lyne

On Saturday, June 11, the Masters of Harmony family gathered to honor the legacy of Dr. Greg Lyne, one of the world’s most talented choral directors. Under his leadership, the fledgling Masters of Harmony chorus grew

from 23 members to over 100 and the chorus won three international chorus championships.

The tribute began with a mass in St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Long Beach followed by a Celebration of Life service at The Reef, a restaurant with beautiful views of the Long Beach waterfront. Attendees and livestream viewers alike viewed performances by several notable quartet champions: Revival (Royce Ferguson, Mike Lawton, Mike Spencer, and Jeff Solano filling in for Bill Myers) sang “Sentimental Gentleman from Georgia” and “It Is Well With My Soul;” Nightlife (Rob Menaker, John Sasine, Brett Littlefield and Cody Littlefield filling in for Jeff

Baker) sang “Love’s Old Sweet Song” and “One Moment in Time.” The final tribute was performed by a Legacy Chorus made up of MOH members and other singers Greg had directed. The chorus sang the inspirational “Unclouded Day” and “There Used to Be a Ballpark.” They also sang “Somewhere,” by Leonard Bernstein, someone Greg always admired. The service closed with “Keep The Whole World Singing,” a perfect coda for a life devoted to bringing beautiful choral music to so many others. Rest in peace, Dr. Greg!

The Masters of Harmony Spring Show

On June 23, the Masters of Harmony presented “Here’s To The Dreamers... LA Stories” at Citrus College’s Haugh Performing Arts Center in Glendora, California. When the curtain rose after a two-year performance absence, Masters singers delivered songs with such precision and emotional impact that the audience responded repeatedly with thunderous applause. After singing “This Is The Moment,” the chorus debuted the Charlotte contest set – “Audition” from La La Land and “Defying Gravity.” The uplifting story wonderfully portrayed by Ernie Reyes describes the struggles of a hopeful but struggling entertainer pursuing personal dreams, experiencing continued rejection, but digging deep to find layers of inner strength help him to rise above the naysayers and reach his dream. Audience members weary of two years of angst responded with an instant standing ovation.

The Charlotte Chorus Contest Experience in Perspective

With the send-off memory of that standing ovation still ringing in their ears, with several outstanding rehearsals tweaked by Erin Howden and Tony De Rosa, chorus members liked their chances for a successful run at a 10th chorus gold medal. Instead, for the first time in its illustrious

three-decade history, there would be no medal at all as the chorus finished in 6th place. Failure to live up to such lofty expectations will lead to careful, honest self-examination and changes in the weeks to come. However, when Director Alan Gordon read all of the judges’ scores, it became quite apparent that on this particular day and time, the Masters simply did not perform well enough to win a medal and that the judges scored them properly.

Nevertheless, during the contest week, the Masters family did experience some truly wonderful “golden moments.”

1. After hearing the Masters perform “Audition (The Fools Who Dream)/ City of Stars Medley,” arranger Kirk Young paid the chorus the ultimate compliment when he said, “I heard in my head what I put on paper.” He added that he was humbled by what he heard being given back to him and he thanked the chorus for bringing his arrangement to life.
2. In 1992, Joe D’Amore was inducted into the Masters of Harmony Hall of Fame. For some unknown reason, a proclamation noting his many contributions to the success of the chorus at that time was not presented to him. Longtime MOH member Bernard Priceman remedied that when he read a proclamation noting how Joe not only helped get the fledgling chorus up and running in 1985 but has been an indispensable guiding light in so many ways ever since. In the dark days on the onset of the Covid pandemic, Joe worked tirelessly to keep the existence of the Masters of Harmony a reality.
3. Erin Howden had each member of the chorus briefly describe what Director Alan Gordon meant to him. As each man took his turn, what followed was one of the

most emotionally moving tributes ever bestowed on a Masters of Harmony director. To all in attendance at the tribute, some in tears, it was obvious how deeply loved Alan is by the men he directs each week.

Finally, Alan helped put the Charlotte experience in better perspective when he said, “It saddened me temporarily that we did not win a medal, but there is a tomorrow, and we don’t even have to wait long to step into it. Every week needs to be a journey. There are so few people who get the blessing that we do to share music at a high level on a weekly basis with people we love. To the future!”

Membership Changes

Since the last issue of Westunes, Mitchell Sampang was welcomed into membership and former members Royce Ferguson, Mike Nicholes and Emilio Pichardo were approved for reinstatement.





Westminster announces new director



*Dan Wessler, Music & Artistic Director
The Westminster Chorus*

After an intensive three-year process, the Westminster Chorus is pleased to announce that internationally renowned choral director and gold medalist singer Dan Wessler has been selected as our new Music and Artistic Director!

Dan Wessler currently holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from Bradley University as well as a Master's Degree in Choral Conducting from Western Illinois University. Currently, Dan is in the final stages of earning in DMA in Choral Conducting from the University of Colorado Boulder, at which time he and his wife Molly will join the chorus in Southern California to direct Westminster full time.

Dan is the gold medalist bass of 2018 quartet champions After Hours, as well as the past musical director for The New Tradition Chorus (Northbrook, IL chapter and storied Chicagoland chorus). Dan's quartet is world-renown as one of the most virtuosic to ever cross the competition stage, and they currently hold the record for highest score ever achieved in quartet competition with a 94.7%. Dan is a sought after arranger and coach in the Barbershop Harmony Society, teaching at Top Guns, Harmony Colleges, and at Harmony University throughout the year. He's also a prolific arranger, creating contestable and general show arrangements for choruses and quartets at all levels and voice/gender classifications. Dan also has experience as a music educator and held the position of Director of Choral Activities at Freeport High School in Freeport, IL from 2012 to 2020. Dan is currently a candidate judge in the MUS category, wrapping up his final year of practice before certification.

Please join us in congratulating Dan as he embarks on this journey with us and joins the ranks of many incredible directors to have lead this ensemble. We can't wait to share our music with you!

Chapter Eternal

Members reported as deceased between
May 15, 2022 and September 1, 2022

Send updates to membership@barbershop.org

August 2017

Harry Kaylor, Hemet, CA

April 2021

Charles Fredrickson, Santa Maria, CA

February 2022

David Hanush, San Luis Obispo, CA

Dennis Strub, California Delta

March 2022

Bernard Carlson, Placerville, CA

May 2022

Karl Diller, Aloha, HI

Donald Duperon, South Bay, CA

June 2022

Ellis Strange, Frank Thorne

July 2022

Shelley Herman, San Fernando Valley, CA

Timothy Hasselman, South Bay, CA

Edward Simons, Frank Thorne

Director Needed

Director Needed, Palm Desert, CA

Seeking a new choral director. We are the Coachella Valley Barbershop Chorus, a group of men and women meeting weekly in Palm Desert, CA. For more than 30 years we've been entertaining and competing. We enjoy great camaraderie and we're a fun group.

Please contact Dale Steinmann for more information using the link below.

<https://farwesterndistrict.org/news/announcements/328-director-needed-palm-desert-ca>

Director Needed, Tucson, AZ

The Tucson Men's Barbershop chorus needs a director. Monthly salary and education benefits provided.

Contact Frank Hartline at the link below.

<https://farwesterndistrict.org/news/announcements/336-director-needed-tucson-az>



CODE OF ETHICS — BARBERSHOP HARMONY SOCIETY

The Society aspires to preserve for its members and for all future generations of prospective members, the sacred right of all people to seek haven from the burden of their daily cares through indulgence in old-fashioned vocal quartet harmony, and to that end we do hereby solemnly pledge ourselves to abide by the precepts of the Code of Ethics.

1. We shall endeavor to perpetuate the Barbershop Harmony Society and the barbershop style of singing.
2. We shall deport ourselves and conduct the Barbershop Harmony Society's functions in such manner as to reflect credit upon the Barbershop Harmony Society and its membership.
3. We shall conform to the bylaws of the Barbershop Harmony Society and any other rules set forth by its Board of Directors.
4. We shall accept for membership only congenial persons of good character who love barbershop harmony or have a desire to harmonize.
5. We shall exhibit a spirit of good fellowship toward all members and strive to resolve any conflicts with civility and respect.
6. We shall refrain from forcing our songs upon unsympathetic ears.
7. We shall refrain from taking improper advantage of our membership and BHS fellowship for personal gain.
8. We shall not permit political, religious, or other controversial issues to hinder or inhibit the enjoyment of barbershop harmony.
9. We shall, through our service to the Barbershop Harmony Society, endeavor to spread the spirit of barbershop harmony throughout the world.



What if for one day everything stopped? And we all just listened to the music?

In case you hadn't heard of it, the last Saturday in August is "International Play Music on the Porch Day." SAI Quartet, SoloVoce (with Lead Tracey Sandberg, member of FWD Pacific Coast Harmony), hosted its third annual event in aptly named Harmony Grove Escondido, on August 28th, and invited all Southern California barbershop quartets and choruses across all organizations to come and simply share music with each other. This year's event was well attended, drawing 14 quartets and 5 choruses. This beautiful County park boasts a gigantic metal gazebo that acts as an amazing resonating chamber, and is quite the perfect place to ring a tag. FWD choruses singing at the event included Sun Harbor Chorus and Pacific Coast Harmony (PCH) Chorus. FWD members were featured in these quartets: Behind the Barn, MotleyQ, MX, Pacific Experience, Relative Pitch, Troubadour, and Syzygy. Fun moments included when PCH joined SAI chorus OC

Sound for Bohemian Rhapsody, when Troubadour joined SoloVoce for an eight part version of Ain't No Mountain High Enough, and when all singers joined together for a group sing under the gazebo for Clay Hine's, "It's the Music That Keeps Us Together," and "Keep the Whole World Singing." SoloVoce is already planning next year's Music on the Porch Day for the last Saturday in August. Mark your calendars now.



For more information visit
<https://playmusicontheporchday.com/>



Left: Pacific Coast Harmony; Above: SoloVoce & Troubadour



Behind the Barn quartet



Pacific Experience quartet



MotleyQ quartet



Relative Pitch quartet



MX quartet



SoloVoce quartet



Sun Harbor Chorus



Troubadour quartet



Syzygy quartet



Troubadour quartet





Editorial

As we emerge from pandemic hibernation there is plenty of good news to report on the home front, yet the fallout from a series of Nashville bombs appears to have a long half-life, and there is still great discontentment amongst the membership which—sadly for some—has produced enough outrage that they have chosen to leave.

That refers in particular to: Everyone in Harmony (EIH), not so much the in initiative itself but the way it was handled; the ongoing BHS-HFI battle, a hostile and totally unnecessary legal fiasco costing us millions; and the total disregard for membership voice in settling the Separate but Equal vs. Open contest question. While there are differing opinions on those subjects, that fact remains that they were handled extremely poorly by Society leadership, and even today we are facing a lack of transparency and credibility coming from the top at the home office.

There is growing concern that all is not what it seems or what is being reported, and many groups are making contingencies for if and when the walls come tumbling down. **Make no mistake: barbershop will survive with or without BHS**, but if we truly want to see this organization survive and prosper, we need to **fix the problem at its source**.

On the pages following are some OP-ED pieces that have been circulating around. The opinions expressed are that of the authors themselves. They are included here, unedited, for your consideration.



BHS & HFI: A timeline of events

by Sharon Miller

“This post is intended for friends/family who have an interest in the recent activities between BHS and HFI. If you don’t know what those acronyms stand for – you can skip this post.

Since I married my husband, almost 40 years ago, I have been a staunch supporter of both organizations. My husband won 2 quartet golds, 1 quartet silver and 1 quartet bronze. Between John, Justin and Jon-Michael they received 17 chorus golds, 5 chorus silvers and 3 chorus bronzes. During those years I was an avid supporter of them by hosting rehearsals, being a cheerleader, advocate/promoter, honorary chorus board member and with John, an influencer and donor for these organizations that we loved. John is a BHS Hall of Fame member, an AIC member and served on the SBOD for 2 terms.

I served on the HFI Board of Trustees from 2009 until 2018 in roles of Secretary, Nominating, CEO Compensation, Strategic Planning and Investment Advisory committees, Vice Chair, Chair, and in 2016 – 2017 served as Chair as well as Acting CEO/President. My last year I served as Immediate Past Chair and remain proud to still hold the distinction of being a Past Chair.

When I was working in Harmony Hall from 7/2016 to 4/2017, I and several other staffers got an uncomfortable feeling that all was not right. Below is a timeline that I created for my own edification. This document is based on facts gathered from BHS’s own timeline, knowledge of events from my own history and research from people who

lived it and were involved in various activities. I think this Timeline is worthy of sharing.

BHS/HFI Timeline of Events

June/1959

HFI (Harmony Foundation International) was created so Harmony Hall could be transferred from SPEBSQSA (Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America, Inc) for avoidance of property taxes and protection of these assets from creditors. Please note that, unlike most Foundations, HFI did not start with a generous endowment to pay for fundraising overhead and cost of doing business. Therefore, those costs must be covered through fundraising efforts.

7/3/1959

Trust agreement between SPEBSQSA and HFI

2004

HFI creates and implements an annual giving program. At the time the President of the Society told the CEO of HFI that they didn't need money. He went as far as to say, "You'll never get 50 bucks from a barbershopper". As fundraising became more successful BHS realized that they could use extra funds. They began putting 400K in their budget. Their fiscal year ended before HFI's so many times HFI didn't have that amount. BUT according to BHS, because it was in their approved budget, HFI had to give it to them.

Sometime in 2005

The BHS CFO who also served as HFI's Treasurer at the same time, told HFI they could borrow from their endowment to help with operations and meeting BHS's grant needs.

10/29, 2005

HFI Board of Trustees passed a resolution that set parameters of borrowing from their Endowment Fund and the repayment thereafter. It was signed by the HFI Chair who now serves on the board of the SBOD.

2010

HFI changed their fiscal year so their budget was approved prior to BHS approving their budget.

Jan. 2, 2014

HFI had been in charge of grants until this date. BHS took over the Grant Process and thereafter HFI was not given a schedule of approvals, declines, or how applicants would be notified. HFI regional directors had to field calls from livid donors not only because their grant requests were denied, but because of how little explanation they were given. BHS told HFI to direct them back to BHS. HFI tried this for a time but took up the mantle again because the more HFI directed them to BHS the more donors HFI lost. In December the next round occurred,

without HFI notification. HFI fundraisers walked into midwinter meetings blindsided by irate donors whose grant requests were denied. Regardless of how often HFI tried to demonstrate that the most counterproductive time of the year to decline grants was immediately prior to the two major conventions, that schedule never changed. Regardless of how many facts HFI presented showing that their process, their interaction with members, BHS's excessively complex grant application, their lack of assistance to applicants and lack of transparency was costing HFI annual donors, BHS made no effort to change the process. This is an example of how tone deaf the SBOD seems to be to the needs of their members.

Jan/Feb/2015

HFI CEO & CFO often met with BHS CEO & CFO. BHS CEO/CFO asked several times to be able to get their grants as an unrestricted aggregate, they wanted their funds given holistically, or a lump sum. HFI's CEO continued to deny their request because HFI funds specific programs at specific amounts with specific outcomes. See below and 11/2/2016.

Sometime in 2014/2015

HFI had a donor that was willing to give \$1.5M to digitize all the decaying media in BHS's basement. Two BHS/AIC members had previously organized/categorized the media, so part of the project was complete. They helped solidify the donor and formed a team to get the work done. All BHS had to do was open the doors for the team. Some of the media would be sent to expert facilities, while others would have been done in house by the team. It seemed at the time BHS wasn't interested in adding this to their list of priority projects. The willing donor got tired of waiting for an answer, eventually lost interest and backed out. This was to be a 3-year process. If BHS had just accepted this unbelievable offer, a completely digitized, catalogued, cross-referenced archive would have been saved by 2017/2018. Sometime in 2017 BHS came to HFI to ask them to find someone who would fund the Archive Project, only now they wanted \$3M for the effort.

March/April 2015

BHS CEO and CFO offered to give HFI a gift to pay off the loan taken out of HFI's endowment fund in part to fund BHS programming. Endowment money was also used to hire an architect for the SING Museum project among other things (BHS asked for money to pay for buses in Anaheim, another example). When the loan repayment check was delivered to HFI's CEO & CFO, the BHS CEO & CFO accepted responsibility, said they were sorry that this ever happened and apologized for not paying it back sooner. They actually said, "We're here to right a wrong". Fast forward and they are now saying repeatedly they paid off HFI's debt not BHS's LOAN!

2016

BHS CEO had phone calls with various staff/officers of Sweet Adelines International to discuss the possibility of their organization joining with BHS. I was told by many people in the know that BHS's CEO said they needed to come under BHS's umbrella or there would be nothing left of them in a couple of years. This did not feel like a proposal, an offer or an invitation – but was perceived as a threat. SAI quickly declined.

6/11/2016 – 4/7/2017

When I was working in Harmony Hall from 7/16 to 4/17 I and several other staffers got an uncomfortable feeling that all was not right. We got the clear feeling that the BHS CEO and CFO wanted to change the relationship between BHS and HFI. They continued to ask for the grants to be given as an aggregate rather than us continuing to give guidance as to where our donors want the \$ allocated. To meet donor's desires, those aggregate requests were denied.

11/2016

President of Harmony Inc. (HI) was researching the possibility of finding an Association Management Company to help her organization grow nationally. She contacted BHS CEO to see if there was a possibility of BHS helping them. Over the next two years they were in talks about HI possibly joining BHS's ranks while keeping their identity.

11/2/2016

I met with the BHS CEO in my office to go over the Schedule for funding, which includes Distribution and where HFI wanted the funds to be applied.

A few days later we received a schedule of events from BHS that had been altered, ignoring our instructions. When I talked to the BHS CEO on the phone, he said he had never seen the document! I had personally handed it to him, and we discussed it in my office. I proceeded to take a copy of the doc to him and he again denied ever seeing it. When I requested that he use our original document, he refused citing that it was too late.

1/1/2017

HFI Board received a formal accounting of where the grant monies were distributed. BHS awarded Alexandria Harmonizers a 15K grant with their director as head of the grants committee. This felt like a gross conflict of interest. I met with the BHS CEO and Head of the Grants Committee at midwinter expressing my concerns. I said that amount could have given many small grants to Districts and Chapters to help subsidize their camps. I expressed my dismay that BHS never talks about their financial situation publicly yet uses terminology that "there isn't enough funding for this year". Donors inevitably blame that on

HFI, HFI gets the complaint calls and loses donors. BHS blames HFI for their financial woes, but never owns their part in situations where they cause donor difficulties. Incidentally, that was the last accounting HFI ever got from BHS as to disbursement.

The HFI Board created an application form for BHS to let us know what programs they want us to fund for any given year. The form was never filled out. BHS CEO even helped with the draft document. The Foundation would often ask BHS's CEO "why shouldn't you fill it out when you ask your grantees to fill out extensive applications"?

March 2017

BHS met with HI to discuss the possibilities for the partnership. In that meeting Erik Dove said that districts were ineffective and inefficient. He made the point that it was a shame so much money sat in their accounts because it will never allow BHS to "reach scale". BHS doesn't seem to understand that members are BHS and BHS's culture lives in the districts. Later, as the exploration of the partnership evolved, members of HI and BHS who were participating in the talks were asked to sign NDAs (Non-Disclosure Agreements).

April 3, 2017

New HFI CEO starts. He and BHS CEO decide to meet every Wednesday. At some point BHS CEO began canceling meetings and they were then spotty through the summer of 2019.

July 3, 2017

SBOD approved the 2017 Strategic Vision. One item that jumped out at me was 'create positive external social impact through the power of singing'. One example, 'outreach programs in new settings that can benefit from barbershop harmony, such as prisons ... at-risk youth ...' BHS actually talked about a program called "Prison Sing" off and on from 2013 – 2019 but it stalled and halted without warning or explanation. Fast forward to 2020 – Harmony Foundation created Power of Harmony, which does just that.

EIH was announced at Vegas International, and BHS CEO mentioned on stage that women would not be invited to join as full members at that time. Interesting that in 2016 they proposed that SAI join BHS and began discussions with HI. It seems consideration of women being members had begun in earnest two years before announcement of complete EIH.

Sept. 2017

At the HFI Annual meeting, BHS CEO gave detailed Strategic Plan to Trustees and asked HFI for fundraising strategy.

11/8/2017

HFI CEO sent an email to the BHS CEO regarding the

“the assertions and messaging, subliminal and overt, of a potential ‘hostile takeover’ of HFI by BHS.” He made it clear that HFI staff and board were concerned about what they were hearing, and it served as a distraction to their focus and work. He said that type of talk was not conducive to a healthy partnership or working relationships.

Sometime around January 2018

During the vetting process for SBOD nominees, the Chair of the Nominating Committee was told NOT to tell potential nominees of what was being considered by BHS regarding the gender change to EIH. BHS Board members were required to sign NDAs to keep the discussion about the changes coming to BHS a secret.

6/19/2018

Everyone in Harmony announces next step - “Everyone means everyone – people of every age, of every background, every gender identity, every race, every sexual orientation, every political opinion or spiritual belief. Every person who loves to harmonize has a place in our family.” HFI was not consulted the year prior by BHS for planning, communication rollout, or guidance as to how they felt their donors would react to this change. They were given a week’s notice prior to the announcement.

6/22/2018

Teams from BHS and HFI meet for the 1st time to discuss Trust Agreement

7/2018

BHS CEO asked HFI to invite some hand-picked top donors to a meeting in Orlando. He was seeking \$2.4M over the next 3 years and asked the attending donors to open their pockets and consider giving \$285K each. He gave a presentation but was unable to answer donor’s questions as to what program they would be funding. The HFI CEO and staff assisted with scheduling and attended donor meeting. I was in attendance. The meeting ended with no commitments.

9/16/2018

Teams from BHS and HFI meet for the 2nd time to discuss elements of a successful partnership.

11/2018

After two years, and many discussions back and forth, BHS seemed unwilling to commit on the issues that Harmony Inc. felt was core to its identity, including a guarantee that HI would continue to exist rather than be absorbed by the BHS brand. At a final HI board meeting, with 3 BHS Board members present, HI finally broke off negotiations. They were unwilling to be absorbed by BHS with no guarantees for representation and lose their 60-year-old culture. Treatment of HI by BHS was not stellar – significantly stressing the relationship.

Jan 27/2019

Teams from BHS & HFI meet for 3rd time to discuss need for shared services or MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) including fundraising goals and strategy.

June 7-9/19

HFI trustee meeting attended by the BHS CEO and SBOD EVP to discuss HFI strategic planning efforts with facilitator. HFI CEO said they would need to do a feasibility study. The BHS CEO said, “I’d do that”. However, he never presented that request to his board, who would need to approve the financing, therefore it never happened. BHS now consistently says HFI never gave them a strategic plan. HFI told BHS they needed to know what programs they would be fundraising for. EIH is a membership philosophy, not a program and BHS never provided information that would describe programs or specifically how the funding would be used.

June 8, 2019

HFI Board created an Articles of Collaboration.

July International 2019

At the SBOD public meeting there was discussion about allowing District Presidents to each have a vote in the election of SBOD officers. Then DPC Chair asked that the vote be taken verbally with the reason stated as to why they were choosing to vote that way. The current SBOD President answered that his vote was nay because they were not a representative board – that they didn’t represent districts or members, but the Barbershop Harmony Society. The vote failed. This wasn’t the only time that statement was heard that SBOD worked for BHS and not their membership.

Mid 2019

SBOD began calling for Executive session after “fluff” part of meeting so HFI CEO had to leave the meeting, thereby missing actual business discussions.

Sept 7-9/19

BHS attends HFI BOT annual meeting to discuss questions raised by each organization. HFI presented Power of Harmony program but SBOD didn’t want to pursue it. Both boards agree that they will demand their CEOs meet and try to work things out.

At this meeting HFI discussed that they would be giving their grant in two cycles instead of one payment. BHS CEO had received the document in a board packet in August. Both he and the SBOD IPP heard the info at this meeting, yet the information was never shared with the SBOD and not brought up at the joint meeting on 9/9. BHS later accused HFI of simply making the decision to cut the grant in ½ without communication. On 9/23/2019 the SBOD received a letter from HFI again detailing what had been decided in August and that was the SBOD’s 1st notice. HFI

paid BHS the amount promised in full for those programs that were fully implemented.

Sept. 8/2019

HFI CEO kept the Wednesday meetings on his calendar and was willing to meet. BHS CEO refused to meet after this date. Would not even come down to 2nd floor. BHS CEO ignored the request of the attorney and his board to try and talk to HFI CEO.

Sept/Oct 2019

BHS CFO began filling out applications to fundraise in various states laying the groundwork for taking fundraising duties in house.

November 30, 2019

The SBOD was in process of considering taking their “shot across the bow” prior to Midwinter. At this time the proposed plan was to begin the process of taking over HFI by modifying the HFI/BHS Bylaws as needed, reduce the HFI BOT to a minimum of 3, dismiss all current HFI BOT members and approve a BHS slate of 3 or more. A few members suggested that such actions were both drastic and premature. Those members could not endorse this path feeling more conversation and due diligence was needed. The feeling was this would be devastating to the plans and arrangements that had gone into Donor preparation for the midwinter convention ... and create a very public disruption with the donors of the Youth Festival. The plan was postponed.

1/11/2020

Teams from BHS and HFI boards meet for informal 5th face-to-face during Midwinter to inform HFI of continued SBOD concerns and to share legal interpretation of the Trust Agreement. BHS mentioned they would explore other ways of fundraising and wanted to meet with HFI’s attorney to also discuss legal interpretation of the Trust agreement. HFI was forced to hire an outside attorney.

February 2020

A Society Board member tells HFI CEO that the SBOD has told Marty to stop meeting with him.

2/25/2020

Legal counsel from both organizations met in Nashville to discuss Trust Agreement interpretation

3/11/2020

BHS Counsel sends email to HFI counsel. In this email there was reference to a meeting in June 2019 where BHS offered to fund a ‘research effort’, yet there was no response or action taken by HFI. Indeed, a feasibility study was requested, but that was never taken to BHS’s board for approval, and HFI was never given the green light. HFI needed written authorization from SBOD to spend BHS’s

money. The amount requested was above the CEO’s executive authority to approve.

There was also misinformation about our Miller match. It said HFI gave resistance until we said it wouldn’t impact our annual gift. We never said that. My husband said if we got to 100K that would help lower HFI’s 600K grant to 500K thereby helping both organizations. He explained that several times to the SBOD.

3/22/2020

SBOD voted in executive session to amend HFI Trust Agreement, expand the number of HFI Trustees and elect 16 additional Trustees to the HFI Board pursuant to its alleged authority under Article VII of the agreement. This was unbeknownst to HFI. ARTICLE VII – Governing Law of the Amended and Restated Trust Agreement: This restated Agreement may be amended by majority vote of the Society Board of Directors, provided, however, that a favorable vote of a majority of both the Society Board of Directors and the Foundation Board shall be necessary to change the tenure, duties or liabilities of Foundation Trustees. By unilaterally amending this document and then nominating sixteen persons to serve on the Foundation Board, they are changing the duties of Foundation Trustees by taking away their right to make the nominations. Therefore, the Trust Agreement was invalidated as HFI understands it.

3/22/2020

1st ‘Task Force’ meeting - Four members of each board met over zoom. The ostensible agenda was to discuss cost of fundraising so BHS could understand HFI cost structure around fundraising. Instead, the 4 BHS members read from scripts explaining what they planned to do, better known as the hostile takeover. The BHS members expected the 4 HFI members that were present to make a unilateral decision on behalf of the entire HFI board on the spot. That isn’t the way HFI’s board operates. They do everything by consensus.

3/30/2020

HFI legal counsel informs BHS legal counsel via email that it is HFI’s position that BHS does not have the authority to unilaterally change the Trust Agreement. Counsel suggests the two parties resolve their differences and work together in a collaborative manner going forward. HFI would agree to mediation instead of litigation even though they felt it would be a poor use of resources. Counsel requests further communication be between lawyers and not BHS and HFI directly.

4/2/2020 “Settlement letter” or Hostile Takeover

BHS’s Attorney sent a letter to HFI’s attorney contending that BHS members will give to BHS instead of HFI. They estimate that HFI will run out of cash and be forced to

close in a few months. They offered a financial package to “rescue HFI” by taking them over. They would let the CEO go and after six months the CFO as well. They repeated near the end of the letter that HFI will exhaust all of its funds in the near future. That hasn’t happened.

4/6/2020

HFI legal counsel sent letter to BHS legal counsel rejecting the settlement offer.

4/11/2020

HFI amended their By-Laws after BHS rewrote the Trust Agreement on 3/22/2020 and elected 16 new Trustees to stack HFI’s board. They removed BHS CEO as an ex-officio member of their board.

Mid 2020

HFI CEO was disinvited to SBOD meetings.

6/4/2020

BHS announced the development of a fundraising department within its organization.

Headquarters sent out an email with a link to BHS CEO ‘State of the Society: Let’s Go’. This statement was included: “With revenue delivered from Harmony Foundation International not reaching expected levels, we will suspend making grants for the remainder of 2020. Current applicants will receive further information in the coming weeks.” No mention of the pandemic we were in – simply blame HFI for BHS cutting the grants. By the end of 2020 HFI had given to BHS all the promised funds for services that had happened.

6/5/2020

BHS sent brief email to all members announcing a new fundraising strategy and accusing HFI of inefficiencies.

6/5/2020

HFI sent out letter expressing their dismay over what BHS’s decision could mean for the partnership between the 2 organizations, and indeed their members and donors.

6/6/2020

BHS sends email to all members with link to FAQs

6/10/2020

I personally sent a letter to SBOD at 7:00 pm then posted it to Facebook an hour later.

6/14/2020

Mea Culpa message re change of BHS’s philanthropic strategy from SBOD to membership. “We want to talk to you today about how and why we imperfectly did it...” “We deeply regret this miscalculation, because it dragged our entire community into a social media brawl that might have been avoided” ... “The record would show that our side was messy and imperfect, but not for lack of effort to get it right”.

6/15/2020

1st meeting between reps from BHS and HFI boards facilitated by DPC members.

6/24/2020

2nd meeting between reps from BHS and HFI boards facilitated by DPC members.

7/1/2020

BHS launches fundraising effort on their website 7/8/2020

SBOD “We’re Listening” letter posted - “choices have unintentionally caused confusion and bewilderment...” “For some our intent did not match the impact and it made our distanced global community feel more separated”

7/9/2020

3rd meeting between reps from BHS and HFI boards facilitated by DPC members

7/16/2020

4th meeting between reps from BHS and HFI boards. Both boards agreed on the wording of a document to be posted on their respective Facebook pages the next day. It was referencing both board’s desire to continue negotiating.

7/17/2020

HFI realized the next morning that BHS had NOT posted and would NOT post the agreed upon announcement. BHS instead posted, “A MESSAGE FROM THE SOCIETY BOARD: BHS/HFI COMMUNICATIONS TIMELINE AND DOCUMENTS. The document included “These talks between BHS and HFI have not produced satisfactory results, and we have concluded our participation.” This after having a congenial meeting just the night before ending in agreement to continue negotiating. BHS also posted a Timeline.

HFI received a letter from the BHS SBOD President notifying them of the decision of his board to forbid HFI from using BHS assets to raise money for them (BHS). It was signed ‘In Harmony’.

7/27/2020

I sent a letter to SBOD and CEO Eval Committee sharing that during my tenure in Harmony Hall, BHS CEO had lied to me twice, that he had allowed financial impropriety in the grant process by allowing a large grant to be awarded to a chorus whose director was the BHS Grants Committee Chair, that he was guilty of failure of leadership, and that he violated his fiduciary duty by allowing the misuse of funds in pursuit of institutional philanthropy.

7/28/2020

My letter was shared with the BHS CEO

7/30/2020

I received a letter from a BHS Board member requesting that I meet with the Board and the CEO.

8/7/2020

I sent a response that their request was inappropriate and that I would not meet with BHS CEO and the entire board. I said I would consider meeting with one board member of my choice.

8/10/20

I received an email back with an apology from the board member who made the inappropriate request. He stated that the Board agrees I shouldn't have to meet with them all, that he sent the letter in error.

8/13/2020

I had a 4 hour zoom meeting with a BHS Board Officer. I was promised that the board would address my concerns with the BHS CEO.

9/17/2020

I received a letter from the BHS Board Officer with whom I had spoken. They did have a meeting and chose to stand by their man. I felt angry and frustrated. He said their path was well-intentioned but imperfect. They've used the word imperfect to describe their actions in other documents.

12/2/2020

BHS sends out email saying that they and HFI are going to court. The actual HFI board knew nothing of this. BHS is basically suing the 2020 Chair of HFI Board.

There are many untruths in the plaintiff's lawsuit. One is that BHS 'gave' HFI 'free' seats to incentivize donors. Donors PAID full price for those seats. BHS just allowed HFI to seat them according to giving level. This helps both organizations.

12/2020

The attorney of the HFI Chair at that time (Defendant in the BHS Lawsuit) asked BHS to consider mediation. BHS said they would mediate as long as HFI capitulated on all the governance issues.

1/9/21

8 HFI Trustees received a letter from BHS's Chair of Governance and By-Laws letting them know that if 5 of them would agree to BHS's governance rules, they would drop the lawsuit.

BHS created and utilized HFI as their fundraising partner for over 60 years. HFI has given \$12.94M to BHS, its chapters, choruses and districts over these many years (2005 – 2020). BHS CEO and Senior Executives, along with the SBOD, attempted a hostile takeover, then was encouraged by barbershoppers at every level to reestablish this long-standing partnership with HFI. Even with that grass roots feedback, they refused to come back to the table with HFI even after asking HFI for another meeting. Now BHS is suing the Past Chair of HFI - not HFI – but the

Past Chair and "certain unnamed persons acting in concert with him". As a result, the legal fees continue to mount taking away from BHS programs while already stressed and challenged by a pandemic. Their hostile, inappropriate actions have hurt people's livelihoods, caused undue stress and confusion for the very membership they should revere. I would ask BHS, "does this seem like a successful strategy to you"?

This timeline shows BHS has worked under a culture of secrecy, manipulated communication, and illustrates the choice to not engage in the opinions, needs and desires of their membership. The dispute with HFI accelerated an already declining membership. The actions of BHS's CEO have alienated a large portion of the barbershop ecosystem. What has occurred never needed to happen but has caused mental anguish to both organizations and those they profess to serve. Suing HFI could result in serious financial devastation for BHS since this lawsuit could potentially extend into 2022.

HFI never lost its willingness to come back to the table and find common ground to continue working in harmony with BHS. After everything that happened, they hunkered down and continued the great work that they are capable of.

- HFI successfully raised over \$360,000 for AIC Outreach Programs in 2020. AIC debuted the 1st ever holiday musical feature film. Free of charge, this groundbreaking film is estimated to have been viewed by over 100,000 people worldwide. HFI established ongoing AIC Outreach Initiatives support with the recent launch of the New AIC Outreach Fund.
- HFI has supported choruses in their own local fundraising efforts through their "COVID Relief Program".
- HFI has supported local and regional barbershop singing, through both Donor's Choice to Chapters and their new District Model, giving a portion of the annual fund directly to Districts. Further, HFI has stated publicly and plainly that it will continue to support BHS Corporate programming at the National Level.
- HFI now partners with Harmony Inc, SAI's Coronet Club, The Contemporary A Cappella Society of America (CASA), and the Association of International Champions; HFI created 'Power of Harmony' to help address anti-recidivism.

I have been concerned about leadership at the top of BHS for quite a while. BHS underestimates the value of their Districts, Chapters and the importance of the opinions of their members. The BHS SBOD feels that the relationship between the two organizations is that of a parent/child. This mindset, on the part of BHS's SBOD, has significantly reduced their ability to find mutual understanding with

HFI. SBOD, of their own admission, doesn't represent the membership and often makes decisions in their own echo chamber. Some of their actions have brought about change not agreed to by their membership. HFI has done great work and been excellent ambassadors for our lifestyle yet are being tossed aside because of a systematic shift due to the desire of the BHS CEO to exert control.

Recently the CEO of HFI said, "After watching the trajectory of BHS over the past few years, it is my sincere hope that the Foundation can serve an instrumental role in helping to save the Society that has meant so much to so many barbershoppers over the years. Indeed, that is the impetus for the District Support Model the Foundation developed in 2020 and implemented in FY2021. The future of this hobby rests in the health and vitality of strong programs at the local and regional level."

I think every member needs to think long and hard, realize why we joined and fell in love with this lifestyle. Then ask those in leadership roles – how did we get here? What can be done to change the downward spiral that is BHS? I feel we all want barbershop to continue into perpetuity and we want BHS to commit to making this relationship whole again. With all the good Harmony Foundation has done this year while wanting to repair this relationship, I implore all to reconsider if you have pulled your donations. We should all get behind the programs and partnership HFI has been actively pursuing and raising funds for, which still includes BHS. After all that has transpired with BHS and all the surprises that have happened over the last few years, it comes down to a level of trust. My husband and I are in the process of finalizing a match for HFI to support the barbershop ecosystem. We hope you will join us."



My thoughts on Open Contest

by Eddie Holt

(Disclaimer: I'm currently employed at BHS but am writing this post purely as a barbershopper/member)

I've talked to a lot of friends about the open contest and have tried to wrap my mind around everything to put into words what I've been thinking and feeling. I'm sure there's a super hilarious meme just a little further down your feed, so feel free to skip on by my TL;DR. But nonetheless:

Change is hard. I'm old enough to know what it was like in the good ol' days of our traditionally men's only organization, yet I also know that the only thing we can count on is that nothing will ever stay the same. Bluntly, we're all going to be dead soon, maybe today, maybe tomorrow, maybe in 40 years, but after my father's heart attack and untimely death a year and half ago, I've been staring at my own mortality in the face, and the last thing I want to do in this short life is miss out on chances to enjoy good barbershop with my friends.

I'm at peace with the open contest and hopeful that the BHS can be a welcoming home to a brand new generation of singers. A younger generation that, frankly, looks nothing like us "longer-term" members of BHS. I've made a decision for myself that despite the fact that this fraternal brotherhood of worldwide barbershoppers has been the very core of my identity for so long, the open contest can be a force for good for the future of the BHS. As a middle-aged straight white dad nerd (which obviously makes my opinion SUPER important) I've made a decision for myself that this isn't a hill that I wish to die on. I'll probably get chastised for saying it, but I didn't always feel this way. I mean, it all still feels weird. This barbershop brotherhood "thing" that's been so much a part of my heart is just different now. It's WEIRD, yall. That's what happens when you get older: Things change, and sometimes IT FEELS WEIRD.

Many of you who tenaciously fought for the open contest have crashed through this barrier with almost frightening speed and ferocity, and I truly stand in awe



of you, I do! But for some people, change comes slowly. It comes through relationship, understanding, and hard honest conversations, and sometimes through peers agreeing privately that change sometimes sucks, but hey, whayagonnado. I've never seen anyone come to a change of heart by having their character assassinated. That's a much tougher sell, and I've watched it happen on both sides of the Open Contest issue. It makes me sad.

I've got dear barbershop brothers, quartet mates, coaches, mentors, supporters, champs who have inspired me to be a better performer, many of whom I consider some of my closest friends, who strongly disagree with the open contest, and I want you all to know that if this is where you are, then fair enough. If you have decided to sever your ties with the BHS I hope we can still find ways to barbershop during these short days we have left on this earth. I'll meet you where you are! Let's rock LDJ. Or HU, or a tag party, whatever, let's hang. I love you guys and would love to make some new fun memories.

And to be clear: If you've decided to sever your relationship with the BHS as a matter of principle, so be it, I cannot tell anyone what or how to feel. None of us can, not without risking harm to long-standing relationships, as we've all sadly witnessed during this season of change. Far too many insults have been hurled across the divide both publicly and privately. I know some of my friends have communicated that they feel betrayed by Society leadership, misled, or perhaps have placed such high value on what has been 80+ years of a worldwide fraternity, this treasured brotherhood of barbershoppers, they feel abandoned by a change some say was needless and, for them, unforgivable.

But if you've decided to sever your relationship with the BHS because you feel non-male competitors will make the International Contest somehow worse, that it degrades the all-male experience at the quartet/chapter level, I'd like to challenge that notion. I was in a unique position with my job in Charlotte to be backstage watching every competitor walk on and off stage, and witness groups overwhelmed by raw emotion, tears, hugs, the fist pumps, the off-stage "omg I love y'all so much"s, the expletives, all of it. Men, women, All Voice groups, I found myself smiling and laughing and tearing up with all of it, reliving my own barbershop highs and lows. It helped me see for myself up close and understand the value this open contest change has given to those who have embraced it.

But to get very specific: I was able to watch non-male groups like Better Together, Half and Half, The Ladies, Midnight Society, GQ, Sweet and Sour, Ripple Effect, and "PRAISE THE CHORD!!", not to mention GOTHAM's 88.6% score and all the All Voice choruses who killed it, take command of the stage and just crush their sets. The floor

under my feet (just off stage left) literally thundered all week as group after group rocked it out. I could feel the tidal wave of audience response, deep visceral reactions of thousands of audience members overcome with appreciation, standing and cheering and shouting. And I've been around barbershop long enough to know that this audience response wasn't BECAUSE these groups were non-male, and it wasn't IN SPITE OF the fact these groups were non-male. It was because it was DAMN GOOD BARBERSHOP. Period.

It's a matter of opinion for sure, but I believe that the BHS is the purveyor of the best barbershop in the world. And even though the open contest has absolutely made our international contest look different, the BHS big stage imo still serves up the best of the best. And there were young people in the audience watching everything going on in Charlotte and they saw 'themselves' everywhere on stage, all week long. They knew that this wasn't the world's best barbershop stage for 'other people' or 'those guys', it was the big stage for them, someday. The only barrier now being the time and work to perfect their craft and earn a spot alongside the others.

I tried to put myself in their shoes. I think back to when I was a college nerd walking into the 1994 Pittsburgh Convention with my CBQC quartet and watching all my hero quartets take the stage, seeing FRED mic test, seeing GHG Swan Set, listening to and chatting with The Ritz, Gary Lewis (lol) winning college gold, singing a tag with Awesome Joe, so many life-changing moments that first year. And me thinking someday if I worked hard enough I could be on that stage with these men too. A lot's changed since then, but in a way, there's a common thread here. I was the next generation of barbershopper looking at my heroes and aspiring to that level of artistry. And nearly 30 years later, there were young people in the audience at Charlotte watching men's/women's/all-voice groups with the same inspired wide-eyed wonder equally at GQ, Midtown, Gimme Four (omg these freaking guys), The Ladies, and so many others.

So, to my friends who have walked away from BHS for whatever reason, I respect your decision and can't wait to find other ways to barbershop with you, but I'd like to invite you to come back to BHS if that's something you'd consider someday. If not, I understand, but I think we're better with you as a part of BHS, and we could all use your experience and wisdom to keep crushing chords and bonding through harmony, and to inspire and mentor the next generation of barbershoppers. Either way, life is short, so let's sing together sooner rather than later however that makes sense.

To my friends who fought strongly for the open contest and EIH from the beginning, don't stop fighting. This is

your time. We need smart, young, passionate leaders to help guide us through this hugely important next phase of the BHS to ensure not just its survival, but growth that truly reflects the spirit of inclusion and diversity and provides a home for all barbershoppers. For GOTHAM. For the brotherhood of Music City Chorus, for GQ. ALL of us.

There's an argument that women's group have had multiple spaces of their own for decades in which to gather and compete, that all voice groups have had unique and rich experiences of their own through BinG!, MBHA, and other places to compete, and that it's seen as unfair to change what has been this unique space for men to gather and compete. I absolutely understand this, and I don't have an easy answer to those who have expressed this unfairness. Change is hard, but nonetheless it's arrived. How we choose respond to this change is our free choice to make. What I've come to realize is that my regular weekly rehearsals with Music City and the afterglows continue to be so rich, so satisfying, that I'm at a place now where I just want others to have this same level of incredibly satisfying barbershop wherever they are in life with whoever they want, and if once a year we all get to barbershop underneath the same Big Tent of the BHS, so be it. It's different, yes, but it can be so good. This was my experience in Charlotte.

Lastly, I'll just say this. As a guy with a less than zero percent chance of ever being in the AIC, allow me to share my unasked for opinion: I do hope the AIC decides to invite any quartet that wins the BHS international contest regardless of gender into their membership. I also believe the AIC should be able to do whatever it wants to do. And it's fascinating why so many of us who will probably never be in the AIC care so much about what they do and have strong opinions about it. I think it's ok to admit that the AIC has played a hugely important role for barbershop. This isn't ego-stroking. It's simply acknowledging that the AIC has been a group, a mechanism that has inspired us to hone this craft as we have actively participated in this game of barbershop, because ringing chords is FUN. And scoring big points and getting measurably better and winning awards is FUN.

For me, the AIC's consistent standard of execution of this weird art form has given so many of us something to shoot for, a clear identifiable goal for those of us who play this silly contest game. We're the ones who have chosen to play it, we're the ones who care so deeply about the rules, and the AIC has been something of an endgame for this odd little thing we spend incredible amounts of time and money on. I truly hope the BHS and AIC can find a way forward together, but as with all things, we're all free to make our own choices during this short time we have. And I believe deeply that we're better if we choose to be in this

together.

Change can be hard. But it can be good, too.

I CANNOT WAIT FOR LABOR DAY JAMBOREE!

FWD Quartet Representatives at Charlotte



A open letter to Marty

by Tom McQueeney

Marty Monson
Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director
Barbershop Harmony Society

cc:
Eric Dove BHS Chief Financial Officer
BHS Board of Directors
District Presidents Council & Leaders Society Contest &
Judging Committee
Association of International Champions
Harmony Foundation International

Hello again Marty

As you know it's been nearly two years since I first contacted our Board of Directors expressing my serious concerns regarding your intended changes to our treasured society traditions and our deteriorating financial conditions given your continued leadership. **Perhaps I should have understood then, that I'd be unable to influence any action from you or our Board.** At age 81 with 61 membership years, I expected more, apparently from the SPEBSQSA I used to know.

With two more years under my belt I've read, researched, listened and learned a lot about what's happened to my Barbershop Harmony Society. This combined with some substantial business experience has provided the foundation for this letter.

The motivation to challenge your actions and apparent "plans" is not for any benefit I might enjoy in my few remaining years. It is solely for the future benefit of the hundreds of smiling faces pictured on the 17 District web sites I recently visited and thousands more in Charlotte.

Thankfully I'm guessing less than a few hundred members know the seriousness of the financial crisis I believe we face given your leadership. And in some ways, even fewer care since they will simply continue to harmonize thinking there is little more you can do to negatively impact the joy of four voices, ringing chords with their barbershop buds.

The purpose of this relatively lengthy note is to offer my thoughts regarding how we likely got to where we are now – some observations regarding our continued but threatened strengths – and finally quite a few questions, the answers to which will **allow every member of our Barbershop Harmony Society to have his or her own opinions regarding where we are and what we believe needs to be done before it's too late.**

Marty in all fairness I want you to know that I sincerely appreciate the positive impacts many of your earlier actions have had on our Society. Like most talented new leaders, I'm sure you began by reviewing the overall condition of our BHS and quickly identified a number of opportunities that could produce measurable performance improvements. For example, one among many was your early on actions to explore mutually beneficial relationships with other vocal music organizations; this was important and notable. And given your affable personality and energetic style you earned the respect and confidence of many.

I sincerely wish as I'm sure you do, that the overall condition of our Society was now all that we believe it could be. Looking back, a short ten years ago our membership trajectory was a core concern without clear turnaround solutions. Of course, if the key issues our BHS faced then had been easy to solve, they would have been. **Clearly your earlier successes remain notable but, like others, not the difference makers leaders are expected and paid to provide.**

You and I know that most organization leaders introduce, especially early on in their tenure, some clearly significant, measurable successes beyond simply picking the low hanging fruit. However, over time we also know that their performance often plateaus given any number of externally driven and frequently unattended internal organization performance problems.

To be fair, your CEO position operations authorities have been relatively unbridled and insulated from the potential impacts of a differently empowered, more responsible Board of Directors.

In the business world, that I'm familiar with, Key Staff members didn't last long if they didn't ask incisive questions, offer alternatives and disagree for clear reasons during almost any presentation. All of this being for the good of the business and for the CEO or responsible Officers.

Marty, I believe that you've not had this kind of healthy give and take because of our current **Carver "Policy Governance Model"** which clearly **defines your current absolute total responsibility and accountability for all headquarters policy implementation means and methods, operations and its impacts on our BHS.** The BOD in this case is mainly focused on policy and your performance and it clearly has the authority to remove and hire the CEO and define Executive Limitations.

I believe that our Society would be significantly better served by the "Complimentary Board Governance Model" where the BOD is responsible for governing and managing our BHS while the CEO or Executive Director is held accountable to the board for the implementation and overall management of our headquarters operations. I'll provide some specifics regarding this potential alternative later in this note.

At this point it seems most important to underscore that The Heart of Our Society is largely made of Barbershoppers who volunteer their time and skills to support and sustain core services that our membership has come to expect as normal.

To name a few-- our Certified Judges, District Presidents and their Board Members and various committee members -- our Association of International Quartet Champions -- hundreds of Chapter Chorus Directors -- scores of world class Arrangers -- District Convention Chairmen and their teams that make it all seem so easy -- some of the best Masters of Ceremonies doing far more than most will ever know behind the scenes integrating with the back stage crew and runners. **Whew!**

And of course, there's more -- like the men and women with a vast array of coaching talents who frequently are the keys to unlocking that elusive performance level so many seek -- and how about the ticket sellers, add getters, show program designers and afterglow teams -- **and many more just not listed here.**

At the top of this "administrative and fun-loving pile" is our Society Board of Directors. In contrast to Fortune 500 Company Board Members who are generally well compensated, ours are caring Barbershoppers who volunteer to do what they can to help out and don't make a dime. And if anyone thinks that all they do is attend several Board Meetings per year then, please know that they spend hundreds of additional hours studying assigned issues in depth, preparing presentations for the CEO and the fellow Board members, etc. At the BOD meetings all our membership sees is board performing its oversight role and voting to approve (or not) CEO and other motions. **And for all of this I can only hope that they at least get good seats at "the Big Show".**

All of the above begs a few obvious questions – and seemingly some common-sense possibilities:

What would a District require to fulfill its membership needs, that it would not be able to provide without the BHS headquarters staff? This is a relatively easy study that our Society's Presidents Council, with a no Nashville self-interest skilled facilitator, could rough draft to completion rather quickly.

What would our Headquarters organization still be required to do if for example, the Districts membership services were differently integrated with our C&J Committee, focused on increasing District self-sufficiency? Here again this **wish list of available now possibilities is already common knowledge among our District Presidents.** Given a little President Personal Prep time, a facilitated brain storming session could wrap this up in a couple of hours

Now – what if Nashville's Mystery World – and -- the responsibilities of our Society Board of Directors -- were revised to have each with its own separate responsibilities, accountabilities and authorities. It could look like this:

- **The Society Board would be responsible** for our BHS strategic planning, budget, policies and committees' oversight. **In other words, the board would be responsible for governing and managing our BHS.** In the world of non-profit Governance, it's called a "working board".
- **Our CEO or Executive Director would no longer be responsible for the above.** Instead, he would be simply be held accountable to the board for the implementation and overall management of our Nashville Operations Headquarters.
- **Our District Presidents would remain responsible to understand and satisfy the needs of their membership and to serve actively on the District Presidents Council.** Given the Councils first hand, day-to-day membership "wants & needs" awareness and credibility its individual and collective influence on the Society Board and Nashville Operations would increase dramatically. **In essence it becomes a primary source of information that will largely determine our Barbershop Harmony Society's direction, financial and cultural health and services.**

Marty, I hope you feel that the clarity of the above division of responsibility and applied human resources provides a clear, more “membership first”, productive path back to our cultural roots. And while focusing on Operations may or may not be your preference, there is little doubt that the realignment of responsibilities **will result in productivity improvements and significant financial benefits for our Barbershop Harmony Society.**

“Everyone In Harmony” Marty given the controversy surrounding this “Strategic Initiative” and its current impacts on our Society I need to make clear my most fundamental and hopefully practical views. Just allow me this one caveat. **As a society, in many ways “we are where we are.”**

It appears that your envisioned **financial and membership improvements have fallen short** of your strategic plan estimates and I can only imagine what the real Return on Investment is at this time. The **“Everyone in Harmony” vision** statement however is really terrific. What could be better?

The Vision of Everyone in Harmony is one I believe we can honor and celebrate and in **many potential ways** be guided by. **As such I believe, as you once said, we need to consider its current implementation as a test** which may reveal opportunities for thoughtful enhancements that will benefit our men, women and mixed quartets and chorus performers

Marty, I sincerely wish that I could say that your leadership, over the last three years, has given me reason to feel that you’ve learned from your mis-steps and are now on a clearer, better track.

Unfortunately, upon reflection and given the passage of time, I must say that my concerns remain and -- have unfortunately increased. This has occurred in part because of what I perceive to be an attitude of indifference regarding the fact that **your implementation of various actions has created a membership divide where there was none. This has fractured fraternal relationships both in our historically unified purpose, fun-loving Society and with its closest independent supportive organizations.**

You have of course noted that by copying in others I’ve decided to share my concerns for the health and welfare of our Society with hundreds of others beyond simply you and our Board of Directors. **I’ve done this for two reasons:**

First because I’ve learned that alone, I’m unable to influence any action from our Policy Governance Model Board of Directors.

Second because I remain hopeful that **your promise of transparency will provide** this broader audience and others with some of the **unvarnished insights required, by anyone that cares, to better understand our Societies evolved condition.**

To this end you’ll note that **all of the following information requests**, with a few simplistic exceptions, **are for copies of what I know to be generally maintained, fundamental operations data.** I expect that these should **require little effort to post** in our Document Center. **Hopefully you can assure that a simple index is included to ease our membership’s ability to find and review various segments as they wish.**

Information Request List

Given all of the above I believe our best efforts should lead to clear and fair understandings. In other words – **let’s let the data stand by itself without opinion or explanation.**

In addition, should this list fail to request other specific 2010 thru 2020 YTD data files, that you believe would be helpful, please add them to the documentation list.

I’m sure that Eric Dove can easily respond to the following four financial record requests

- **Copies of Form 990 BHS Income Tax returns for the years 2010 thru 2021** (Note 2015 thru 2019 are currently posted)
- **Legal Expense Budgets vs Actual Costs for the Harmony Foundation International Litigation by year beginning with the initial action thru 2022 Q2**
- **Budgeted vs actual HFI Litigation associated employee expenses for the same period as above**
- **Budget vs Actual EIH costs, including those for new programs developed to support this initiative, by year beginning with those dollars initially included in the Investment Accounts**

As regards the following seven Strategic Planning items, I’m guessing, given your Strategic Planning Consulting business experience, that you probably have all of this at your fingertips. If not, I’d expect that you can reach out to Kevin Lynch; he can provide all of this from his files.

- A copy of the Strategic Model (Template) used by Chief Strategy Officer Kevin Lynch to perform our SWOT and driven deep dive possibilities which led to our Everyone in Harmony strategic initiative.
- A copy of the identified Strengths & Weaknesses and Opportunities & Threats file
- A list of the “Member Surveying” actions (not the details) and the resultant quantitative data, findings and related conclusions
- A copy of the Landscape Analysis and identified implications
- A simple list of all specific action recommendations flowing from the above strategic analysis planning process.
- A copy of the resultant strategic plan
- A copy of the “Simplified Strategic Plan” recently provided to the Board.

Marty, membership totals and available demographics are among the Societies most important measures. In fact, I’d bet that you asked for and received some historic data even before your first day on the job (8/13/2012) as our CEO.

I’m sure that it comes as no surprise that there is some skepticism regarding the question – Are we being told the whole story or convenient half-truths. One natural cause for this perception could be the loss of men when Everyone in Harmony was introduced vs the increase in women; the prevailing scuttlebutt is that the total real numbers have never been revealed to our membership.

It is of course inconceivable that, for analysis and action planning purposes, you don’t have accurate membership totals, including a pile of insightful demographics. So please, at a minimum let’s get the following facts posted in the Document Center, along with the other requested responses.

Quarterly for the years 2011 thru the 2nd Quarter 2022 for Males and Females Separately

# Total Members	# New Members	# Lost Members	# Associate Members
# Youth Members	# Trial Memberships	# Full Membership Cost Payers	
Age Demographics	#50+ year members	Years of Membership Demographics	

Given that the costs to be an active member in our Society may impact new member recruitment and member retention please provide the following cost information, plus other costs I may have failed to mention. for the same periods as above.

Annual Membership Cost	Quartet Registration Cost
International Convention Registration Cost	Mid-Winter Convention Registration Cost

+Forty-Seven Employees

*Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director	\$193,738 and \$40,911 = \$234,649
*Chief Financial Officer/Chief Operations Officer	\$157,086 “ \$30,742 = \$187,828
*Chief Marketing Officer.....	\$141,845 “ \$26,539 = \$168,384
*Chief Program Officer	\$103,188 “ \$21,556 = \$124,744
Total Officers Compensation	= \$715,605
Total number of individuals employed in calendar year 2019.....	47
<u>Total Compensation & Benefits for 47 employees was</u>	<u>\$2,883,024</u>

*Data source for the above four executives 2019 Form 990 Income Tax return

- A copy of the Position Description and Performance Measures for each of the following 19 management positions (Position Title source Harmonizer January/February 2022)

I would expect that Erin Harris and/or Jama Clinard can provide these files.

- Senior Manager, Copyright --
- Director of Membership

- Community Care Coordinator/Quartet Success **Manager**
- Relationship **Manager**
- Community Fundraising **Manager**
- Development Operations **Manager**
- **Director** of Events & Conventions
- Show Production **Manager**
- Warehouse **Manager**
- Controller & HR **Manager**
- IT **Manager**
- **Director** of Marketing
- Video Production **Manager**
- Digital Media **Manager**
- Public Relations **Manager**
- **Director** Harmony University & Education Services
- Music Educator Relationship **Manager**
- **Director** Relationship Management
- Strategic Initiatives **Manager**

Marty I'm hopeful that this fundamental set of requests will indicate that a lot has been accomplished during clearly unprecedentedly difficult times. Still, it appears that serious membership and retention issues doggedly remain.

The implementation of EIH almost instantly caused a loss of membership and financial contributors. And it appears to be at least a partial cause for non-renewals. Now we see that we had just 13,476 members and a year-end plan to reach 14,100 which may or may not be a realistic target.

Add to this mounting **HFI Litigation Expenses** with no certain returns to date – and an **ever-increasing number of contributors to the HFI stipulating that no part of their gifts go to BHS Corporate and that 100% of their distributed funds must go directly to Barbershop Chapters, not through our BHS headquarters.**

Separately I and others have contributed significantly to the AIC Miller Match. And **the fledgling SPEPPBHSUSA with now more than 1,450 members**, is naturally benefiting from the generosity of its growing fun-loving membership and other supporters.

So, what's next? From what I've read and heard at the last viewable Board meeting the answers are:

- "Listening sessions" **and** "Proactive communication with DPs & District Executive VP's"
- "Progress towards a change/shiftaway from a dues dependent business model" **and**
- **A "Memorandum of Understanding"** Between the staff and the districts.

With respect -- **Much of this sounds like "a plan for a plan"** that is **dependent primarily upon the experience and knowhow that exists in our Districts.** Add to this the headquarters effort to complete a **"Memorandum of Understanding"** so headquarters may better serve our district initiatives -- and it appears that we may be **adding more bureaucracy where none is needed** unless Harmony Hall feels the need to be more involved in every District initiative.

Marty – I think your actions are focused too much on our BHS Headquarters financial support objectives and not nearly enough on our memberships wants and needs. Absent information to the contrary it seems clear that our best BHS future lies down a path that requires dramatic, not simply membership dependent, incremental change, to increase headquarters revenues.

Hopefully you and Eric will apply the little resource time required to post the requested information during the next two to three weeks. Once it's available in the Members Only section of our web site, be assured that I will review it in depth and prepare those **observations the data provides** and if possible, offer some additional, hopefully helpful **recommendations.**

Should you have any questions or reluctances regarding any of these information requests please let's discuss them soonest. In the spirit of transparency and the maintenance of a pleasant informative process lets avoid the need to involve third parties.

Please know --

As I was expanding my mailing list by visiting all seventeen District Web Sites, I couldn't help being drawn to the hundreds of smiling, proud, fun loving pictures of guys no different than you or me. People who love what they're doing, with great memories, looking forward to the next new song, show and convention. It's made it difficult to decide to do something vs hoping someone else would **"Speak Up!"**

I'm pretty sure that very few of our remaining 13,500 members know that our Society is nearing what I feel to be, is a financial and leadership crisis. And it seriously pains me to think that when they read a copy this letter, they may think that this hobby and its traditions that provide them so much comfort and joy is closer now than ever before to its total demise. **Clearly this is not the case.** I firmly believe that it's not too late for us to secure a bigger and better Barbershop Harmony Society future.

But absent the involvement of every member who cares –deciding to "Speak Up" after being given the information I've asked for and more – I personally fear the consequences of your continued leadership.

Our membership will soon be at a crossroads. Individually we can sit and watch OR every one of us can **"Speak Up" and give our leaders our own considered opinion regarding what needs to be done.**

We can add our one voice now by making sure that every one of our 13,500 receive a copy of this letter. At a minimum we need to let our Chapter and District Presidents plus our Society Board of Directors know our concerns. **Then an only then will we know that we've each begun to do our part to assure a bigger and better future for our treasured Society.**

Marty, so far, I've compiled a little over 250 email addresses and I'm asking everyone who receives this letter to please take the time to send a copy to every Chapter President for distribution to all of their current and past members. And if you're a C&J or AIC leader please send a copy to each one of your highly trained "Masters of the Craft" and honored International Quartet Champions. Finally, while many may already have received a copy from another source – **hey, -- one more won't hurt.**

In the interim -- I wish you all the best –

Tom McQueeney

Proud 63 Year Member of our Barbershop Harmony Society





**KEEP
CALM
AND
KEEP SINGING**



**FAR WESTERN
DISTRICT**

FRESNO COMPETITORS

In order of appearance

Quartets

1. HOPS
2. Coastal Desert
3. Chromatix
4. See You At Six
5. Four Love Or Money
6. Mixed Up
7. Fogalicious
8. Soul Purpose
9. Velvet Frogs
10. GANG BUSTERS
11. Swimming With Sharps
12. Four Wheel Drive
13. Notable Vintage
14. FAR WESTERN ROVERS
15. Bardic Inspiration
16. Bridgetones
17. The Summertimers Harmony Band
18. Four Fifteen
19. Motley Q
20. The Seventh Variety
21. Six Feet Off Bass
22. Side Hustle
23. C.O.D.
24. Team Harmony
25. Note-orious BASE
26. 4D
27. Plead the Seventh
28. Never Too Late
29. Vocal Capital
30. Western Addition
31. The Essentials
32. Overly Chromatic
33. LAST PLACE

Choruses

1. Golden Valley Chorus
2. Gaslight Chorus
3. Stockton Portsmen
4. Southwest Division All-Stars
5. Mighty Oak Chorus
6. Central Coast Chordsmen
7. Orange Empire Chorus
8. Silver Statesmen
9. Pacific Coast Harmony
10. Peninsulaires
11. Southwest Vocal Alliance
12. Fog City Harmonia
13. Sun Harbor
14. Fog City Singers
15. Voices of California

An open letter to the SBOD & DPC by Tom McQueeney

John Santora, SBOD Treasurer
 Society Board of Directors
 District Presidents Council

cc:
 Marty Monson BHS Chief Executive Officer
 Eric Dove BHS Chief Financial Officer
 Society Contest & Judging Committee
 Association of International Champions
 Harmony Foundation International

Hello again.

As I begin to draft this note, I need to thank all of you who wrote regarding the content of my 7/25 information request to Marty. My heart goes out to those who are so discouraged, that while offering their thanks, said I was wasting my time: "I am firmly with you... unfortunately, I fear that this particular group of leaders (Marty, Eric, and key SBOD officers) will continue to 'double-down' rather than make a much-needed course correction."

Surprisingly only a few were upset or disappointed: "I've been continually surprised at the misinformed accusations of mismanagement I see lobbed at our Harmony Hall staff several times each year." Others said that I'd not noted the challenges Nashville had to deal with during the pandemic. Others offered welcome advice: "I wish your letter had been a little less rambling, a little less congenial, and a little more formal."

Given the above you'll note this note is addressed to **Society Board of Directors Treasurer** John Santora who will be our next board chairman, and to the balance of the board since they are the most powerful and bound by their legally defined Fiduciary responsibilities and accountabilities.

In contrast to the SBOD our **District Presidents Council** can be the most influential when united in purpose, which is why this letter is also addressed to them.

Sadly, Marty chose not to respond to any of the information requests included in my July letter. Still thanks to member responses plus BHS posted 2015 thru 2019 Form 990 Tax Returns and various SBOD, BHS and HFI recorded sessions, I was able to compile some data and insights that clearly underscore the financial and organizational conditions I believe we face given Marty's leadership and the SBOD's fiduciary support.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue - Expenses = Total?</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>#Emp</u>	<u>Total C&B \$\$</u>	<u>Marty\$\$</u>	<u>Eric \$\$</u>
2011		24,267				
2012		23,589				
2013		22,868				
2014	\$5,057,760 - \$4,561,597 = \$496,163	22,218		\$1,784,043		
2015	\$5,411,189 - \$6,035,764 = (\$624,575)	21,529	43	\$2,057,750	\$221,453	\$153,581
2016	\$5,037,005 - \$6,035,764 = (\$248,140)	20,985	43	\$2,186,413	\$227,228	\$159,214
2017	\$4,921,126 - \$5,549,890 = (\$628,734)	20,446	42	\$2,511,266	\$231,107	\$166,365
2018	\$5,065,777 - \$5,510,571 = (\$444,794)	19,624	49	\$2,578,669	\$235,176	\$185,038
2019	\$5,120,923 - \$5,926,003 = (\$785,020)	18,700	47	\$2,883,024	\$234,649	\$187,828
2020	\$4,536,788 - \$5,585,935 = (\$1,049,147)	15,167			\$233,281	\$184,784
2021	??? - ??? = (\$878,003)					

Note: BHS Litigation 2021 Expenses \$700,000

COVID Years 2020-21 = Total Loss 2015-2019 = \$2,731,263

2017 Chief Strategy Officer hired 2016 (paid \$142,173 in 2017) EIH was the announced product

2018 Motion to approve \$1,048,880 in spending for EIH implementation contingent on credit

2019 Motion to execute borrowing agreement with Studio Bank term sheet dated 12/3/2018

In my opinion the above data and SBOD actions leave little doubt that *Everyone In Harmony* conceived in 2017 was a desperate design to dramatically increase revenues, both short and longer term, while apparently doing little to reduce the costs of a bloated organization structure, concurrently receiving annual compensation and benefits increases.

Unanswered questions are frequently revealing. For example, one unanswered request asked during the 6/17-18/2020 BHS Finance Q&A was – to “describe in detail the leveraged assets” provided to the bank that resulted in the \$3,325,000 line of credit. If memory serves, Chief Financial Officer Eric Dove noted that the building was the primary asset since it was purchased for \$5,000,000 and was now appraised for \$10,600,000. When asked for greater detail Eric responded to this effect: “I’m not going to share my financial documents with you - you’ve got all the information you need.”

Eric’s uncharacteristic response piqued my curiosity and only two things came to mind. The first was the potential rental income, which seems logical. The second theoretically could have been a forecast of *Everyone In Harmony* membership increases. The potential addition of 3,000 to 5,000 new members given this new initiative could have been perceived as reasonable given prior membership levels. Unfortunately, absent transparency there cannot be trust.

In any event the \$3,325,000 line of credit appears to have been totally spent by 2021. The 15-year loan repayment period began last February. The SBOD’s safety net to pay back the bank was the anticipated vacant space rental income. Eric Dove noted rental income would be \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year - more than enough to pay the \$270,000 per year loan repayment for 15 years, leaving \$130,000 to \$230,000 for BHS. Note that at best this doesn’t quite pay for Marty’s 2020 compensation and benefits, but even worse, to the best of my knowledge, the vacant space “safety net” still has not yet been rented.

John Santora during the June 2020 Q&A was asked “how do you defend these wage and benefit increases?” And to John’s credit he provided a clear, never heard by me before, response. His explanation is a definite game changer in almost every way imaginable. “Our BHS *Everyone In Harmony* membership (revenue) growth objectives require that we must invest now in people and in things that our strategic plan requires to meet its five to twenty years out growth objectives.” “The important part of the story is that in 2017, 2018 and 2019, and even now in 2020 this is executing on the strategic plan that the Society Board approved, which involves growing the organization beyond its membership and in order to do that, you have to make investments in people and in things in order to achieve those strategic visions that are five, ten and twenty years out into the future. People are part of that. Systems and activities are part of that, but It’s all related to the growth that we are planning for related to *Everyone In Harmony* and not the static situation of our legacy business as I described earlier.”

While I can’t define how much the BHS has spent on *Everyone In Harmony*, I do know the following:

- Chief Strategy Officer Kevin Lynch was paid **\$263,631** during the 2017-2018 period.
- On 7/4/17 the SBOD Approved **\$42,000** budget modification of net new spending to support 2017 Strategic Plan implementation.
- On 7/3/18 SBOD meeting, a motion to approve the “amended 2018 budget” to include **\$1,048,880** spending for EIH implementation costs contingent on a credit facility by 10/31 for 2018-2020 expenditures.

Beyond the above \$1,354,111 we're left to interpret three relevant observations.

On November 17, 2019, the Finance report to the SBOD anticipated full year revenue would be \$6,100,000 vs the \$6,600,000 budget. As you can see above, just six weeks later, the 2019 total revenues turned out to be just \$5,120,923. That is a shortfall of \$979,077. What would an average member think about this? And what would they think about the total 2019 \$1,479,077 negative performance to budget?

John Santora's aforementioned explanation that meeting the *Everyone In Harmony* membership (revenue) growth objectives require significant investment now, is apparently leading the SBOD to ignore these precipitous budgetary shortfalls.

Given that the Society Board and Harmony Hall agree the implementation of EIH was flawed, and the \$1,000,000+ spent has yielded little to no membership and revenue growth, and that EIH is reported to have caused significant male membership and financial donor losses, doesn't all of this beg for more than a few critical questions? The fledgling SPPBSQSUS organization has added another couple of hundred new likely older, wealthier members - since my 7/25 letter and now totals more than 1600. Can we continue to bleed members from that demographic?

Since the driving force for the financial crisis, I feel we're in, is said to be our "Strategic Plan" and -- being no stranger to its various thoughtful processes and preferably candid expressions -- I will offer a few simplistic, made-up but likely SWOT notes.

- A large percentage of our male membership will initially object to the inclusion of females
- Mixed Quartets & Choruses will likely increase in number
- Some losses in male membership will occur but may be offset by female additions
- Limited financial assets are inadequate to fund costly dramatic revenue increase initiatives
- HFI will experience a loss in total number of donors and likely more senior above average contributors
- HFI provides needed support to BHS but not enough to meet our *Everyone In Harmony* needs

And here are three made-up likely Strategy Implications/Action Items and my detailed thoughts on each.

1. Engage the Harmony Foundation to access increased financial resources

Given the controversy and the BHS litigation expenses totaling more than \$700,000 in 2021 alone, let's begin with "Engage the Harmony Foundation to access increased financial resources."

As you know the BHS (SPEBSQSA, Inc.) long ago had its own fund-raising program. However, given changing laws and fund-raising organization staffing, reporting and control requirements, the BHS decided in 1959 that it would be best to support the creation of a separate, properly staffed, independent, nonprofit, incorporated Foundation. For 60 years things apparently went well.

In April 2020, the BHS determined that the HFI was unable satisfy its forecasted financial support needs and therefore announced its intent to enter into collaborative discussions regarding how to reunite the two independent organizations. However, like many hostile takeover plans, it became apparent early on that the Society's actions were inconsistent with its announced intentions as the BHS's now revealed power grab raged from proclaiming the HFI's poor performance, to offering most HIF employees similar positions in the BHS, to initiating costly litigation attacks to get control of the HIF. The irony of what appears to have been a deeply in the red performance failure essentially offering a better tomorrow to anyone or for anything is inescapable.

Currently, I suspect that there is yet another apparent reluctance of the BHS to simply recognize what any board with Fiduciary accountabilities is required to do. Specifically, the Harmony Foundation International is Donor Directed. That is when you and I contribute to the HFI, we can stipulate specifically what is it we want our money to support, or what specifically we don't want our money to support.

One of HFI's primary fiduciary responsibilities is to require for example, a BHS financial grant request that describes the grants' purpose and intended outcomes. It's also important to note that that the HFI doesn't disburse the approved grant funds until its purpose is completed. Absent that requirement the recipient organization could spend your and my contribution in ways we never intended or even on purposes we specifically didn't want to support.

Given Nashville's current self-inflicted, acrimonious, and unpredictable working relationship with HFI and donor directed stipulations, the Foundation has most recently been working directly with our District Presidents to better understand and financially support their memberships wants and needs.

Separately it's important to understand that the Foundation, while absolutely donor-centric/directed, serves an increasing number of organizations in addition to the BHS. Its vision is clear: "to be the premier international agent through which individuals and organizations invest in the lifelong benefits of singing."

(For what it's worth two years ago I began stipulating that my donations were specifically to and for District needs, and furthermore asked for assurance that not one cent of my contributions would pass to or through Nashville's control.)

2. Leverage current assets to provide necessary EIH initiative funding

Absent withheld information I'm left to identify just five possibilities.

- As you would expect the Society, invests some of its money in various financial instruments. The 2019 tax return reports revenue totaling \$26,045 vs \$92,183 in 2018.
- The yet to be realized vacant space Rental Income <https://www.loopnet.com/Listing/110-7th-Ave-N-Nashville-TN/21143576/>.
- Borrowing money (\$3,325,000 line of credit) using the headquarters building for collateral
- Event income - e.g., Conventions, Harmony University.
- Improve staff productivity via reorganization, staffing review, and the like.

3. Develop a short to mid-term *Everyone In Harmony* implementation plan

- In and by itself *Everyone In Harmony* is a wonderful vision statement
- It's one thing for the Society Board and Harmony Hall to agree that the implementation of EIH was flawed and quite another to not take ownership and rectify their mistakes.
- *Everyone In Harmony* is a strategic performance failure by almost any measure
- The forecasted membership and resultant revenue increases were devastating misses as well

So where does all of this leave us today? What can and should we do?

Absent data to the contrary I'm left to consider the likelihood that BHS is nearing bankruptcy. Here are my reasons for this assertion.

The IRS Form 990 for 2020 for the BHS shows a loss of \$1,049,147 and a Net Worth of \$1,105,673. The loss of \$878,003 in 2021 (as reported to the BHS Board by Eric Dove) reduces BHS's net worth at the end of 2021 to just \$227,670

The \$3,325,000 loan repayment of \$270,000/year for 15 years, began last February. The contingency payment resource was the vacant space rental income, forecasted to be \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year. The space has yet to be rented.

Absent information to the contrary, the above would imply that Nashville's net worth by now is zero and that it has a large amount of debt. If that's the case, declaring Chapter 11 Bankruptcy would allow Nashville to reorganize its struggling operations while delaying the payment of their debts. However, if the creditors vote to reject the plan or the Bankruptcy Court denies confirmation, the debtor must begin again.

In my opinion, Nashville's lack of transparency is more than just a gross insult to its membership, leaving each of us to imagine and guess:

- Why are there no SBOD meeting minutes posted in the document center, for nearly two years, i.e., beyond September 12, 2020?
- Why, with apparently catastrophic financial performance results, hasn't Nashville's Form 990 tax returns been posted since the 2019 return?
- What possible reason could there be to not respond to the most if not all of the questions asked in my July 25th letter to Marty?

Given the SBOD's responsibilities and accountabilities should I have sent my information request to them? If so, then please consider the following to be my request to the SBOD for answers.

Please post in the Document Center the following for each monthly or quarterly period beginning 2010 thru most recent period.

- Basic Membership data Monthly or Quarterly Membership Totals and Demographics. For example, #men, #women, #New, #Lost, #Associate, #Youth, #50+Year members, #Trial Memberships, Total Membership Age Demographics for men and women.
- Membership annual dues for each segmented group. For example, Regular, Youth, Associate, Lifetime.
- International Convention and Mid-Winter Registration costs for each segmented group
- Position Description/Performance measures for each of the 19 BHS Director & Manager positions listed in the January/February 2022 Harmonizer
- Form 990 Federal Income Tax Returns.
- Actual BHS expenditures to for the HFI litigation Actual HFI Litigation associated employee expenses.
- All Budgeted vs Actual EIH costs, including those for new program development to support this initiative.
- Strategic Plan. A copy of:
 - The utilized planning/analysis model or template.
 - Identified Strengths and Weaknesses + Opportunities and Threats.
 - The resultant Strategic Plan and the now available Simplified Strategic Plan.

Why are the answers so important? It is because those answers would provide numerous insights that become the foundation for observable financial performance improvement opportunities.

BHS needs dramatic financial and cultural performance improvement. Culturally we must become far more transparent and membership wants & needs driven. Absent that, there can be no trust and little more than forced change. Our current business model, including its division of responsibilities, accountabilities and authorities has produced massive financial and cultural performance failures. Several changes are both necessary and consistent with desired membership increase objectives and creditor requirements. They are as follows.

1. The SBOD must assume full and complete responsibility for strategic planning, budget, policies, and committees' oversight. They would delegate most day-to-day responsibilities to an Executive Director, who they are also responsible for hiring. In this governance model, staff, volunteers, executives, and committees report back to the board. Overall, the model is also known as a working board.

The immediate impacts of this change are the elimination of our Current CEO and Chief Financial Officer positions, the combined compensation of which totals \$418,065 plus benefits, expense accounts, and other miscellaneous costs, all of which likely exceeds \$500,000. These expense reductions will be partially offset by the establishment of an "Executive Director" of Nashville Operations.

2. The SBOD needs to commission a fundamental position responsibility, accountability study of the remaining 45 employee Nashville Operations organization structure. Key considerations would include.
 - a) Those responsibilities being removed from Nashville Operations and undertaken by the board.
 - b) Those performance accountabilities retained by the Nashville Operations Executive Director,
 - c) Identified responsibilities and/or redundancies that may or may not be maintained.
 - d) Current compensation & benefits plus position responsibility budgets & expenditures.
 - e) Responsibilities farmed out to former employees and other service providers.

The objective of the Nashville Operations study is to establish a leaner, less complex organization structure clearly focused on membership wants and needs. Given the anticipated position responsibility changes, compensation should be largely based on community wage data.

Likely position eliminations include the following.

- i. Chief Marketing Officer, Holly Keller \$187,828.
- ii. Chief Program Officer, Erin Harris \$168,024.
- iii. 2018 Chief Strategy Officer, Kevin Lynch \$121,458.
- iv. Significant others included in Nashville's \$2,883,024 total for Salaries, other compensation & benefits .

Given that only Listed Officers in (1) and (2) account for \$895,375, I believe that additional position eliminations in (2.iv) will likely exceed \$700,000 for a total expense reduction of more than \$1,595,375. Add to this the money spent by these positions and something more than \$2,000,000 in cost reductions will likely be realized. However, some small portion of these reductions may be partially offset by remaining employee responsibility increases.

3. Concurrent with (2) above, the SBOD should request the District Presidents Council to contribute the following for inclusion in the above Nashville organization and staffing study
 - a) What does a District require to fulfill its current membership needs and wants?
 - b) What, among those identified needs and wants require Nashville's support?
 - c) What among the identified needs and wants require the Society Board of Directors support?

- d) Organizationally what is needed to assure priority awareness of and attention to your memberships needs and wants?

4. The SBOD needs to recognize that it is in the best, short, and long-term interest of our Barbershop Harmony Societies membership to restore its mutually supportive relationship with the Harmony Foundation International. This can be a win-win for everyone and in particular for our all-important Society membership. However, given the recent past, trust issues could make it impossible.

What's at stake and what needs to be considered?

- a) There is a large number of lost donors and others whose stipulations exclude Nashville's involvement.
- b) Actions that restore public and donor trust and confidence are paramount in importance to mutually desired outcomes; these most certainly include the responsibility and revised staffing noted above.
- c) Questions created by the extended allegations period need to be answered in an effort to maximize the restoration of public and donor trust and confidence, e.g., the alleged \$600,000 irrevocable trust.
- d) Required settlement agreements, approved by the court, with prejudice, would forever prevent a repeat of any and all contentious allegations. By clarification necessity these would include the recognition of separate Boards and BHS participation on the HFI Board of Trustees.
- e) Substantial ongoing Litigation costs and remaining internal and external budgeted BHS fund raising expenses would be eliminated.
- f) Renewed utilization of the HFI's professional fund-raising assets would benefit the BHS *Everyone in Harmony* vision objectives .

If our past experience is at all suggestive of potential savings, we are easily looking at a \$1,000,000 positive financial impact.

5. The SBOD needs to revisit our *Everyone in Harmony* implementation experiences, including suggestions made by the District Presidents Council and the members they represent. Specifically, we know the following.
- a) Given the Societies spiraling, negative financial performance, little imagination was required to suspect that *Everyone In Harmony* was conceived to produce dramatic revenue increases; in that regard it must be considered to be a total failure.
 - b) The Strategic Planning process which produced *EIH* mission, most certainly would have considered every conceivable opportunity to secure additional revenues and the related anticipated threats.
 - c) While the *Everyone In Harmony* vision statement is wonderful and potentially even inspiring, its perceived core objective, resultant membership losses and destruction of valued traditions seems to have indelibly tarnished its more admirable potentials.
 - d) Recommendations from the District Presidents Council and reportedly numerous other voices offering more palatable structure and implantation alternatives were not accepted for inclusion.
 - e) The announcement of *EIH* with its inclusion of women quickly resulted in numerous, negative male membership reactions ranging from resignations to non-renewals to HFI doner losses and more.
 - f) *EIH* in its current form will likely be a cause for current and future membership attritions.
 - g) Given its flawed history, there is substantial doubt that even a more inspiring, holistic *EIH* Vision can be embraced by a righteously skeptical membership.

Frankly I'm not as pessimistic as many clearly are regarding the preservation of *Everyone In Harmony*. I have however been repeatedly disappointed by our current Nashville Leadership's failure to own their mistakes and have the courage to rectify the situation versus ride a wonderful vision into oblivion.

There are many alternative ways to move forward, but only those that share all of the following considerations will have any probable chance of success.

- Keep in mind that the current *EIH* contest eligibility and random order of appearance format was a test with expected unforeseen issues and appropriate revision.
- Include the District Presidents Council recommendation to segment all contest to include all male, all female and mixed ensembles.
- Maintain the current C&J categories and qualification standards for all male ensembles.
- Retain the current all-male ensemble medalist designations and rules regarding Champion Quartet non repeat and Chorus Champion no compete year intervals.
- Request the C&J modify our current three categories, to the extent necessary, to provide equivalent performance standards and to more properly judge all female and separately mixed ensemble performances as well as to provide more insightful performance improvement feedback and coaching.

Given that there is a likely possibility that it may be a lengthy period of time before a sufficient number of all-female and mixed ensembles achieve the equivalent performance qualification standards necessary to qualify for District and International competitions, more than one Champion Medalist designation will not be sensible or well received and will in any event be predictably problematic. This may or may not be considered reason enough to establish a totally separate time and place for each of these two ensemble convention weekends.

6. Everyone knows that this is a relatively expensive "hobby" and what's less known is the degree to which many "members" are enticed to join and are retained by significantly lower to zero dues - some actually receiving financial support. The SBOD needs to prioritize, for transparent consideration, some imaginable ways to reduce our active member hobby costs dramatically. Notice I underscored the word imaginable and never used the word viable. However, a few million dollars less in BHS expenses is definitely a VIABLE way to begin.

In the interim – I wish you all the best --

Tom McQueeney



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**



CROSSWORD

A healthy singer needs a healthy body and a healthy mind.

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Across

- 1 Dye, spice or tanning agent from Rhus plants
- 6 Lather
- 10 Hit hard
- 14 "Enchanted April" setting
- 15 TX/AR city
- 17 Femme fatale
- 18 Favorably influenced
- 19 Kind of lineup
- 21 Leftover
- 22 Wahine accessory
- 23 Drench
- 25 Deft
- 30 Diamond of note
- 32 Time div.
- 34 Gas burner
- 35 Serbian-American inventor and electrical engineer
- 37 Copper
- 38 Pinocchio, at times
- 39 Inferior
- 40 Overused
- 41 "---- It Romantic?"
- 42 Horned goddess

Down

- 43 Records
- 44 1994 Peace Nobel
- 45 Emcee's need
- 46 Goon
- 47 Con
- 48 Bad looks
- 50 Cicatrix
- 52 Org. for movie makers
- 55 Volcanic type buried Pompeii
- 57 Ties up
- 59 Of the lowest quality
- 64 Drops
- 65 Completely healthy
- 66 Burn
- 67 Took advantage of
- 68 Bow trees
- 69 Cereal killer

Down

- 1 Rope fiber
- 2 Of service
- 3 Tool used to separate strands of a rope for splicing
- 4 Bar stocks
- 5 John Lennon's first wife

- 6 Thrills
- 7 President pro ---
- 8 Big show
- 9 Pledge
- 10 Feb. quartet, usually
- 11 Suffers from
- 12 Unity
- 13 Crash site?
- 16 Abbr. after many a general's name
- 20 "You've got mail" co.
- 24 Comes out
- 26 Leans (on)
- 27 Sat on the Dock of the Bay
- 28 Really dumb
- 29 Small open fruit pies
- 31 French president's residence
- 33 Hostelrys
- 35 Cuts back
- 36 Red fluorescent dye
- 37 Henhouse
- 40 Sort
- 44 Function
- 47 Battering device
- 49 Physics units
- 51 Mentions
- 53 Start
- 54 Money in the bank, say
- 56 Roll call call
- 58 Arabic commander
- 59 "Law & Order" spin-off, initially
- 60 --- Master's Voice
- 61 Smelter's grist
- 62 Clunker
- 63 Embroider

SUDOKU

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SOLUTIONS on page 42



Bill Rosica

Far Western District President
president@farwesterndistrict.org



Three-Year Retrospect

When I was installed in October of 2019 by then Society Board Member Bernard Priceman, I had planned on a very busy schedule, beginning with the Contest-at-Sea. Even before our next meeting in the spring of 2020, things had changed with Covid-19 rearing its ugly head. At times, I felt like pushing the “Hold” Button and wait until Covid blew over to begin my term. Well, life doesn’t stop for anything. Covid eventually put a stop to the Contest-at-Sea and the spring Convention and eventually the International Convention in Los Angeles.

These cancellations were tough, but through it all Chapters found ways to keep singing. We all learned the term, “You’re Muted”, very quickly. Zoom® was a life saver for some chapters and for others, outdoor singing, masks and in my chapter, The Masters, with a grant from the LA Arts Commission, used a new system called JackTrip® allowing singing with little to no latency. I attended a few chapter meetings using Zoom® and found that those who didn’t sing still got together to watch former Quartet and Chorus Champs from old files and even told stories about “the good old days”. The Brotherhood was still alive and kicking.

We lost a few chapters because of Covid, but we gained some new members as well. I would encourage all chapters to provide an Open House night to all men and women if you have a mixed chorus to introduce them to our style of singing. I just talked to my brother from Oregon and his mixed chorus is singing better than ever. And like it or not “Everyone in Harmony” could be what saves some chapters.

I’d like to thank the District Board and the District Management Team for keeping a good attitude through the past three years. There was never a time when we accented the negative. Everyone looked for new and better ideas to “Keep the Whole World Singing”. Our Fall contest is shaping up to be a great Coming Out Party. We visited with the Fresno Convention Center and they are very

excited about having us back in their town. We’re working on getting some local TV Coverage during the event and especially at the Massed Sing in the Arrium of the Hotel.

I’d like to say a special thanks to my mentor and Immediate Past President, Craig Hughes. Not only did he help me through some difficult times, but he had his own two years as president and filled in for Mongo while he was on the mend from back surgery. Craig didn’t let any moss grow under his feet as he now is president of The Masters. Talk about going from the frying pan into the fire. Thanks Craig! Your advice was spot on in those areas where I need sage advice.

Your next president, provided he gets enough votes, (lol) will be Kenny Rios from Las Vegas. I know he is a high energy guy and has plans for the district to move forward in the next couple of years. In his shadows will be Executive VP, Adam Kaufman from the Phoenix area. Adam has done a great job of keeping tabs on the folks over in Arizona and has plans for the Fall Convention in 2023.

Finally, thanks to the many of you who had enough faith in me to put me into this office. I learned a lot about dealing with adversity. I never thought that when I joined the Society 40 years ago, I would have been in this position. I am humbled and joyful for the time I spent as your president. I will continue to do what I can to make, **no to keep** the Far Western District the best District in the Society.





Kenny Rios
Executive Vice President
 evp@farwesterndistrict.org

Everything old is new again and everything new is, well... exciting!! But before I get into that, I'd like to introduce myself for those who are new to our District or still don't know me.

I currently hail from Sin City...The Entertainment Capital of the World...the Glitter Gulch...The Marriage/Divorce capital of the World...Lost Wages...all known as Las Vegas, Nevada.

I started my Barbershop career in Pasadena, California singing with the Crown City Chorus in 1984. Later that year, I left the Crown City Chorus and became a Founding Father of the Masters of Harmony along with 7 other men. I was the chapter's first Secretary and we chartered the chapter in 1985. Unfortunately for me, I was transferred to Las Vegas, Nevada, in 1987 just as we were picking up steam for our quest to be on an International stage. Upon moving to Las Vegas, I then sang with the Las Vegas Gamblaires and then with The City of Lights Chorus, also from Las Vegas. The two chapters eventually merged and became the present Las Vegas chapter, The Silver Statesmen Chorus. I, like most of you, have held several offices while singing Barbershop. The only office I haven't held is Treasurer.

I am married to my beautiful wife, Renee, who also sings Barbershop with Sweet Adeline, Inc. She will be with me in Fresno so please track us down to say "Hi!" We have 4 adult children and six grandkids, so far.

As we all are finally coming out of the pandemic, this Fall Convention will be the epitome of the saying, "Everything old is new again." Why? Well, as we gather for our first Fall Convention since 2019, what was a past experience for a lot of us will be almost like a new experience. Not only do we get to enjoy the Barbershop Convention as in days gone, but we also get to venture further into "All in Harmony." This year's Fall Convention will, once again, allow us to see and hear men's, women's and mixed quartets and choruses...and that's exciting!! Some chapters in our District are just now getting back on their feet while others have continued to meet through Zoom and even in person. Either way we look at it, it's time we come together in Fresno to do what we do best... gather as brothers and sisters through the magic of music. I'm

looking forward to the applause, cheering and show of support of all who cross the Fresno stage. Now THAT is exciting!!

Even though our craft is "old" hat to a lot of us, everything old is new, ONCE again.

If you haven't registered for the Fall convention yet, do so today. Don't miss out on our return to barbershop harmony and brotherhood/sisterhood. Because...WE. ARE. BACK!!!

Please look for my wife and me and say hello to us!! We both are looking forward to not only seeing our old friends again, but are also excited to welcome new faces into our family!



Craig Hughes
Immediate Past President
 pastpresident@farwesterndistrict.org

Our 2022 International Convention was historic.

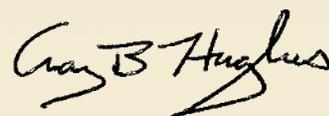
I was in Charlotte, NC, a couple of weeks ago with thousands enjoying the gift of close harmony. It was our first experience with a gender-neutral International Convention and Contest. It didn't matter who was singing as long as there were four parts in the Barbershop Style. The variety and simplicity were magical. No need to guess about qualifications, just relax and enjoy. I was happy to participate and not provide an official judgement.

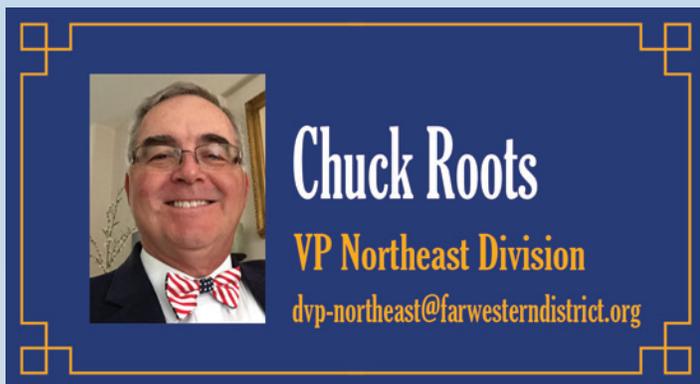
While some of us had strong feelings about the changes and how they were implemented, the support for the competitors was incredible. Cut through the controversy and we had an arena full of wonderful people – Barbershoppers.

My short message is this: The changes to our Society were divisive, and the implementation was flawed but . . . if you are sitting out, please return and help with the healing. Your participation isn't a sign of approval but a sign of love. Love for the music and the people. Your Quartet, Chapter, District and Society need your voice and smile.

It is truly "Great to be a Barbershopper!"

"Keep the Whole World Singing,"





Our singing is vital to our very existence. It lifts the spirits and brings a stronger sense of belonging and unity within the human family.

To borrow from the Bible, Psalm 100 says, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord . . . with singing." Whether you sing for joy to the Lord God, or just sing for personal pleasure, either way, it is good for the soul! And everybody said, "Amen!"

Keep Ringing Those Chords!

Chuck Roots, NE Division VP

Make a Joyful Noise

Congratulations to the new International Champion Quartet, Quorum, and to the new Champion Chorus, Music City!

Perhaps some of you had a chance to attend the fun in Charlotte, North Carolina. Or you watched it via some electronic trickery (I would never be mistaken for a "techie," or "tekkie" if you prefer). In any event, it was obvious that everyone, singers, and others, were delighted to once again be back singing on the big stage.

From all that we are told, Covid will be with us for a long time. Undoubtedly, we have lost some of our fellow barbershoppers to this virus, and it has certainly had a major impact on our ability to sing together, causing some of us to hibernate from any outside the home activities. Obviously, there is a large percentage of us who are in the senior citizen category, a portion of our population that seems to be particularly at risk to this pandemic. Let me just point out that if you are making the choice to stay away from social contact, then we respect that decision. Several guys I know are medically at risk, or their spouse is at risk, so their decision to absent themselves is certainly the correct one.

But there is another category of our brothers and sisters that have yet to rejoin their chapter. The reason is they have grown comfortable not getting out on rehearsal night, choosing to stay home, or engage in something other than this great hobby we all love. If you know someone like this, do them, and your chapter a favor by sending them a card, or make the phone call inviting them to come back. If they do not hear from someone, they may feel they are not really wanted. As a former pastor, I can tell you that one of the biggest reasons people do not come back to church is that they never hear from anyone, the pastor, or a church member. The same is true for our hobby. So, make that call! Write that card!

No one could foresee this pandemic, and certainly not the length of time it would last. But we have pressed through. And we will continue to push back against this health issue.



Barbershop is Fun

I want to remind all of you about something

Barbershop is fun.

Yes, we like competing.

Yes, we like doing shows.

However, the reason we do all of this is for fun!

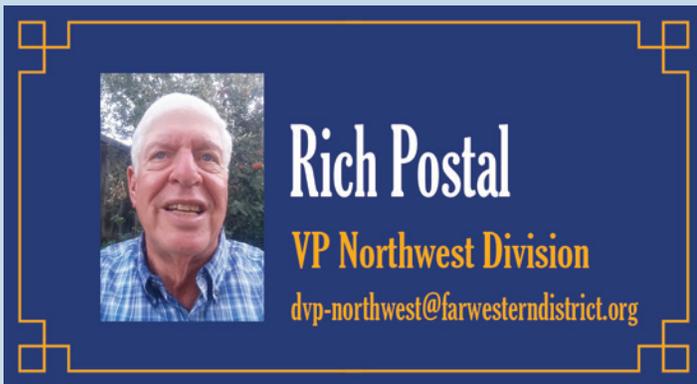
This year we brought back the Arizona Summer Bash, and it was one heck of a party! Friday night there were over 100 people in attendance. They were wowed by 5 quartets and 2 choruses. Saturday afternoon Cary Burns held a very successful Tag Zone, and then Saturday night there were 9 Luck of The Draw quartets, a novice quartet, and a VLQ.

The AZ Division in conjunction with the Phoenicians has plans in the works for an Octoberfest on October 8th. No specifics yet, but you can be sure it will be fun.

I am encouraging anyone who is reading this to find more ways to have fun with our hobby. Have an afterglow...even if you don't have a show. Do some pick-up quarteting. Sing tags. Whatever is fun for you...do it! Invite friends, invite acquaintances, invite people you just met.

If you going to have a fun event... please invite me!

Remember....Barbershop is fun.



This has been a strange summer in that there are a number of significant Barbershop events that took place such as our International Convention in Charlotte and most recently Harmony University. During this period I have visited a number of Chapters in my Division and found spotty attendance at some and moderate attendance at others. Some of the folks blame it on the summer doldrums and others are hanging on to Covid. As we progress into the fall, I hope there will be a renewed interest in this hobby that we all love. I feel that those groups that have the best attendance have performance goals upcoming, be it the Fall Contest in Fresno or Chapter Show(s) or even Farmer's Market singouts. Every person needs to know how important they are to the overall sound of the chorus. It is especially true for small choruses who need all four parts at any given rehearsal. This job of letting others know they are missed is not exclusive to the officers of the Chapter, but to all the members Following is an article that came from another organization's newsletter.

The Member Who Never Came Back

It amuses me to think that your group spends so much time looking for new members while I was there all the time.

Do you remember me? I am the person you asked to join, I paid my dues and was asked to be a loyal and faithful member?

I am the person who came to every meeting, but nobody paid any attention to me. I tried to be friendly, but everyone seemed to have their own friends to talk and sit with.

I sat with different people several times but they did not pay much attention to me. I hoped that someone would ask me to join one of the committees or do something, but no one did.

Finally, because of illness, I missed a meeting. When I came again no one asked me where I had been. I guess it didn't matter much whether I came or not. Next time I decided to stay home and watch a good TV show. When I

came back again, no one asked me where I was the month before.

You might say I'm a good person and fun loving and religious. You know what else I am?

I'm the member who never came back.



Well. I have good news and I have bad news.

Bad news first.

I have not one chorus, under my watch, registered to compete in Fresno this fall. I say "I", and not we, because I take this personally. I have failed in my efforts to encourage my choruses to come back to barbershop. To come back to their roots, to recapture that which enticed them in the first place.

I know that things are not like they once were. I know that many of my choruses are struggling with membership and keeping a director. They are hanging on by their fingernails. Some have given up and are not singing at all anymore. How sad it that.

All of this is heartbreaking for me. I so want them to take one more bit of effort to rebuild. Yes, it takes time. Yes, it's not easy. Yes, it takes the risk of changing things to make others want to join and have what you offer.

It really does come down to change, doesn't it? Change is not necessarily a bad action. Things change, people change, life changes. Our society, both sociological and barbershopical, (I made up that word – thank you, Jeff Baker) is not now what it once was.

Like most things, there are good and bad changes. And sometimes we can't recognize the difference. Some of us are stuck in the changes and have forgotten what it means to just gather and sing.

And that brings me to the good news!

An idea came to fruition, and it seems to be garnering good results. The powers behind the scenes love it and

have given their endorsement and encouragement.

I have introduced this idea in person to a few choruses and some have openly embraced the idea, while others have agreed to consider participating. I'm thrilled with those who are committed to playing with us, and hopeful others will just show up.

We're building a Southwest Division Chorus to take the stage in Fresno for evaluation only!! Think of what this means.

So far, we have around forty singers with varied contest experience. I hoping to have at least another forty singers who want to have the experience of standing on the risers and giving it their all. Heart and soul all. The whole enchilada...from dusting off their music to make sure they know it well, to rehearsing on Friday, to smiling their faces off for the audience, to taking in that thunderous applause

from the audience.

And that's not all. There's the evaluation!

We get to gather with representatives from the judging panel who will critique our performance. They will coach and encourage us. They will remind us of good singing practices and techniques. They will help us fall in love with barbershop again if need be. It will be a good thing.

Hopefully, this experience will catapult some to go home and get busy rebuilding. And for those choruses who are successful and thriving, I hope this experience helps you to appreciate the effort of those who keep your choruses healthy and moving forward.

Go home and thank your director and management team for taking good care of you and your chorus. I'm not sure we do enough of that.



What an exciting time to be apart of the Far Western District! Part of my job as DVP SE is encourage chapters to sing at a division and district contests in their respective choruses and quartets. However, as you know, it's so much more than that. It's the people, the laughter, and the bonds we share that make this thing all the worthwhile.

Nothing brings me more joy than to experience Barbershop harmony within our own district. Nothing tops that Barbershop experience for me. Our people, our history...it's an untouchable experience.

So remember as you take the stage in Fresno: Whether it's your first time or 20th time at District, soak up every bit of butterflies you feel and the energy you receive from the audience.

Feelings like that don't come around very often.

Have a blast!

We are looking forward to an incredibly exciting Fall contest in Fresno! We have reached our absolute maximum of THIRTY THREE quartets, and already have another five on the waiting list, should we get any scratches for unforeseen reasons. There are also 15 choruses planning to be on stage, so it will be a super, fun-filled weekend of singing and coaching. Live barbershop is back!

With the incredible number of entries, we'll begin the Friday semi-finals round at 2:00 pm. Plan to be in Fresno early to support all of the groups crossing the stage. Another exciting modification for this year will be that given such a large field, we'll advance 14 quartets to Friday night's finals, plus the traditional mic testers. This means that everyone will get to hear even more from some of our top quartets.

We're also working hard to make sure we keep the schedule tight to allow for people to enjoy mixing, mingling, and singing in various hospitality rooms Saturday night.

Plan now to be in Fresno October 14-16 – it's going to be fabulous!



Scott Suwabe
Chorus Director Development
 cdd@farwesterndistrict.org



Jim Maass
District Secretary
 secretary@farwesterndistrict.org

I have emailed other members in my positions in other Districts to gather advice and information about what they are doing in their districts to guide what I should be doing here in ours, specifically the Cardinal, Dixie, Northeast, Rocky Mountain, and Sunshine Districts as their emails were readily available.

I have received an email regarding finding a new Chorus Director for the Santa Clarita Chapter through our website, and provided an email reply, from which I have yet to receive any word from them whether the information I provided was useful or not.

I am aware of other chapters that are looking for directors, and while they have not specifically contacted me, I am trying to reach out to them to support them in any way I can.

I am still trying to make a game plan for the Director's Guild Workshop, especially with COVID regulations slowly being loosened.

We had talked about a Director's Breakfast at District, I would love to have that be an option for Fresno, but I understand if we have neither the time to plan it nor the resources to have it on semi-short notice.



ROB MENAKER
TREVOR WAY
ERIC BJORNSEN
DAN DAVENPORT

VOCALOCITY
 QUARTET

480.259.6633
 VOCALOCITYQUARTET@GMAIL.COM

A reminder to all chapter secretaries on the procedure for filing for show clearance.

BMI/SESAC LICENSE and Show Clearance

File these for EACH performance:

1. Go to the FWD Website (farwesterndistrict.org).
2. Navigate to Media > Show Clearance Forms.
3. Download the file "**** IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS for PREPARATION & MAILING****".
4. READ the detailed instructions in that file.
5. Download the latest Application for Show Clearance BMI & SESAC LICENSE Form.
6. Complete the form per the instructions (you can fill out and the print the form using your computer).
7. Have your Treasurer issue a check, payable to either "BHS" or "SPEBSQSA" for the about due (usually \$28.00).
8. **IMPORTANT: DO NOT MAIL THE FORM AND CHECK TO BHS!** This will only slow down the process. Instead, mail the check and form to your District Secretary, whose address you will find in the instructions downloaded in Step 3.

Following these procedures will get your show cleared and added to the district calendar in short order.

ASCAP Reporting Forms

File Annually

1. Go to the FWD Website (farwesterndistrict.org).
2. Navigate to Media > Show Clearance Forms.
3. Download the file "**** IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS for PREPARATION & MAILING****".
4. READ the above instructions.
5. Download the latest ASCAP Reporting Form.
6. Have your treasurer cut a check payable to "Barbershop Harmony Society".
7. Mail the form and check to BHS per the instructions.



ARIZONA DIVISION

Cherie Kaufman • Division Editor

Central Arizona Quartet Chapter

by Bill Kane

A substantial number of chapter members enjoyed greatly participating in the Arizona Bash. Was this especially true because their VLQ won the contest? Keeping with Division VP Adam Kaufman's theme of "Barbershop is Fun" we all sure did have fun! One of our chapter quartets, Cut for Time, performed in the Parade of Quartets and many members participated in the Luck of The Draw contest. Many thanks to Adam and The Phoenicians for hosting this event. Looking forward to the next one- OktoberFest.

Chapter quartets are preparing for a couple of public performances commissioned by the City of Phoenix that have been long-delayed due to the pandemic. One quartet, Cut for Time, performed for the oOpen houses held by the Greater Phoenix Chapter this summer as they start to rebuild their chorus under the leadership of a new director. Another quartet, Tribute, had its first hour-long performance. Good thing they had a lot of rehearsals to get 21 songs under their belt.

Monthly Saturday meetings are open to anyone wanting to quartet and our irregular schedule can be determined by contacting President Bill Kane at billkanevip@msn.com.

Greater Phoenix Chapter

by David Melville

The Phoenicians held two very successful events earlier this year: The SPRING FLING, an old-fashion burger and hotdog cookout in the park, with plenty of singing by quartets; and the SUMMER BASH which is a revival of a long-standing tradition in the Arizona Division. Both events were very well attended, and suffice it to say a good time was had by all.

We've also held two OPEN HOUSES over the summer, and invited barbershoppers from around the area to join us for some Tag singing and some excellent sessions on vocal technique led by Cary Burns.

The last 2.5 years have been tough, like many other chapters have experienced, but we are happy to say we've kept a core group going through it all with weekly meetings on Zoom. A Steering Committee has been formed to develop a plan for building a New Phoenicians chorus from the ground up, and we are very excited about how that is shaping up.

Greater Phoenix (D-002) is the oldest chapter in the Far Western District – even older than the District itself – and as such we have taken on the patriarchal role of bringing all our barbershop friends together for fun, four-part harmony, and family. We are very pleased to announce our next event will be an OKTOBERFEST, once an annual Phoenician tradition that we are not only reviving, but making it

an Arizona Division event that is sure to be a hit.

Mesa Chapter

by John Soper

The East Valley Barbershop Harmonizers from Mesa, Arizona, remained active throughout the summer, learning new songs, and keeping our current repertoire "tuned up". Special thanks to interim music director and Music VP, Greg Grace, President Phil Kraft, VP of Programs Terry Morrison, and Performance Leader Shreyas Amin for their dedicated service, keeping the chapter on track while our search for a new Music Director was underway.

On that note, we are thrilled to announce that Matthew Frable has joined the society and our chapter. On September 1, 2022, he will become our new Music Director. Matthew has extensive experience directing theater groups, choir festivals, and conducting both small vocal ensembles and large community choruses. He has served as Assistant Director of the Tempe Community Chorus, founding Artistic Director of the San Tan Community Chorus in Mesa, and Artistic Director of the Fountain Hills Community Chorus. Matthew has led worship and music in churches in Arizona, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio, and Texas. He currently serves as the Minister of Music at Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church in Fountain Hills, AZ.

The Phoenicians present...

ARIZONA DIVISION



OKTOBER FEST

.....BEER FESTIVAL.....

FOOD • BEVERAGE • SINGING • FUN

SATURDAY • OCTOBER 8 • 2022 • 1-5 PM

PAPAGO PARK

625 N Galvin Pkwy, Phoenix • Ramada 16

Free Admission • Food & Beverage Tickets Sold On-Site • We suggest you bring Lawn Chairs



Matthew also brings his experience as a music educator. He was a teacher and the Fine Arts Department Chair at Seton Catholic High School in Chandler, AZ for 17 years. Mathew is excited to take on this new role and says, "I always wanted to learn the barbershop style of acapella close harmony, and now the door has been opened."

As Fall approaches, many of our winter residents will return to Arizona and the chorus as we begin preparing for an exciting Holiday performance season.

We welcome you to join us at our Thursday evening rehearsals from 7:00PM to 9:00PM at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 322 N. Horne, Mesa, AZ 85203. For more information, visit our website at <http://evbarbershop.com>.

Sedona Chapter
by Michael McCaffrey

The big news from Harmony on the Rocks is that we have put together a repertoire for our fall show on October 16. If you are in the area on

that date, please stop by the Church of the Red Rocks at 3:00 PM for our yearly show. You will be treated to such fare as In My Room, Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans, My Girl, Lost in the Stars, and eight more easy beats, ballads, and up tune songs. You will also be treated to two of our homegrown quartets, Quintessential Quartet and SurroundSound. Hope to see you all there.

Maricopa County Chapter
by Eva

Southwest Vocal Alliance was thrilled to attend the Bash, where we had our first official BHS performance. It was a delight to reconnect with everyone in harmony. A few of our members are brand new to barbershop and got to sing their first tags!

We are grateful for our newest members, as our chorus grew over 20% this summer. We have been working on a wide variety of music, and we can't wait to see you all at our first-ever competition this fall!

Tucson Sunshine Chapter
by Frank Hartline

The Tucson Sunshine Chapter is planning a Barbershop Kickoff Party on September 22d, 6:30-8:30 at the Jewish Community Center on River Rd. All barbershoppers and men who love to sing are invited. Quartets Young at Heart and Desert Transplants will perform.

After two years of Covid Zoom Meetings we are looking forward to ringing some chords in person and restarting an active chapter in Tucson. Plans for weekly rehearsals, performance opportunities in October and November and Christmas Shows will be discussed.

We will also be preparing for a Memorial Celebration for Ron Hayes, who passed away this summer. Ron was a wonderful lead singer and a dedicated leader of our Youth in Harmony program for the last 10 years.

Arizona Summer Bash
Some "Luck fo the Draw" Quartets



Southwest Vocal Alliance wowed the crowd at the Arizona Summer Bash





Southeast Division

Cody Littlefield • Division Editor



Las Vegas Chapter

by Kenny Rios

VIVA LAS VEGAS!!

Listen...can you hear Elvis Presley singing this??...

*"Bright Light City gonna set my soul,
Gonna set my soul on fire!
Got a whole lot of money that's ready
to burn,
So get those stakes up higher!"*

Greetings from the Entertainment Capital of the World!

The Las Vegas Chapter, known as The Silver Statesmen Chorus, has been busy making sure the art of Barbershop singing and entertainment is still alive! Coming out of the "pandemic" we've had a busy 2022.

Earlier this year, on April 30th, we performed for the Field of Honor Memorial Day Event by invitation from the Rotary Club of Henderson, Nevada, at Cornerstone Park in Henderson, NV. Our next performance was for Grace Presbyterian Church on July 3rd at 9:00 am immediately followed that afternoon at 6:05 pm for the Aviators, the Oakland A's Minor League Baseball Team who is based in Las Vegas.

On August 20th, we performed, along with representation from our local Sweet Adeline's Chorus, The Lady Luck Showtime Chorus, our spring show, "Viva Las Vegas!" HOLY COW!! What a show!! The audience was obviously starved for entertainment as their reception was unbelievable! We

even had a special appearance from "Elvis" himself!! One of our quartets from the show, "High Stakes" will be competing in Fresno! Be sure to keep an eye out for this talented quartet. On August 17th we performed for a Non-Profit Awareness Event for the City of Las Vegas.

By the time you read this, we will have completed a performance for Nellis Air Force Base on September 17th. Our next performance will be a repeat performance of our show, "Viva Las Vegas" for Siena, a large inner-community within the City of Las Vegas.

We'll then travel to Fresno, California (yes, an out-of-state- travel for us!), to the Fall Convention. Only a small, handful of us will be able to make the trip to Fresno due a variety of reasons however, we hope to be entertaining!

But wait! There's more! In November, we will perform our "Veteran's Day Show" at two different venues on November 12 and then again on November 13th.

On December 12th, we have a Christmas Show planned at a local venue along with pro gratis caroling at various Adult Care Facilities and Senior Residences within our community throughout the community of Las Vegas.

As you can see, we've been busy and plan to stay that way. Our membership has wanted to perform more for our community and has taken a "fun" approach to our meetings. This "fun" translates

into more performances, more entertainment and, well...more fun!

Special thanks to our Music VP, Wally Smulson, our Director, Gordon Lankenau, our Events Chairman, Greg Dreyer (who is Secretary Elect for our FWD!!) and our Marketing and PR VP, Fred Green as well as the rest of our Board of Directors.

Look for us on stage in Fresno. Even though we'll be small, we're looking forward to entertaining you!!

In closing, from "The King" as he sings:

*I'm gonna give it ev'rything I've got,
Lady luck please let the dice stay hot,
Let me shoot a seven with ev'ry shot...
Viva Las Vegas, Viva Las Vegas, Viva,
Viva Las Vegas!!*

Westminster Chapter

The Westminster Chorus

See feature article on page 6



Southwest Division

Justin McQueen • Division Editor



**Greater Los Angeles Chapter
Masters of Harmony**
See feature article on page 4

San Fernando Valley Chapter
by Ben Marder

It is with deep regret that I must announce the passing of two of our oldest members.

Don Ribeiro (April 25, 1930 – March 29, 2022.) Don joined the Society in 1964. Don was a member of Frank Thorne up until 2011. (47 years). When I joined our chapter in 1993 Don was program VP. Don was BOTY 1970. Don was a bigger than life character who loved to teach tags.



Don Ribeiro

The second person is Shelley Herman. Shelley passed away July 10, 2022.

Shelley joined the SPEBSQSA (The Society for the Encouragement and Preservation of Barbershop Quartet Singing in America) in 1951, when he was 19 years old. He was always a Historian, collecting memorabilia throughout his 71 years in the Society. Throughout the years Shelley assisted in setting up the sound systems for the International and Far Western District Conventions, as well as chorus chapter shows.

Shelley served as Board Past President and Member- at Large. Shelley was BOTY 1967. Both of these men loved 4- part Harmony in the Barbershop style and will be deeply missed by all who knew and sang with them.



Shelley Herman

On July 30, 2022 the Valley Harmony Singers were planning on holding our first show since 2019.

Unfortunately, it wasn't meant to be.

On Monday July 18 chorus rehearsal and complete run through of the show, several of our members and spouses came down with the BA.5 Covid sub- variant. Unfortunately I was one of them. I spread it to my wife. Because a children's chorus was supposed to sing on our show, the show was postponed. We're now back to Zoom until all are cleared of the virus.

Since the stay-at-home order was given in 2020 our chorus has gone on Zoom learning 10 plus new songs for the July 30th show. The music team under the leadership of our director Tom Raffety worked diligently in preparing us for the show. Then covid struck. It just wasn't meant to be.

This new variant is more contagious than previous ones. Don't take any unnecessary changes protect your fellow chorus members, family and friends by wearing a mask when in public places. Better safe than sorry! Have a good Summer.



FRESNO 2022

**Far Western District
Fall Convention
October 13-16**

DoubleTree Hotel • Saroyan Theatre
events.farwesterndistrict.org/fwd-fall-convention

SOLUTIONS

Remember, if you "peek" you're only cheating yourself! :-)

CROSSWORD

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SUDOKU

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6	8	5	3	4	9	2	1	7
7	3	2	6	1	8	9	4	5
4	1	9	7	5	2	3	8	6

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One-Liners

1. My wife told me to stop impersonating a flamingo. I had to put my foot down.
2. I went to buy some camo pants but couldn't find any.
3. I failed math so many times at school, I can't even count.
4. I used to have a handle on life, but then it broke.
5. I was wondering why the frisbee kept getting bigger and bigger, but then it hit me.
6. I heard there were a bunch of break-ins over at the car park. That is wrong on so many levels.
7. I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather... Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.
8. When life gives you melons, you might be dyslexic.
9. Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.
10. It takes a lot of balls to golf the way I do. I told him to be himself; that was pretty mean, I guess.
11. I know they say that money talks, but all mine says is 'Goodbye.'
12. My father has schizophrenia, but he's good people.
13. The problem with kleptomaniacs is that they always take things literally.
14. I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory. All I did was take a day off.
15. Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician.
16. Never trust atoms; they make up everything.

Events

DISTRICT CALENDAR

View the official Far Western District Calendar at farwesterndistrict.org/events/calendar

UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 8, 2022 Arizona Division OKTOBERFEST, Phoenix, AZ
- October 13-16, 2022 FWD FALL CONVENTION, Saroyan Theater and Double Tree Hotel, Fresno, CA

For an extended list of conventions, visit farwesterndistrict.org/events/conventions

EVENTS REGISTRATION

Register for FWD Conventions at events.farwesterndistrict.org

Letters

Letters to the Editor should be sent to: westuneseditor@farwesterndistrict.org

Sunshine

To report important life events that occur with our members, please contact your Division Vice President

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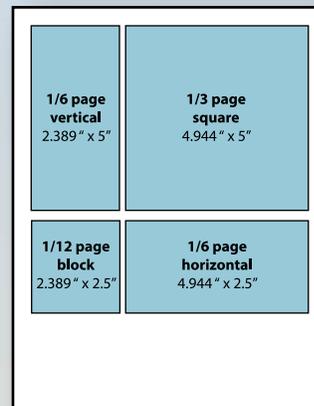
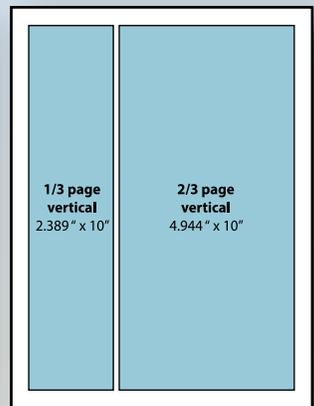
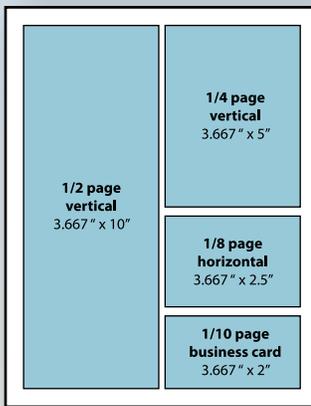
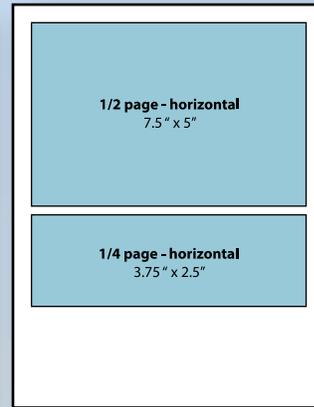
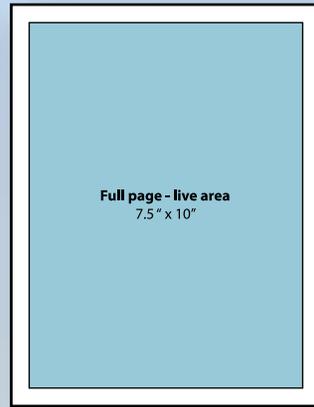
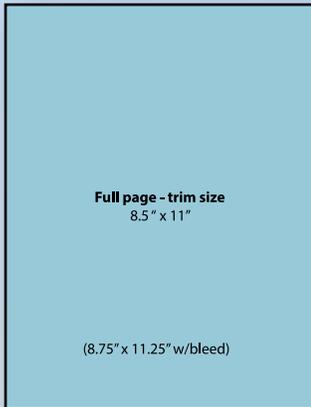
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For any questions, please contact: marketing@farwesterndistrict.org

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Ad deliverables by February 15

Summer issue (June 1)

Ad deliverables by May 15

Fall issue (September 1)

Ad deliverables by August 15

Winter issue (December 1)

Ad deliverables by November 15

When using Adobe Illustrator, all fonts should be converted to outlines and linked images must be embedded. Special effects such as glows, transparencies or drop shadows are not recommended; use Adobe Photoshop for these effects instead.

Ad Size	Trim Size width x height	1 Issue Full price	2 Issues 20% Discount	3 Issues 30% Discount	4 Issues 40% Discount
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Full page - live area	7.5" x 10"	\$50.00	\$80.00	\$105.00	\$120.00
Full page - trim size	8.5" x 11"*	\$50.00	\$80.00	\$105.00	\$120.00
2/3 page - vertical	4.944" x 10"	\$35.00	\$56.00	\$73.50	\$84.00
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1/2 page - vertical	3.667" x 10"	\$25.00	\$40.00	\$52.50	\$60.00
1/3 page - square	4.944" x 5"	\$17.50	\$28.00	\$36.75	\$42.00
1/3 page - vertical	2.389" x 10"	\$17.50	\$28.00	\$36.75	\$42.00
1/4 page - vertical	3.667" x 5"	\$12.50	\$20.00	\$26.25	\$30.00
1/4 page - horizontal	7.5" x 2.5"	\$12.50	\$20.00	\$26.25	\$30.00
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1/10 page - business card	3.667" x 2"	\$5.00	\$8.00	\$10.50	\$12.00
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