



Far Western District

Convention Honoree

Howard Mesecher – 2003 FWD Spring Convention Honoree



The Far Western District proudly dedicated the 2003 Spring convention to Howard Mesecher. Howard started his music career in Davenport, Iowa, where he played French horn in the band and orchestra. While serving in the U.S. Army during World War II, he had the opportunity to tour throughout England as a member of the Shrivengham College Orchestra.

In 1951, Howard attended his first Barbershop chapter meeting in Rock Island, Illinois, where he had the pleasure of listening to the Vikings quartet rehearsing for the International Competition. The Vikings not only won the coveted gold medal in 1953, but also convinced Howard that Barbershop had to be a part of his life!

In 1952, Howard became a charter member of the New Davenport Chapter and subsequently took over the reins as chorus director. The chorus competed in two International Competitions, placing eighth in Atlantic City and sixth in New Orleans. While in the Central States District, Howard served as District Vice President, established the

first chorus directors' school and was inducted into the Hall of Fame. He and his family moved to Fresno in 1972 where he served as Chapter President and Chorus Director.

Howard's contest and judging career began when he was certified in voice expression and went on to adjudicate his first International Contest in 1964. Coincidentally, his good friend, Lou Laurel, was the International President and Director of the Border Chords Chorus of El Paso, Texas, that won the chorus contest that same year. Two years later, then-International President, Wes Meier, appointed Howard International Contest and Judging Chairman.

Howard became deeply involved in FWD music education programs while serving as District Contest and Judging Chairman, creating chorus director seminars, which greatly improved the quality of directors throughout the District. An offshoot of these seminars resulted in Howard establishing the first chorus director seminar for Australian Barbershoppers. After serving for 34 years in the contest and judging program, Howard retired in 1997.

Howard was inducted into the Far Western District Hall of Fame in 1988. In 1990, he started a new chapter in Hemet, California, and is, not surprisingly, serving as its musical director. Howard is in a quartet names ACE [A Chord Explosion], which has been ringing chords for the past seven years.

The Far Western District is fortunate to have Howard among its talented musical and administrative leadership and recognizes his tremendous contributions during this 2003 Spring Convention!