



Far Western District

Convention Honoree

Bill Rosica – 2016 FWD Fall Convention Honoree

Bill Rosica was born and raised in California into a family that always had music. The sounds of the big band era and Broadway musicals filled the house. Bill's dad, Joe, was particularly interested in singing and this was passed along to Bill, whose first recollection of singing was when in grammar school nuns taught the class to sing "Christmas in Killarney".

In 1960 barbershop entered the Rosica household when Joe attended a company picnic where a barbershop quartet named "The Rebels" performed. The next week he visited the Bakersfield Chapter and before long was singing lead in "The Thermalaires", who 50 years ago (1966) won the FWD Championship.

Of course Bill tagged along whenever he could, attending rehearsals, helping in show rehearsals, doing a little acting and helping out backstage. Listening to Joe's quartet rehearsing in the living room really set the hook. All this before the Society even thought about youth outreach programs.

In 1968, while attending Bakersfield College, "Up with People" came through town recruiting members for their local groups. Bill signed up the first night and was a founding member of "Sing Out Bakersfield". There he learned to sight read music and perform choreography. The group remained together for 2 1/2 years, but disbanded with members going to college out of the area.

After graduating and landing a job in the oil industry Bill received a call from a local barbershopper, Dave Fletcher, who asked Bill why he hadn't been down to sing with the chapter. Bill's answer was simple, "No one ever asked me." Bill took Dave up on his offer and the rest is history.

Bill joined the Bakersfield Chapter in 1983 and hit the ground running, receiving the Barbershopper of the Year (BOTY) that same year. Subsequently he was awarded the BOTY in 1987, 1994, and 1999 for his work for the chapter. During his 16 years with Bakersfield, he held every position on the chapter board. During this time his chorus won four small chorus championships, one of which he co-directed. The chapter hosted many FWD Conventions under Bill's watch and produced many shows with International Champion Quartets and choruses including Masters of Harmony and the Vocal Majority.

In 1998 life changed once again for Bill and he found himself with some free time. Bill's friend, Rich Owen, asked him if he would like to ride down to Santa Fe Springs to see The Masters rehearse. Both Rich and Bill subsequently joined, and since that time Bill has served on the board for The Masters as VP of Chapter Development and three years as President. Bill served the entire Society as Chairman for the 2009 International Convention in Anaheim. As a result of that effort he was awarded The Masters BOTY that year. His current role with the chapter is Executive Producer. While singing with The Masters Bill has earned 7 District Championships, 5 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze International Chorus medals. For six years Bill served as Southwest Division Vice President for the FWD and he continues his service on the District Management Team as the Membership Manager.

When asked about his barbershop career Bill said, "It seems like yesterday that I walked into that hall and was welcomed as if I had been a long lost soul. I have been fortunate to be able to sing with and meet so many great people. I'm not quite ready to hang up my pitchpipe yet. Let's see what the next few years brings."

