



Westunes Vol. 71 No. 2

Summer 2021



WESTUNES

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



**2020 FWD Hall of Fame Inductee
Brett Littlefield**



Far Western District Family and Friends

Update: As you all know by now, your District Board decided to forego the “**Contest at Sea**” for **October 2021** because of the uncertainty of the **COVID** circumstances. Please note that we did **not cancel the cruise**. The Far Western District had to decide what was best for the District.

As of today, Carnival is still planning on sailing October 15 and returning on October 18, 2021. Some folks may want to join Donna and her husband Greg for a great time of sailing, singing tags and meeting up with old friends. Your upgrades and \$300.00 on-board credits are still in effect.

For those of you who choose not to go on the Cruise, your Board worked on Plan B, which is to conduct the FWD Convention and Quartet and Chorus Contests “as usual”. *[There may be COVID protocols in place at the facilities to preserve our safety. As we are all aware, the protocols change from time to time.]* We had to scramble for event sites and dates that would not conflict with the new “*Barbershop-themed Cruise*”. Luckily Adam Kaufman, DVP-Arizona found a member, John Johnson who wanted to assist. John and Russ Young found a venue and we have reserved Higley Performing Arts Theater in Gilbert, AZ for October 7-10, 2021, a week before the “*Barbershop-themed Cruise*”. The Headquarters Hotel is TBD at this writing[.

FYI, the 2022 Fall Convention and Contest is slated for Fresno for October 13-16, 2022 at the Saroyan Theater and Doubletree Hotel.

Please see the Events article for more details.

Bill Rosica
Far Western District President



WESTUNES



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WESTUNES

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

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Brett Littlefield inducted into Hall of Fame

Presented by Gordon “Mongo” Bergthold (2019)



Back in 1969, the Far Western District Hall of Fame Award was conceived to honor the all-time greats of the District. Those who have unselfishly, and with dedication and devotion, performed through the years in the District, Society and International arenas have been awarded this distinction. Before I proceed, allow me to introduce the HOF members in attendance:

- John Krizek 1994
- Terry Aramian 1995
- Sam Barger 1998
- Chuck Hunter, Sr. 1999
- Ray Rhymer 2004
- Ron Black 2010
- Nick Papageorge 2011
- Peter Feeney, Sr. 2013
- Richard Lund 2014
- Russ Young 2016
- Bruce Sellnow 2017
- Yours Truly 2019

Whenever a nominee is selected for induction into the Hall of Fame, his award is traditionally presented at the Spring Convention, usually in March. However, with the interruption of our normal activities, that convention was cancelled in 2020 which made a presentation to the 2019 recipient seemingly impossible. I was fortunate enough to be that recipient but the HOF Committee needed to find a creative manner by which to pres-

ent the award. Using the leadership skills that helped land them in the HOF, they decided the best way to do this was on a Zoom call, something that we've become all too familiar with. But the committee went even further when Richard Lund, Patsy, Chuck Hunter and Pat appeared on my doorstep on July 1, 2020. They started a Zoom call and made the presentation with the remaining HOF members on the call. I was invited to say a few comments, and after my heart beat slowed a bit, I said how humbled and honored I was to be included with those who were in the Far Western District Hall of Fame.

Therefore, by HOF guidelines, I'm the chairman for this presentation; once again brought to you by Zoom, and the Hall of Fame committee who have Zoomed in for this event.

The incoming recipient has been very active in barbershop activities throughout his membership in the society, both in choruses and quartets. He's held musical and administrative roles and always performed at the top level.

Our recipient is a dedicated family man with a musical family. He's a man with an outstanding work ethic and dedication to whatever task he takes on. He has helped barbershoppers worldwide through high-level instruction, coaching and performance. He is highly respected throughout the worldwide barbershop community as a strong leader. He is a perfect example of what a FWD Hall of Fame Member should be.

If that isn't enough to convince you of his qualifications for this prestigious award, he's a long-time member of the Masters of Harmony chorus, having served as section leader, quasi Assistant Director and music team member. He's the former Musical Director of the Orange Chapter. He's a two-time International Quartet Champion, a Chorus and Quartet coach, and Certified Judge.

He stepped into a leadership role, making a significant contribution to the Contest & Judging Committee by turning a challenging transition into a successful endeavor. He is the type of individual who would step onto the stage in a commanding manner to accept this award and his voice in accepting this award would command everyone's attention. However, he's a giant of a man with a teddy bear heart.

Ladies and gentlemen please welcome the 2020 Far Western District's Hall of Fame Inductee,

Mr. Brett Littlefield.

Brett, the Zoom microphone is yours.

HARMONY CAMP 2021

Harmony Camp is going to happen this year!! YEA!!! YEAAA!!! YEAAAA!!! October 22-24, 2021 at the usual place, Sly Park Educational Center, 5600 Sly Park Road in Pollock Pines.

Anyway, we do believe that by October, things will have opened up for a long enough period of time that the idea of a bunch of boys getting together in the foothills to sing will not be outlandish at all.

We have Midtown as our headliner quartet and a great lineup of clinicians headed up by our Dean, Gabe Caretto.

Right now, what we really need are donations for operating funds. Harmony Camp has been costing in the neighborhood of twenty thousand dollars these past several years and the \$95 fee from the boys only covers about a quarter of that. The Steinkamp Fund is going gangbusters and is up to \$166 thousand dollars, but that is still thirty-four thousand away from the two hundred thousand needed before we can withdraw a dime from that fund. So, we are appealing to you and to all our Northern California chapters who have supported us so faithfully in the past to help us out.

In addition, I encourage you to contact music educators you might know and let them know about Harmony University (virtual) July 17th – August 7th. The core seminar for Music Educators is July 24 – July 31st. A benefit of virtual HU is that the cost is much less than traveling to Nashville for a week. I know of several Music Educators who have attended HU and they can't say enough positive about the impact it has had on them and their program. Additional information is available in the March / April edition of the Harmonizer.

Let's have a Harmony Camp!!!

Personally speaking, I have been feeling awfully darned lackluster in being able to get myself revved up, but I think Harmony Camp is the one thing that will surely make that happen. The Covid thing was So devastating and debilitating for me, and I think for all of us. It is just So refreshing to be seeing that light at the end of the tunnel grow brighter!!!

Plan to join us on Sunday October 24th at 10:30 am in the Sly Park Gyn for our traditional Friends and Family Show. What a marvelous way to celebrate our return to Barber-shop and supporting the youth of our communities.

Richard Lund, Director

530-621-1904

LLOYD STEINKAMP ENDOWMENT FUND FOR FWD HARMONY CAMP

The Steinkamp Fund for Harmony Camp at the Sacramento Region Community Foundation continues to grow, and has reached a total of \$166,000 as of April 30, 2021. We continue to approach the magic fund balance of \$200,000 at which we can begin to withdraw a portion of the earnings to finance Harmony Camp on an annual basis.

We believe 2021 will be characterized as a year of hope and resurgence. We can continue to make an impact as we continue to grow the Steinkamp Fund, thereby ensuring funds are available for future generations of young men to experience the excitement of a weekend of barbershop. This year Harmony Camp is scheduled for the weekend of October 22 – 24, 2021 at Sly Park Education Center. Our teaching quartet is Midtown, already confirmed and quite excited to join us.

Donations may be made through cash gifts, appreciated stock and IRA Charitable Rollovers. Let's get to that magic goal of \$200,000 level so the Steinkamp Fund can support Harmony Camp on an annual basis.

Visit the Sacramento Region Community Foundation www.sacregdf.org and click on Give Now. The Lloyd Steinkamp Endowment Fund for Far Western District Harmony Camps is listed on the drop-down menu of organizations.

You may also donate a gift of appreciated stock to the endowment which means you will avoid capital gains and can deduct the fully appreciated value regardless of the original purchase price. A stock transfer form is available at www.sacregcf.org/year-end.

Should you have questions, you may contact me or the Sacramento Region Community Foundation, 916-921-7723 ext 2021.

Richard Lund, Director

FWD Harmony Camp

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530-621-1904



Greater Los Angeles Area Chapter

by Ron Larson

The Masters of Harmony Adapt to the Changing Landscape of Music

Using changed circumstances to promote barbershop harmony

Masters of Harmony President **Joe D'Amore** has urged chorus members to see the limitations of the COVID era as a blank slate upon which they can reinvent themselves. By immersing the chorus in available video technologies, the Masters can remain on the cutting edge of creativity. Doing so can bring the Masters of Harmony to the attention of otherwise hesitant singers who can easily sample the chorus from the safety and obscurity of a home video screen before venturing out to attend an in-person rehearsal. Such technologies can create performance audition videos for event planners who may consider booking the Masters. Joe's clear call to action reminds MOH members that for over 30 years, the Masters of Harmony have approached obstacles as stepping stones rather than as stumbling blocks.

Rehearsals in the Zoom/JackTrip era

Chorus rehearsals now start on Zoom for updated chorus information. Then they are switched to JackTrip for those who have the equipment and have learned how to use it. Members and guests without that ability can still participate in the rehearsals on Zoom without their voices being added to the mix. Hearing four-part harmony via JackTrip in real-time for the first time in over a year is an awesome experience! Most MOH rehearsals are attended by 80% of the current membership and the majority of those in attendance can participate with JackTrip. Those who need technical help can come to the scheduled 7:30 pm rehearsals at 7:00 pm and receive needed help. Such help has already been extended to other choruses interested in investing in JackTrip tech-

nology. Members providing technical assistance have included **Mark Freedkin, Leonard Jensen, John Yost, and Lucas Purcell.**

Upcoming Masters of Harmony virtual performances

One of the ways the Masters of Harmony are trying to reach out to wider audiences is by singing different types of music in the barbershop style. One such song now being recorded is “We Got a World That Swings.” It will be a music video with chorus audio and short clips of video with scenes of swing dancing mixed in. Another ongoing project is to join with other championship choruses for a nationwide recording of “Stars and Stripes Forever.” Taking this format even further, the Masters will partner with international singers in a rendition of “All Nations Rise.” Plans are underway for a live Christmas show at Colony High School in Ontario for matinee and evening performances. The stage will be shared with Colony’s choral students on Sunday, December 4, 2021, pending health advisories in place at that time. Stay tuned!

Promoting the Masters of Harmony in the era of limitations

The possibility of promoting Masters of Harmony musical activities online is an exciting one, says MOH VP of Marketing **Bart Halberstadt.** “The Society is willing to stream most anything we do on their YouTube channel. We are making plans to work with marketing officers from other major choruses to see how we can effectively generate and share donations.” Accordingly, the Masters reached out to a new audience by sending its video of “Joy to the World” for viewing at the Los Angeles A Cappella Festival held on the weekend of February 27-28. MOH was by far the largest group to participate and the only group to perform in the barbershop style. The showing was a success and drew a number of favorable comments during the live chat feature. Special kudos go to **Grant Goldstein** and **Jeremy Loper** for invaluable help in getting Masters members up to speed in the new world of virtual recordings.

Relaunching of online newsletter

The Masters of Harmony have reintroduced *Master-Line* to all friends and fans on the Constant Contact email distribution list. This quarterly email newsletter contains shorter, general interest stories on the chap-

ter and the chorus. It can also be found on our public website (mastersofharmony.org).

Changes in the Los Angeles County Arts & Culture grants

One of the sources of income for the Masters of Harmony is a grant from the LA County Department of Arts and Culture (LACDAC). When COVID restrictions shut down performance opportunities, it appeared grantees like MOH might lose this source of funding. However, LACDAC decided to allow its grantees to continue receiving funds. In addition, LA County arranged to be the intermediary for federal funds designated for COVID relief. Its COVID Relief Fund helps offset losses and expenses grantees incurred as a result of COVID. Thanks to Grants Manager **Rich Owen**, MOH applied for and received such a grant. Funds from such grants helped pay for the JackTrip equipment now being used by MOH members.

Brett Littlefield named to Far Western District Hall of Fame

Throughout its 30-plus-year history, one constant contributor to MOH success has been the skilled, tireless, inspirational work of **Brett Littlefield.** What some in the MOH family may not know is how widely those attributes are known and shared throughout the barbershop world. Recently, his many contributions were honored by the Far Western District when he was named to the Far Western District Hall of Fame. Congratulations, Brett!

New Member of the Masters of Harmony Chapter Eternal-Rich Martinez

It is with great sadness the Masters of Harmony announce the passing of Rich Martinez. He earned three gold medals with the chorus singing lead and was a steadfast member of the chapter for over 30 years. US Army Colonel (ret.) and MOH VP-Public Relations Larry Icenogle blew Taps for Rich at the WWII veteran’s funeral.



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***



Bill Rosica

Far Western District President
president@farwesterndistrict.org



Well, here we are in the middle of spring with no Preliminaries or Division Contests. Not to fret, my friends! Your Board is working on the Fall 2021 Convention and Contest. It will be held in Gilbert AZ. on October 8-9 at the Higley Performing Arts Center. According to Brett Littlefield, Contest and Judging Vice President, this will be an open contest. Choruses and Quartets just need to complete the proper paperwork as you normally would. John Johnson of the Mesa Chapter is the local Convention Chairman and has visited the venue with Russ Young to make sure it fits our needs. Reports are favorable and we are now working with the local hotels to procure rooms.

On a little longer-range plan, we are working with the Doubletree Hotel (formerly the Holiday Inn) in Fresno for the Fall Contest in 2022. That weekend will be October 14-15. Jim Turnmire and the Fresno Chapter are working to get the same theater we have normally used, next door to the hotel. There will be more information as we get it.

During this time, we are still working through the Covid-19 protocols to make sure Chapter rehearsals follow safe procedures when they are able to sing in-person again. With what I have seen in the other 16 Districts, vaccines will be expected in order for Choruses to gather once more. Most of the mandates come from the rehearsal halls we rent. I know most, if not all, churches will require that vaccines have been given before a rehearsal is allowed. While not singing, masks will be worn and, as much as possible, social distancing will be enforced.

I know that this subject is political to some and I paused before I decided to write, but your health is of the utmost importance to this Board of Directors. We have already lost too many Barbershop friends to this disease and don't care to lose anyone else. I got my second vaccine a few weeks ago and consider the act as being for my fellow singers and friends as much as it was for me and my wife.

During our last Board Meeting, I tasked Kenny Rios with

a project of contacting each Chapter and see if they were meeting either in-person or virtually during the last year. He was to get information about the Chapter meetings and if possible, relay it to all members, so they could join in on rehearsal night to see how that Chapter is operating. I'm hoping to have that information very soon and will distribute.

I have decided to plan an in-person Summer Board Meeting this June in Fullerton. There is some work to be done to keep everyone safe like vaccines and using the entire room for our meeting, so we won't have to sit right next to each other. I figure we have to come out of this sometime, so why not take it nice and slow and safe. We have a few hurdles to negotiate, and some members may have to join us via ZOOM, but that's to be seen.

I rejoined the gym last week and am trying to knock off about 10 LBS of sit-around excess baggage. My old Gym, 24-Hr Fitness closed down its two Bakersfield locations, so I joined Body Xchange, which is almost within walking distance of my house. I'm starting off slow 'cause I'm old and don't want to pull any muscles I have left. Elliptical, Bike, triceps and biceps and 90 minutes later, I'm done. I go three days a week and do enjoy the workout. I believe the better shape you're in, the better you'll sing. Go get a Guest Pass at your local gym and give it a try.

Lastly, I took a page out of CEO Marty Monson's book and am doing a little reading (from an actual book). I am reading Barack Obamas Book, "A Promised Land". I was never a big fan of his, but I am finding it interesting on what made him such a popular President and how he looked at situations before weighing in. This position of President can get you down if you're not careful. Lucky for me, I have a great Board, who for the most part, are right on top of things. Some need a little prodding from time to time, but don't we all.

Please stay safe and utilize your Division Vice Presidents.

Thanks



Adam Kaufman

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Chuck Roots

VP Northeast Division

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“Change is the only constant”- Heraclitus

It has been over a year since the world changed, affecting every aspect of our hobby. How we meet, how we compete, how we do shows, and how we have conventions.

That change keeps happening.

People who didn't know their mouse from a stapler are now “Zooming” on a regular basis.

We have all become armchair epidemiologists.

Now things are starting to change again. I am hearing from more and more Chapters who either are, or will soon be, meeting in person.

Quartets are getting back together in person.

Maybe the most exciting thing I can say is that we are making plans and have signed a contract to have the FWD Fall Convention here in Arizona at The Higley Performing Arts Center with contests being held on October 8 and 9, 2021, and while there will be mitigation strategies in place, this will be a full scale event with Chorus and Quartet contests.

Now is the time we have been waiting for, the time we can come back stronger and better than before. If you know a person who has not been showing up to Zoom meetings, call them and let them know the time has come. If you know someone who has been away from our hobby for a while, let them know that we are still here.

It is time to start coming back together carefully, with thought and consideration for others.

It is time to get excited!

Hallelujah! I'm truly looking forward to Tuesday evening, May 4, when the Golden Valley Chorus (GVC – California Central Valley) will once more sing together. Like so many of you, we have not had the joy of engaging in our blessed four-part harmony since mid-March of last year.

During this pandemic period, we have held weekly Zoom meetings in an attempt to ride out this enforced separation from the hobby we all enjoy so much. I'm sure you all are like me in that I have grown a greater appreciation for not just the Barbershop singing, but the relationships we have all garnered over the years with our fellow singers. I've had to ask myself the question: Was I guilty of taking those relationships for granted? Was I assuming this hobby would always be there whenever I chose to participate?

There may still be some COVID restrictions that we are encouraged to abide by, but the end is in sight! Just to again be able to sing the old songs, sing some tags, and look at each other and not have to guess who the masked person is next to you will be absolutely glorious!

One of the unexpected benefits of Zoom meetings is the opportunity to have guests from around the BHS sit in and share their Barbershop experiences with the rest of us. Just recently VoCal hosted the one and only Tony DeRosa who first appeared on the International stage as a Tenor at the tender age of twelve. He has accumulated four gold medals with four different Quartets! In 1992 he was singing with Keepsake when they won gold at International. Tony was the youngest medal winner ever. He won gold again in 2000 with Platinum. Then again in 2007 with MaxQ. And lastly (but not finally?) he won in 2017 with Main Street. Tony spent about an hour-and-a-half with us. He was thoughtful, and humble throughout.

I'm hoping we might occasionally make effective use of Zoom meetings so we can connect with such super stars as Tony DeRosa.

Hope to see you singing soon!



Rich Postal

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Kathy Kileen

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This past month I made contact with most of the Chapters in the North West Division to find the status of their meetings. Almost all were meeting on zoom once per week. A few were employing Jamulus as part of their meeting to simulate sing together without experiencing the latency effect of singing together on Zoom. One chapter was using Carbershop (Singing in their cars live with a director leading the group and using wireless mics and mixed sound broadcast over low power on to a specified FM channel). One chapter had elected not to meet even though they have a high skill level of technical ability in on line conferencing.

It has now been more than 14 months since the pandemic put the brakes on in person rehearsals. There is now a light at the end of the tunnel and most choruses are ready to start singing in person with the provision that all persons attending have had their two Covid vaccines + two weeks. They are implementing a policy that unvaccinated folks are still not allowed to attend at this time. The CDC issued new guidelines on May 13, 2021 indicating "singing in an indoor chorus" is now permitted for fully vaccinated people. This guideline also comes with the caveat that all state, local and tribal regulations should be followed.

I know that California has stricter rules and some groups are trying to meet outdoors in a park type setting using the CDC guidelines.

I have attached a link to a chart from the CDC explaining the 5/13 update.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/participate-in-activities.html>

Here's what I know to be true. We Barbershoppers are a special breed. We are survivors. We persevere. And we in the Southwest Division are a particularly determined, dedicated group in this regard.

This past year has been difficult for singers to say the least. But we have managed to find ways to circumvent our restrictions and continue our musical journeys with a few detours. Zoom, Jamulus, JackTrip, Carbershop, Virtual Conventions with Avatars!? Who had even heard of these things before the events of this past year?

Choruses in the Southwest Division have been leading the way and sharing their experience and knowledge with all who ask. It is reassuring to know that those Choruses who are experiencing the most success in these difficult times are the most eager to share their knowledge and experience with those who are struggling to stay afloat.

Many of our SW Division Choruses are meeting regularly by zoom in an effort to maintain close contact and stay connected with members. Some directors have taken this as an opportunity for teaching moments that are not always so readily available during regular rehearsals.

Some are revisiting vocal skills building and learning new music. Some are inviting guest speakers to rehearsal who bring an element of education and enjoyment not often found outside of a harmony college type environment. Some are turning to YouTube and sharing past championship performances of Choruses and Quartets to demonstrate Barbershop at its best.

It's particularly encouraging to note that several of our Choruses held virtual shows with great success! Both the Aloha Chorus and MOH come to mind. These Choruses moved forward using what resources they could muster within the confines available to them and made it work. I know that they were not the only Choruses to do so but they were the most visible. We shared in their successes on facebook and other social media applauded their efforts.

I know there are still Choruses that are struggling and feel as though they are barely holding on. Keep the faith my friends. Help is here for the asking. I realize that it might be difficult to look at the larger Choruses and believe that they have any relevance to your situation. But they do. Everything they do that makes them successful can be scaled down and used by even the smallest Chorus. Model yourselves after one of the Choruses you admire and see if it doesn't make a difference.

There is no one size fits all. There is no blueprint on how best to navigate these pandemic-restricted times. It comes down to whatever works for your Chorus is what you need to be doing to stay the course. We will get through this and we will sing together again. And it will be thrilling to say the least!



Summer is here and I am smiling behind this mask!

Signs point to a measured return to normal. Vaccines and precautions have brought us to a hopeful place. It is time for reflection and excitement. Let us reflect on the friends and opportunities lost, lessons learned, and look forward to the return to real rehearsals with excitement.

I ask that we be respectful and cautious as we resume. Please consider all our friends and join them at their comfort level. Some will be ready to jump back in like nothing happened, others will return with caution, and some will need more time. Let's find a way to welcome all. No judgement, just joy. We are members of a unique family.

Safe Return Policies and Protocols are being developed by Chapters addressing the CDC, State, Local and venue requirements. Considering the five-state expanse of the Far Western District, these plans will certainly vary. Please ask your District Team if you need help preparing the plan for your Chapter.

We aren't the only ones longing for contact and harmony. Now is the time to offer our gift of music to others. Our communities are ready for some enter-

tainment, and let's extend an invitation to join us as we return safely.

It is truly "Great to be a Barbershopper!"

Be safe out there and "Keep the Whole World Singing"!



The Board of Directors for the Far Western District would like to recognize the service of Mr. Bryan Forbes for the many years he had the position of Events Manager. Bryan's attention to detail allowed our members to enjoy the fruits of his labors. The behind-the-scenes work with venues and hotels as well as with the VPs of Contests and Judging kept all the District and Divisional Contests on track. We didn't always make a lot of money, but that was more of an attendance issue, which was out of his control.

So how does one fill the shoes of such a hard worker? After some talks with the Nominating Committee, it was decided that your District President would step in until we could find a reliable replacement. I have the experience of chairing many conventions, including the 2009 International Convention in Anaheim. So, it's back to the "Throwback Thursday" in a broader sense.

Since the Events Chairman is tasked with all FWD-sponsored events, I needed to jump on a few things early in the year. Covid-19 kept our Divisionals on the back burner for a second year but as I have often said, "Hope for the best, but plan for the worst". Each Summer, your District Board meets in Fullerton to plan out and budget the next year. Last year we met via ZOOM® to lay out our plans for 2021.

I decided that with the vaccines available, the Board (BOD) and your District Management Team (DMT) should attempt to meet in-person, which would solidify our relationship, by getting to know each other a little better. The BOD/DMT meeting is set for June 18-19, 2021. Each attending Officer will have had the vaccine and/or the anti-bodies. Those who have not, will be

invited to join us via ZOOM®. My main goal is to make sure everyone in attendance will be as safe as possible. As I polled the group, it was interesting to know that most of us would only attend if these protocols were in place.

Next on the agenda were the Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 Convention and Contests. With the “Contest at Sea” having to be a Non-District Event, we had to scramble for event sites and dates that would not conflict with the new “Barbershop-themed Cruise”. Luckily, Adam Kaufman, DVP-Arizona found a member, John Johnson who wanted to assist. John and Russ Young found a venue and after an afternoon visit sent me the data on the site. So, we now have a venue, Higley Performing Arts Theater in Gilbert, AZ. as our venue for October 7-10, 2021, a week before the “Barbershop-themed Cruise”. We are now looking for a suitable Hotel for our Headquarters.

2022 Fall Convention and Contest is slated for Fresno for October 13-16, 2022 at the Saroyan Theater and Doubletree Hotel. We have used these facilities in the past. Thus far Jim Turnmire and I have been working to get all the players on board. Once we tie up any loose ends, I’ll begin working on Spring 2022 Prelims and Divisionals.

As one last point, Conventions and Contests may be a little different depending on the protocols the venues and hotels have in place. We are planning on making sure everyone attending this year’s Convention in Gilbert has a great time and is as safe as possible. We are planning on proof of vaccine and/or anti-bodies during the registration process. At this time the Venue will require masks when not singing, eating, or drinking and temperatures will be taken at the doors leading into the venue. These protocols are not to scare anyone away. Just the opposite. We want everyone to come down to Arizona and have a great time at “The Great Covid Coming Out Party”.



As Bill Rosica stated, the FWD Leadership is working diligently on tentative plans to have an in-person Fall Convention October 7-10 at Higley Performing Arts Center in Gilbert, Arizona, and further noting that we will still need to follow CDC recommendations, including physical distancing, masks, proof of vaccination/antibodies, and other guidelines that will be required by the venue and the hotels. I’ve also been working on some ways to provide access to the Fall Convention online for those who either are not able to or are not willing to attend an in-person event. There are still many logistical details we need to work out at our Summer Board meeting to make certain we are taking every precaution possible to keep our members and guests safe.

As Gilbert K. Chesterton once said, “There is only one thing certain and that is that nothing is certain.” October is still four months away, and while I know we all hope things will continue to change for the better, we’ve seen recent news of set-backs from around the world, and so we should also be prepared to adapt to whatever situation unfolds.

If you are buying airline tickets to attend the Fall Convention, consider purchasing them with refundable or changeable fares; while they do cost a bit more, they give you some assurance that you will not be out any money if the event is canceled.

Check the Far Western District website (farwesterndistrict.org) often for updates. We will use that to get out up-to-the minute information so that everyone can stay informed.

Meanwhile, be safe and we all hope to see everyone in Arizona this Fall.



Kenny Rios

Youth in Harmony

yih@farwesterndistrict.org

As we are now approaching summer, our interaction with the youth in our schools still remains very little, if any. However, that doesn't preclude us from looking at the upcoming school year. Summer should be a period of time where we sit and plan our strategy for the upcoming school year for both high school and college. With the anticipation of schools returning to a regular schedule by next fall, we need to be looking at how we can "re-introduce" ourselves into the school's curriculum. So how do we do that??

First, understand that the Barbershop style of singing is not a top priority for most music educators/instructors. Although a tight, harmonic chord may be difficult to achieve with consistency and its sound is only beat by a good tag, the art form is not a top priority. Pushing Barbershop upon any group of people only turns them off (remember Ethics code #6? "We shall refrain from forcing our songs upon unsympathetic ears").

Second, after speaking to several choral music teachers, I found that the WAY we teach the art form of Barbershop singing follows the basic and sound principles of proper vocal production in the choral world. In contrast, some forms of contemporary music do not. Teaching proper vocal techniques works to our advantage!

But instead of focusing on the singing of Barbershop music as the "end-all" of musical enjoyment, I began to wonder if we should focus on the **overall** enjoyment of vocal harmony. Don't get me wrong, I love the art form we preserve and prefer four-part harmony to any other genre of music, but I also enjoy other genres of music such as jazz and other artists with a talent to sing and entertain.

So where am I going with this? I believe we need to stick to the roots of the Youth in Harmony Program. We need to view our program as a way of bringing **music** to our youth. And we do that in the art form of Barbershop. Our Youth Program was never meant to be a recruiting tool to increase Chapter membership

(although some Chapters **secretly** wish for that). The goal is to help expose our youth to the wonderful world of music; to "recruit" youth into the world of music; to inspire them to keep music in their lives, **throughout** their lives. After all, we all know how singing changes our lives!

So now is the time to plan for the fall and the following school year.

Have any ideas you'd like to share? If so, feel free to send them to me. I'd love to hear from you!!





Central Arizona Quartet Chapter By Bill Kane

May was a wonderful month for our Chapter as we managed to meet and sing together for the first time since early in 2020 before the virus hit. Since we had reached the 90% level of full vaccination with our members, we felt comfortable meeting outside and singing without masks. However, with the heat of summer coming very soon, that option is not likely available to us for our next meetings.

Chapter leadership will determine how in-person meetings can take place through the summer as rehearsals will be needed to prepare for several shows that the City of Phoenix has commissioned in the fall. In addition, as the FWD is planning a Fall Convention, we would like to be ready to compete for the very first time as a Chorus and enter a slate of Quartets in those contests.

Mesa Chapter By John Soper

The **East Valley Barbershop Harmonizers** from Mesa, Arizona, continued to meet, learn, and grow as a Chorus during the first quarter of 2021. Weekly Zoom meetings continued despite the pandemic, remaining focused on vocal and performance quality enhancement and repertoire expansion. Meetings were further enhanced by adding music theory and Barbershop history trivia sessions, introducing the Chorus members to classic International Quartet champions and having online discussions with accomplished music arrangers, including **Joe Liles** and **Jim Clancy**.

As a Valentine's fundraiser, the Chorus created and sold virtual singing e-cards, featuring classic love songs performed by several Quartets, consisting of Harmonizer Chorus members. Participating Chorus members provided solo recordings to Director **Russ Young**, who matched voices and created the Quartet videos. The e-cards were successfully marketed on social media and sent to loved ones to commemorate the holiday.

We'd like to acknowledge two individuals recognized at our annual installation and Chapter celebration event held via Zoom. New member **Matthew Owens** was selected as Rookie of the Year and **Bob Szabo** was selected as Barbershopper of the Year. Congratulations to Matthew, Bob, and others who received Chapter recognition awards.

We mourn the loss of 90-year-old **Rollie Halvorson**, who was called home to the Chapter Eternal on February 21, 2021. Rollie, who joined the society in 2017, was an active member of the Mesa Chapter and the Harmonizer Chorus until a few weeks prior to his death. His dedication to the Chapter was an inspiration to us all.

We welcome you to join our Thursday evening online meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For more information, visit our website at <http://evBarbershop.com>.

Salt River Valley Chapter By Eric Bjornsen

A Cappella Syndicate continued to meet over Zoom during the first quarter, which allowed its singers to stay in touch and maintain camaraderie. Member commitment remains strong, as evidenced by high levels of attendance on these calls.

Despite the lack of regular rehearsal, the ensemble focused on new music, some of which was arranged by the Syndicate's own **Brent Graham**, who is also a BHS Music Category Judge. Assisting the group to develop a common focus on one song was Performance Category Director for Harmony International and BHS Performance Judge, **Theresa Weatherbee**, who brought her insights into one of the Zoom sessions. Significant progress has been made on several songs, and it was anticipated that the group would hit the ground running in April with regular, in-person rehearsals. Syndicate rehearsals did indeed start on April 6, as most members received their COVID vaccines. Performances are scheduled to begin again in the Fall.

Sun Cities Chapter
By Howard Donley

The **Desert Aires** have been meeting in person for four weeks and counting. Our entire Chorus is vaccinated! We continue to do health screenings with temperature checks and oxygen readings prior to rehearsals to maintain the safety of our members.

Tucson Chapter
By Frank Hartline

The **Tucson Sunshine Chapter** has been holding weekly Zoom meetings with our Director **Luke Diamond**. We produced three virtual songs by 12 or so members and edited admirably by Luke for Singing Valentines, St Patrick's Day, and even an 8-song Annual Show to be released in early May. All were sent to members, friends, and patrons free of charge. We are hoping

to return to in-person Chapter meetings in the Fall. Sadly, our Chapter President **Mike Elbert** and first lady **Gwen Elbert** were taken by COVID in January. They were intrepid supporters of our Chapter and wonderfully warm people. May they rest in peace.

White Mountains Chapter By **Everett Peterson**

Our **High Country Barbershop Chorus** plans to clean our one mile of Adopt-a-Street in Show Low, eastern Arizona, weather permitting, on Saturday, May 8. This will be our first in-person activity in 14 months. We have performed this annual civic activity for several years. This will be a way to reconnect with each other as we tentatively hope to begin in-person rehearsals in June or July, depending on how our community is doing with covid.



If you are interested in becoming the Northeast Division Editor for Westunes, please email Westunes Editor Ray Rhymer at westuneseditor@farwesternndistrict.org or call me at 916-791-2134 to chat. The task is not difficult, but does require a commitment 4 times a year in late Jan, Apr, Jul, & Oct.

Or, you may contact David Melville, Marketing Director at marketing@farwesternndistrict.org

Central California
By Ray Darnell

After almost 15 months without our weekly dose of enjoying a brotherhood of harmony that depends on singing together in person, the Golden Valley Chorus (GVC) met together in person. It was rewarding to sing together again while losing only one member during the shutdown.

GVC is a small Chorus, and we were concerned about the shutdown's impact. Would we lose members? Would we lose our audience because of canceled shows? So, like many Chapters we turned to Zoom for weekly meetings where we welcomed guest presenters, sang while muted, and chatted about the Old Songs and old times. We provided free Valengram videos to everyone on our email list. We also frequently telephoned or emailed members who could not attend our Zoom meetings.

Again, like many small Chapters, we are challenged with rebuilding our Chorus and our audience. It would be easy to say, "We are a small Chorus and we do not have the resources of a larger Chorus." and give up. We could give into the myth that our older voices will not recover after 15 months of silence. We could assume our audience will never return, and do nothing. We could incorrectly assume our audience will magically show up at our performances without any encouragement. Instead, we are choosing to address the rebuilding challenge with a 9-month plan.

We will restructure our rehearsal schedule to include extended vocal exercises. These exercises will focus on restoring and strengthening our voices that have been silent too long. We will rely on the talents of our director to improve our tone, breath control and pitch. We will become better singers.

The Far Western District is a source of invaluable support for small Choruses. We plan to participate in District events and contests. The interaction with contest judges and fellow Barbershoppers will make the GVC a better Chorus. We will benefit from the FWD pool of coaches by inviting them to hold rehearsal workshops.

We will reestablish our connection with our community and our show patrons. As Covid-19 restrictions ease we will schedule up to six free performances to

local community organizations. We will produce YouTube videos to be sent to our fans via social media. We will work with local high school choir directors to help them rebuild their choral programs. This includes sponsoring a local Youth in Harmony workshop and providing scholarships for the Far Western District Youth in Harmony camp this fall.

Most important, we will continue to have fun singing together because IT'S GREAT TO BE A BARBERSHOPPER!



San Mateo Chapter
By Tom Addison

Zoom anyone! Our weekly Chapter meetings continue during this unusual time! We have even picked up a couple of prospective members who are, just like us, dying to sing with someone... anyone! We continue to use Harmony University warmup series, available free on YouTube, and sing against wonderful learning tracks produced by the incomparable **Tim Waurick**. We critique our earlier show videos on a regular basis, participate in sectionals using breakout rooms, and are continually entertained by Pete's Picks, a weekly collection of cartoons, videos and photographs that help us to chuckle during these isolating and tragic

times. As our Chorus members are all vaccinated, we dream about getting together again, to bust a chord, sing a tag, and drink a beer together at our Fiddlers afterglow!

Our tentative first in-person rehearsal will be held outside sometime in mid-May and as we are all vaccinated, without masks. We're really excited about it!

Thanks to our leader **Ed Sterbenc** for keeping us on track and lightening the mood with his witty comments and to **Bill Nott**, for dragging many of us into the world to high tech wizardry. Without which our efforts would probably fail. We cherish these Tuesday get-togethers, always looking forward to that day when we can do it in person.



Editor note: If you are interested in becoming the Southeast Division Editor for Westunes, please email Westunes Editor Ray Rhymer at westuneseditor@farwesterndistrict.org or call me at 916-791-2134 to chat. The task is not difficult, but does require a commitment 4 times a year in late Jan, Apr, Jul, & Oct. Or, you may contact David Melville, Marketing Director at marketing@farwesterndistrict.org



Southwest Division

Justin McQueen • Division Editor



Rincon Beach Chapter Pacific Sound Chorus By Brent Anderson

At least 16 stalwart Pacific Sounders, and an occasional guest or two, meet every Monday for the Zoom meeting at 7:30. We're keeping in the habit of Monday night, anticipating when we'll again be able to meet in person. Most of us are vaccinated yet still cautious for the sake of others. Speaking personally, the only aftereffect of the vaccine is an overwhelming urge to take off my mask.

Each week we have a mental health exercise, then vocal warm up followed by learning a couple of tags, and then singing through a few repertoire songs. The sheet music is displayed on our computer screen, with the page turning automatically along with the learning track. It is our hope that we'll quickly be able to pick up the songs again when we're allowed to rejoin in person.

One cool feature of each Monday is that we close with "music appreciation." This is a video performance by some outstanding a cappella artists, such as Take 6, Accent, Sage, New York Voices, Kurt Elling, and The Real Group. Leaders on our music team find these great videos and we are in awe of the great vocal talent that is out there entertaining the world.

We're happy to be in touch with each other and we value our musical community. We are eagerly awaiting the aligning of the planets in such a manner that our voices can be joined in person.

San Fernando Valley Chapter Valley Harmony Singers By Ben Marder

On April 12, 2021 the Valley Harmony Singers welcomed a special guest to our rehearsal meeting on zoom, **Bruce Poelhman**. Bruce is a former 15-year member of the Chorus. Bruce formerly sang tenor in Oddly Enuf, one of our most entertaining Quartets. Bruce also served as president, and was B.O.T.Y 2013.

Bruce's younger son also sang in our Chorus. Bruce and family live in New York.

Since the beginning of this year, we have had 14 people join our Chorus on Meetup. Several have attended our rehearsal meetings. One person is now going through the process of becoming a member. We plan to have a special guest night for all of these meetup members in the near future.

On April 26, 2021 **Katie McDonald** (BHS Retention and Recruiting Manager) was our special guest speaker at our Zoom meeting. Katie was charming, delightful, full of energy and gave us some wonderful ideas on recruiting and retention on Zoom during the pandemic. She complimented our Chorus on the way we have conducted our virtual rehearsal meetings during these trying times. We have been averaging 20 members plus 1-2 guests from meetup per meeting. We also have been conducting our Music Team and Board meetings on Zoom throughout the year.

In the past several weeks our members have been preparing by downloading Jamulus and ASIO4ALL, and also purchasing the proper headset so we can have our first Jamulus rehearsal, which will be held on Monday May 24, 2021 during the second half of our meeting. This will be the first time in over a year we will be able to harmonize together. Isn't technology wonderful.

Most of our members have been vaccinated and are getting anxious to return to in-person rehearsals at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Van Nuys, CA. We've spent a year learning our new songs and also going over our old repertoire ones. Hopefully before the end of the year we will have a Fall Show and perform all these wonderful songs for an audience.

Santa Monica Chapter Oceanares By Marty Mitnick

With so much time on our hands because of the pandemic aren't we fortunate to have the wonderments

of Zoom and FaceTime at our fingertips.

Our **Santa Monica Oceanaires Director Laura Singer** has made good use of these electronic wonders by having our weekly virtual rehearsals. What a terrific way to keep in touch with one another.

A few of our Quartets have rehearsed outdoors with adequate spacing but that has been the extent of our getting together.

Until next time be well, be safe and follow the rules.


**South Bay Chapter
Coastliners
By Barry Waite**

Here at the South Bay Coastliners, we are fortunate to have a library of over 20 years of our shows on video. We've been watching them together online over the last few months, and it's been really interesting. For the most part, the guys say "That show was better than I remembered it!"

If you've ever been to a Coastliner show, you know it's not a typical stand-on-the-risers-and-sing concert. There is a story (though sometimes thin!), a variety of acts and usually even a live band. It's fun to see guys who are long gone but not forgotten and admire how little we have aged. Hey, that's our story, and we're sticking to it. For our guys who are still working, the tough part is doing a meeting on Zoom after spending all day on Zoom for work.

We just watched our last show from 2019, "The Great Radio Broadcast of 1944" that featured the Gassman brothers as our guest announcers. We held it at the Redondo Beach Women's Club that actually served as a USO club during the war. We're thinking of setting up a viewing of the show for the District. Stay tuned!

We hope to start outdoor Sunday afternoon singing together soon. Since we're all going to have to learn to sing again after this long break, we will be making a big push to bring in guys who have always wanted to sing and they can learn with us. As always, everyone is welcome.



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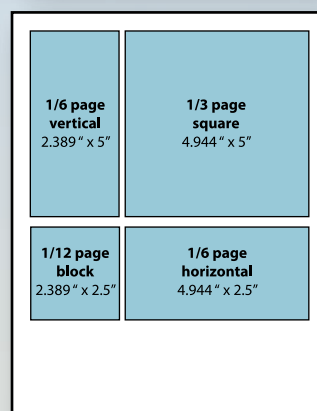
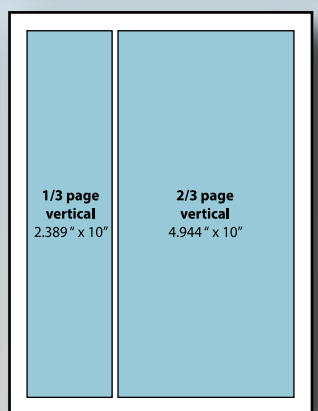
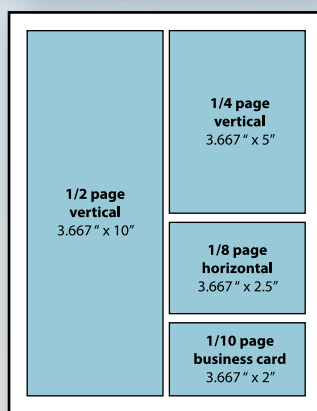
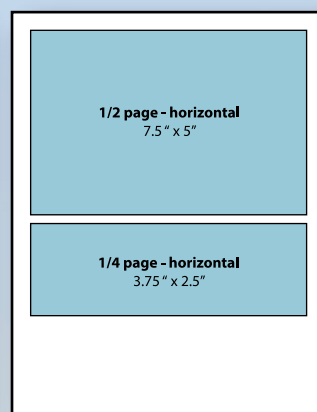
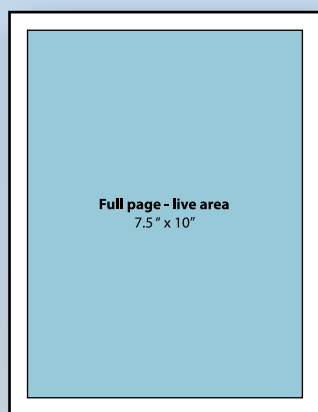
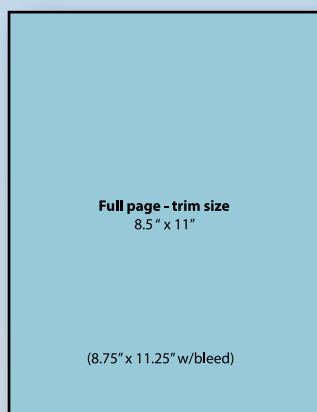
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Events

DISTRICT CALENDAR

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

- October 7/10, 2021 FWD Fall Convention: Gilbert, AZ., Higly Performing Arts Theater
- 2022 FWD Spring Convention, with Int'l Prelims & SE/SW Divisions: date and location TBD
- 2022 NE/NW Divisions: date and location TBD
- October 13-16, 2022 FWD Fall Convention: Fresno Saroyan Theater and Double Tree Hotel

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

EVENTS REGISTRATION

Register for FWD Conventions at
events.farwesterndistrict.org

Sunshine

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

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