



LASTING FRIENDSHIPS – ENDURING MUSIC
PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

September 2019

IT'S ALL ABOUT BEING A PART OF THE TEAM

It is fall in Michigan. Well, at least it seems like fall. The Maze and Blue are 1-0 already, having almost doubled up on Middle Tennessee State opening weekend. MSU, also 1-0 had a great defensive game (and scored 28 points as well) opening weekend. The Lions open up on the road this week in Arizona against the Cardinals...and we are ever optimistic about our Lions....

Summer was not as good to us. The Tigers are looking to set a new record...unfortunately for the number of losses in a season, and the number of home losses in a season by any MLB team in history... They are young; they have traded away their best players for young prospects who have not made it up to the SHOW yet. There are occasional glimpses of great things to come, but it is a struggle.

Perhaps your BHS experience in the past few years has followed the same path as our professional and college teams. Maybe you are riding the high of great recent accomplishments, and are looking forward to repeated success. Maybe you are looking at recent success, and thinking that you are not going to see that success again in the near future. Maybe you have never had that kind of success you see other people have, and you keep trudging along, hoping and wishing for just a bit of success.

One thing is absolutely true however, and that is you can have no success without your team. There is not a single voice which, alone, can win the gold medal. Even Tim Waurick, who could likely step into any part in any quartet and win the Gold, can't do it by himself. The fact is, Barbershop is a participatory activity that requires a minimum of 4 people to execute. So, in other words, if you are to truly enjoy this hobby – this lifestyle – this avocation – you have to be a team player.

So, if you consider yourself a Barbershopper you need to ask yourself a key question: who is your team? The answer may not be as simple or direct as you may think. Is your team as simple as your quartet? Your Chapter? Your District? Your Society? Maybe it is a combination of all of those things. Maybe you think it is none of those things.

It is fair to say that, in this day and age, none of us “joins” a group for the sake of joining or simply being a member. Those days are long gone. Study after study shows that in today’s world, we may participate in an activity for a while, but unless there is some intrinsic value each of receives, our attention will drift, and we will find the next thing to temporarily occupy our time.

My point in this letter is to offer a point of view for you to consider. No one but you can determine what that intrinsic item is that keeps you engaged, only you can know. The fact is, you may not know either; you just know that what you are doing does provide you with that intrinsic value. To discover what that piece of intrinsic value is to you, you should consider what you are seeking in this hobby; what you currently receive from this hobby; what you would like to continue to receive from this hobby; and finally, what YOU need to do to make sure you continue to receive and increase what you receive from the time you spend in Barbershopping.

For me, I find that my greatest return for my investment of my time comes from my Chapter. That is my TEAM. It is what I follow regularly. It is where I “tune in” every week to see what is going on. It is where my soul is refreshed, and my peace of mind restored every week. I once did an interview for a news article, and was asked what it was about Barbershopping that had me continuing for as long as I had. My response didn’t take any thinking at all.

I have known all my life that I can never be mad, I can never be vengeful, and I can never have an unhappy moment when I am singing. For me, singing is the ultimate release of all frustration. Singing, in short, makes me happy, and I am most happy when I show up every week to sing with my friends in my chapter. These are people, many of whom I have known for over 40 years now, whom I consider to be my friends. What could be a better way to spend an evening than to “sing a few” with your friends? I always walk away from my chorus nights with a smile on my face, and joy in my heart.

You can get the same experience from a quartet. I love singing with my quartet. Personally, I don’t think we get together often enough. I could use more of that time to help refresh my soul in an otherwise very hectic, and often contentious day.

I have enjoyed my time serving my friends in the Pioneer District. This is not a primary joy, but a secondary one. It is the joy I get from giving back to those who have provided me with years of joy. Similarly, the work I have done at the Society level has allowed me this same secondary joy. Giving back to the organization that has allowed me the opportunity to meet the wonderful people with whom I sing.

Find your joy. Find your TEAM, and then enjoy it as much, and as often as you can. While you are at it, give back a little bit, as a Chapter leader, a District leader and as a Society leader. You will be surprised at how much joy you get from giving back as well as from participating.

If, at any time, you have anything you want to ask me, or have the Board review or address, feel free to contact me by email at pio.district.pres@gmail.com. I will do my best to get back to you in an appropriate amount of time, or put you in contact with the appropriate member of the District Board.

Dave Montera
2019 President – Pioneer District