

Volume 2, May 2020

The Troub



Enriching lives through singing and serving local communities



PIONEER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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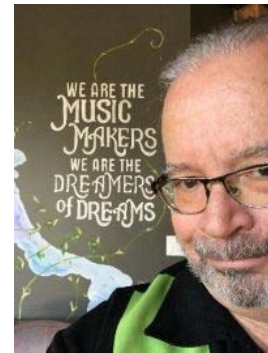
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Pioneer District President

Let's Grow Together

COVID, risers, financials and more



Greetings Fellow Barbershoppers!

In my 60-plus years walking this planet, I don't recall a month that took longer than April of 2020. I'm sure you can relate. The list of events and opportunities that have changed is too imposing to even write.

I will miss the campers, clinicians, and quartets, and all the little moments that inspire them to embrace barbershop for the first time — or the thousandth time. Camp time is when I'm reassured that barbershop will grow and thrive for years to come. It will be tough come July.

In positive news, your district board took advantage of the month to accomplish many tasks that may have taken several months under normal conditions. A few of the projects underway are referenced in this newsletter. Others have been the subject of recent phone calls to chapter leaders, and some will be rolled out in the coming months. Two additional projects were identified during the district board Zoom meeting on April 25. It is exciting to work with nine motivated and enthusiastic leaders on this 2020 board.

Risers

The Pioneer District is considering the purchase of risers. One key consideration is the storage and care of an asset that is a large investment. The district is seeking a chapter that can care for the risers, transport them to conventions and manage a rental program that allows the use of the risers by member chapters and possibly outside organizations. A packet containing the Management Agreement document and the Riser Rental Agreement will be mailed to all chapters in mid-May. Interested chapters may submit a proposal thereafter.

Year-End Financial Reports

District treasurer Chris Berry has been busy, much the same as chapter treasurers this time of year. Tax forms have been completed and the required financial review has been completed. I'd like to thank Jim Kunz for completing the review. He's done this job for a while now and has let us know he's ready to turn it over. If you or someone you know has the professional background and willingness to provide this service next year, please let me know. If you need assistance

getting your chapter reporting requirements completed for 2019, please alert us so we can get you the assistance you need.

Upcoming Events

- MountainTown Harmony Explosion - Scheduled for July 9-11 has been canceled
- Bush League - Scheduled for August 14-15 remains a go as of this writing. Jamie Carey and his crew will be monitoring the restrictions as the event nears.
- The Spirit Chorus intends to meet when possible. They, too, will be monitoring the restrictions.

Conventions/District Contests

The district contests that were part of the canceled spring convention will be moved to the fall convention in Kalamazoo. When contest registration opens, you will be able to enter the district chorus contests and quartet contests as well as the International Prelim contests.

[See the list here](#)

I Miss My Barbershop Rehearsals

I have enjoyed being a part of the Roses and Thorns sessions hosted and created by Chris Berry this past month. The program will continue through the month of May. I suggest you give it a look.

Please Stay Connected

I hope your chapter and quartet remain connected during this stay-at-home period. We learned via recent phone calls that many groups are leveraging technology to stay in contact. Singing together is not the only reason we enjoy this hobby. Please keep the two way communication in your group alive until the time comes to gather in the same space. If you need ideas for staying in touch please contact me.

SINGcerely!

Joe McDonald
District President

Read previous president updates by [CLICKING HERE](#)

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Pursuit of a Return to Normalcy

District to launch digital competition

As barbershoppers, we thrive on lively, engaged rehearsals, the exploration of ways to improve musically and performance – for the enjoyment of others and often for competitive scores.

Then came 2020, the great pandemic, and the prolonged interruption of life as we knew it.

Which called for some creative thinking. Several district board members decided to leverage technology and create a new way to engage barbershoppers in what they love most and do best — prepare, perform, and entertain.

The result is the Pioneer District Smartphone Showcase, which invites choruses and quartets to upload performance videos to Facebook and vie for awards.

The concept was masterminded by Joe McDonald and Paul Ellinger, president and vice president of the district board. Brandon Smith and Zach Schroeder, also board members, have helped finalize showcase details.

“The Smartphone Showcase gives our friends, neighbors, and coworkers the chance to see our hobby — to see the music, the fun, and the sense of community we have,” Ellinger said. “It’s a way for choruses and quartets to increase local interest in barbershop by showing what they’re really like.”

Smith noted that even choruses and quartets not affiliated with a chapter — such as those from high schools — are welcome to enter showcase videos as long as they perform a barbershop song.

“This is a good fit for chapters and others who want something different than competition,” Smith said. “It’s an opportunity to get new ideas out there and to show others what barbershop music

can be.”

A date for entries will be announced once Michigan’s stay-at-home orders are lifted. Please stay safe and don’t get together before then. You’ll have lots of time to plan your entry and a couple of weeks to get it recorded and submitted.

Here are a few of the requirements:

- Submit one song video per chorus/quartet
- Cell-phone captured video only
- Raw video footage in one take, with only the beginning or end of the video permitted

Some advice:

- Choose a song that connects with the general public
- Sing a song that represents the chorus or quartet’s brand
- Can add text and narration

Categories:

- Most Impactful Award (Quartet)
- Best Comedy Award (Quartet)
- I’d Hire Them Award (Quartet)
- Most Viewed Award (Quartet and Chorus) - All submissions will be entered
- Group I’d Want to Sing With Award (Chorus)
- Most Impactful Award (Chorus)
- Best Comedy Award (Chorus)

[Click here for currently known details.](#)

[Have a question about the showcase? We’re developing an FAQ document for release either in next month’s Troub or when we announce the dates and promote the contest. Send your question to \[pioneerdistrictbhs@gmail.com\]\(mailto:pioneerdistrictbhs@gmail.com\) and we’ll add it to the list!](#)

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Let the Music Continue

Weekly Zoom gatherings fuel music education, community

COVID-19 can make barbershoppers stop rehearsing together, but it cannot make them stop connecting as a community.

Proof? The Zoom-based “I Miss My Barbershop Rehearsal Support Group,” led by Chris Berry, a Pioneer District Board member and director of the Monroe North Floral City Harmonizers.

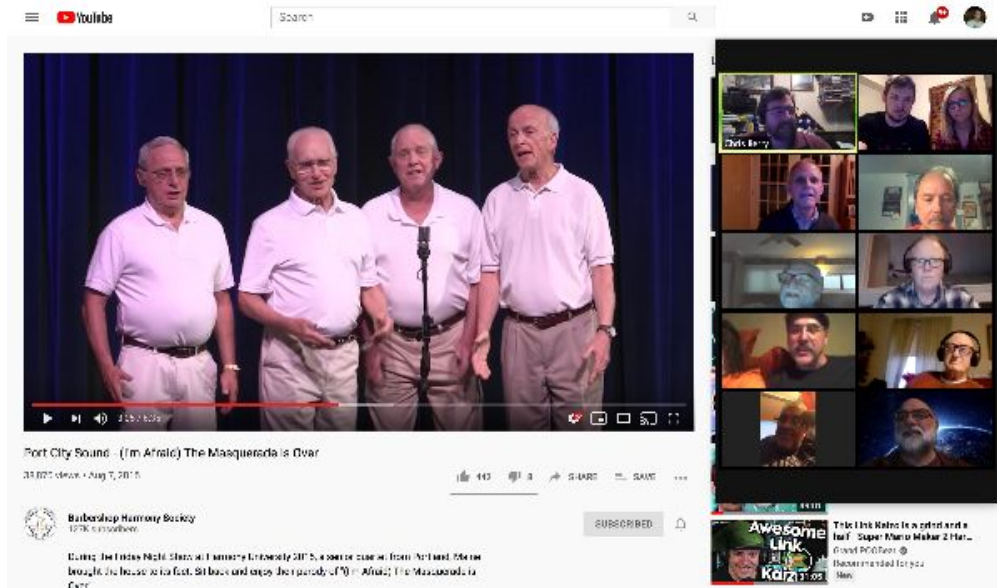
The weekly gathering is open to all Pioneer District members and builds on a concept used by the Floral City Harmonizers. Everyone there is assigned to sing in a quartet during rehearsals. After each quartet sings, other members respond with “roses and thorns” — what impressed them and what seemed off.



The experience helps those singing see if they really know their music while also glean insights for improvement.

During the lively, congenial “support group” meetings, participants listen to and watch videos of both barbershop chorus and quartet performances, then offer roses and thorns feedback.

The April 21 session had 18 participants from across the state, including a beloved former district member, Greg Humbel, who joined from Florida. (For what it’s worth, he was sitting outside on a beautiful, warm night — while those in Michigan were at 40 degrees.) Mark Kettner, a certified judge for the Barbershop Harmony Society, also joined, although his insights were rivaled by those from 13-year-old Charlie Gross.

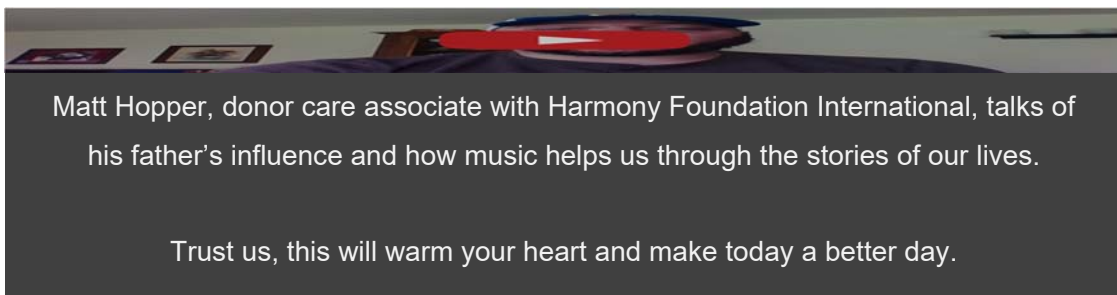


“The neat part is because we’re fussy people as barbershoppers — we’re nitpickers — everybody has something to say,” Berry said. “This is a way to keep moving forward. To keep learning. To have fun getting together, talking about the same thing.”

Email Berry at techberry@charter.net to receive the invitation and weekly Zoom link to the support group sessions, which go from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

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Music for our journey



May Calendar

All May Events have been canceled due to the ongoing pandemic. Check back next month, or use the link below to see future events.

[See Full Calendar Here](#)



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