

Volume 14, June/July 2021

The TROUB



Enriching lives through singing and serving local communities



PIONEER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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Traveling the New Path Forward

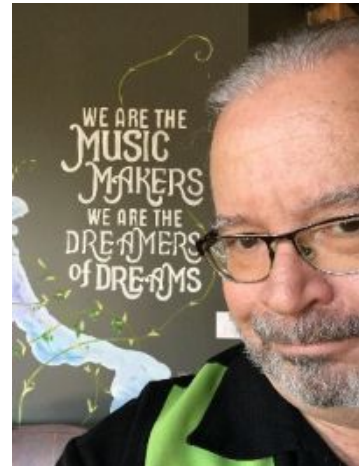
'Barbershop is Coming Back!' with so many opportunities to engage!

"AAAAAHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" Pronounced in a slow, much relieved and happy tone, that's my favorite sound these days, knowing the opportunity to get together safely again is HERE!

Let's all embrace barbershopping as never before, while respecting the fact that barbershoppers will find their own pace to reconnect in person.

When your group is ready, please be mindful that people who would benefit from post-pandemic singing will be looking for your group. Your challenge is to have a plan, reach out and offer an ever-present, welcoming attitude. Our Path Forward is filled with real opportunity!

Be sure to check out the [Barbershop Harmony Society's "Barbershop is Back" graphics](#), perfect for use on social media, as you get back together.



Yes Virginia, there will be a fall convention!

The fall convention in Kalamazoo will feature a combination of traditional and new events during the October 14-15 weekend.

- A quartet contest will be announced soon.
- Choruses, VLQs (very large quartets) and quartets that are not interested in competing will be included in two new showcase events, one Friday and one Saturday. We are seeking "headliners" for each of the shows. Details will be released soon.

- The traditional Thursday evening gathering will be as memorable as ever, given our year and a half with no convention.
- The Marketplace will be back, with all-new merchandise you're going to love.
- A brand-new Hall of Fame banquet will honor those who've made a huge difference, during a reception you won't want to miss.

I'm looking at this convention as a reunion and encouraging our planning team to think outside the box. That is happening. The process includes a thorough look at the convention financial plan. Keep your eyes open for a special Troub with registration information and further event details.

An exciting future, captured in a refreshed logo

Your board of directors and House of Delegates have approved our refreshed logo. As you'll see in the story below, it contains multiple elements that reflect our legacy and our future, barbershop singing, camaraderie, as well as learning and growth. Much appreciation goes to Brandon Smith and Sherry Knight, who invested hours in pioneering this exciting, modern reflection of our district.

MountainTown Harmony Explosion 2021, July 29-31

Plans for our districtwide 2021 youth workshop were "crunched" into a short time frame and filled with new considerations. I believe we have a viable event ready to go and I hope you'll support it. Please check out the story below and then encourage young singers to join in this life-changing, fun experience.

Bush League 2021, August 13-14

The long history of Bush League in Pioneer will pick up where it left off after missing a year due to COVID. Jamie Carey and the crew from Grand Rapids have plans in place. Please consider Bush League as a quarteter, or golfer, or audience member. This is a treasured event with a history of great individual and chapter leadership. Thanks to Jamie and the team from GR for their recent and future commitment to providing opportunities to barbershop!

"AAAAHHHHHHHHHHHH!" Sung with all the resonance I can muster and with the knowledge that I will be able to sing it with three other parts with you at the fall convention and every other opportunity from now until then. Bell well, my friends!

SINGcerely!

Joe McDonald
District President

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

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Pioneer adopts new district logo

Design reflects legacy, four-part harmony and a bridge between generations

For the first time since 1985, the Pioneer District has a refreshed logo. Its clean, modern design reflects barbershop singing, four-party harmony and connectivity between generations and chapters as well as between Michigan and Ontario.

Approved by the House of Delegates on Sunday, June 27, the design honors Pioneer as the “[district of firsts](#),” while also conveying a path to the future.



“Our new logo pays homage to our history while also paving the way to an exciting future,” said district board member Brandon Smith. He co-led the logo refresh effort with Sherry Knight, also a board member.

“Look for the new logo soon on our website, newsletter and social media. A simplified sub-logo will be great on merchandise that will be unveiled at this fall’s district convention,” he said.

The district has had two logos throughout its history. The most recent, featuring a covered wagon, was designed in 1979 and put into use in 1985. Key among the new design’s features:

Musical Symbols

- Pine trees represent the four parts of Barbershop singing.
- A barber pole in a bridge reflects the origins of our hobby.
- A road or river has five lines and four spaces, like a staff.
- Seven stars represent the seven international champs from the district.
 - Four open quartet champions, shown as pluses
 - Chorus, senior and collegiate champions, shown as dots

District Symbols

- The bridge represents connectivity between generations and chapters as well as between Michigan and Ontario. It also symbolizes the five main bridges that connect our district:
 - Mackinac, Ambassador, Blue Water, International (between Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario) and the Gordie Howe International, which is expected to open in 2024 between Detroit and Windsor.
- The road or river reflects our pioneering spirit and forward momentum.
- “Pioneer” is prominent, with PIO — the abbreviation that’s used on a national and international level — being larger than the others.

“It’s a sophisticated logo that echoes the depth of our history and our brand. It says barbershop singing, camaraderie, and connections among people and communities,” Knight said. “It builds on the colors of our former logo while reflecting who we are and what we do.”

The four-color primary logo also will have single-color versions for limited use. As Smith referenced, a sub-logo featuring PIO and the bridge will be used principally on merchandise. The logos and usage guidelines will be available soon on the district’s website.

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Pioneer District Hall of Fame nominations due Aug. 13

Inductees to be celebrated at reception during fall convention

Being inducted into any hall of fame is a Big Deal. That's why a district task force has reinvisioned Pioneer's Hall of Fame nomination process and created a new recognition event.

Especially exciting is that the new event will launch during this fall's Oct. 13-14 district convention in Kalamazoo — the first convention in more than a year since COVID-19 brought in-person singing and gatherings to a halt.

"We can't wait to reunite with a room filled with old and new friends that Friday night at a special reception dedicated to the inductees," said Aaron Pollard, who led the Hall of Fame task force. "We'll recognize inductees of the past as well, paying tribute to our legacy while also inspiring the future."

The Pioneer District of the Barbershop Harmony Society uses its hall of fame to recognize individuals who go above and beyond to promote barbershop over a sustained period of time. Nominees chosen for induction are known for inspiring others to engage as active members of the barbershop community. Ideal candidates have a history of encouraging others to go beyond their comfort zones, pushing their abilities and contributions to the world of barbershop.

The nomination process is designed to be simpler than it used to be, giving sponsors of the prospective inductees plenty of leeway in explaining why their candidates should be chosen.

Nominations for induction this fall are due Aug. 13. [Guidelines and a form for submitting nomination materials can be found on the district website.](#)

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Harmony Explosion returns July 29-31— just as exciting, yet more affordable

Clinicians to include Joe Cerutti, leader of acclaimed Alexandria Harmonizers



MountainTown Harmony Explosion is back in action this summer, with a twist designed to expand participation.

Planners have redesigned the event following last year's lapse in the tradition of helping young people from across the Pioneer District learn about and fall in love with barbershop, said Joe McDonald, president of both the district and the MountainTown Singers chapter.

It had become easy to follow a "wash, rinse, repeat" path, but along came 2020, COVID and a question: How could this great experience be more accessible?

After a 10-year run at Central Michigan University, the 2021 event will move to a local school as a three-day workshop rather than an overnight camp. As a result, participant fees are \$89 per person vs. the previous \$289, he said.

The July 29-31 workshop will remain near Mt Pleasant, at Morey FlexTech High School in Shepherd. Participants who live beyond commuting range will make their own arrangements with local hotels or families and can share expenses.

Lunch will be provided Thursday and Friday; Saturday will include lunch and dinner, followed by the hugely popular annual show.

"Rather than running a camp, we're focused on creating extraordinary singing experiences," McDonald said. "Harmony Explosion is where many next-generation barbershoppers truly cement their life-long passion for singing, not to mention incredible friendships."

Songs again will be distributed digitally in advance, with onsite teaching and rehearsing led by

accomplished clinicians and quartets.

Lead clinicians for 2021 are:

Joe Cerutti, director of outreach for the Barbershop Harmony Society and artistic director of the Alexandria Harmonizers in Virginia, one of the top barbershop choruses in America. Under Joe's leadership, the Harmonizers have performed at the White House, Carnegie Hall and at the 70th anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, France. The chorus has won 19 International medals. In his role with the Barbershop Harmony Society, Joe oversees a suite of programs called "Next Generation Barbershop," helping to launch youth into the world of barbershop singing.

Holli Houtz, who recently completed her second year as the vocal music educator at Davis Middle School and Hillsdale High school in Hillsdale. The former Holli Slamka is a life-long barbershop performer — third generation on both sides of her family. Her father and mother are both active and accomplished barbershoppers, as are her grandfathers, uncles, aunts and cousins. She sings lead in the quartet Girl Talk, the teaching quartet for Harmony Explosion. Holli was part of multiple vocal ensembles at Western Michigan University. For example, she was a section leader in and toured the Baltics with University Chorale and also toured and competed in the Monterey Jazz Festival with Gold Company.

In addition to Joe and Holli, workshop quartets will be supported by regional favorites, Frontier and Girl Talk, two "home-grown" groups that have considerable experience as performers and teachers.

McDonald notes that the workshop price is lower thanks to successful fundraising — and he reminds Pioneer District chapters and members that another \$1,000 is needed.

If you would like to sponsor a young singer at \$89 or make a contribution to the scholarship fund, please contact joemcdonald510@gmail.com

[Additional workshop information is available by clicking this link.](#)

Registration is open via Eventbrite. [Register here.](#)

Show information and ticket information will be announced soon. No afterglow is being planned.

Please pass this information along to a young singer, parents or grandparents!

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Bush League is back, Aug. 13-14!

Singing, coaching, a Saturday show and golf highlight the agenda

This year's Bush League — the usually annual singing, coaching, performance and social event, typically for newer quartets — is ramping up to be great!

Following a COVID hiatus, the 2021 event will be Friday and Saturday, Aug. 13 and 14 on the shores of Lakes Cadillac and Mitchell in Cadillac. Bush League has been a Pioneer District tradition for more than 70 years. This year will feature:

- An amateur quartet contest (no more than two past district champions or International qualifiers per quartet);
- Harmony Mercenary mass chorus;
- Coaching “under glass” by Presentation category specialist Mark Kettner;
- A golf outing;
- A tag contest; and
- Saturday night's spectacular show and afterglow!

Activities begin at 11 a.m. Friday with a no-pressure, fun golf scramble at EL Dorado Golf Club. Spouses and family members may participate as well. Cost is \$45 per person, including prizes and a cart. There is a limit of 24 golfers, so sign up soon! (See registration link below.)

Bush League contest is \$50 per quartet, with men's and mixed divisions. The contest will be at the First Presbyterian Church in Cadillac. Your entry fee includes the contest, lunch, coaching and access to the Harmony Mercenary mass chorus songs. *If your quartet is NOT interested in coaching, please indicate this on the entry form.*

Quartets of past district champs, international reps and others not eligible for the league contest this year are invited to sing as a quartet under glass — coached in a setting observed by others who want to learn — and perform in the Saturday show. Entry is \$60 per quartet.

Individual barbershoppers may join the golf outing, tag contest, observe coaching under glass and sing in the Harmony Mercenary Chorus. Cost is \$20 per person, with lunch. Once you register, you will receive access to songs for the mass chorus.

For hotel reservations, call Evergreen Resort at 231-775-9947; use **BUSH LEAGUE** as your code for a special rate on a limited block of rooms. Per-person rates for both nights, including breakfast, taxes and fees, are \$52 for quad occupancy; \$69.33 for triple; \$104 for double; and \$203 for single. Camping is available at Mitchell State Park and several other locations.

[Sign up today!](#)

Saturday night's show will be a fundraiser for Cadillac High School Choirs. A \$10 per person afterglow, including food, will be at Evergreen Resort.

Contact Jamie Carey, director of the Great Lakes Chorus, at 517-507-9328, with questions.

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Media of the Month



Won't YOU be my neighbor?

This one's going to steal your heart and might even inspire you to have your neighbor over for a BBQ. Beautiful, smooth rendition Joelle Laginess (a Pioneer District board member), Kyle Kolebuck, David Breen, who has Michigan roots, and Scott Kitzmiller, who's well known in this district!

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