



LASTING FRIENDSHIPS – ENDURING MUSIC  
PRESIDENT’S UPDATE  
March 2019  
**IT’S ALL ABOUT MUSIC**

Last month I talked about our focus on Service. I indicated the “It is all about service”. This month I want to talk about it being all about MUSIC. Music in so many different ways, can and does touch our lives. We, as Barbershoppers use music to touch other’s lives as well. That is where the focus is this month, as we prepare to head up to Traverse City for our Spring Convention.

There are many ways that we can use music to touch other people’s lives. Some of them are formal, some of them are just things that happen in your daily life, and you don’t even think about it. This was brought back to the front of my mind after I attended the Annual Show for our Pioneer District Saulte Sainte Marie Northland Chorus show on Saturday, April 6.

The show was a take-off of the Christmas classic movie It’s A Wonderful Life. In the show, a chorus member, Bill Bailey complained to his wife (and later to the chorus in a cute “mental musings”) that he just did not have time for everything in his life, and he wished he had never taken up singing. Well, as in the movie, his wish is granted, and you can imagine what he was shown after that.

He was shown how, throughout his life, music played a major role. He was shown how he met his wife because he was singing in a Doo-Wop group in high school, and she saw him, thought he was cute, and went backstage to meet him. He was reminded of how he never would have met her, except through music. Similarly, he was reminded how he could always calm his fussy child simply by holding him, and singing softly to him.

He was shown how his friends in singing, and in Barbershop, helped him to “de-stress” after a difficult day at work, simply by getting together and singing at rehearsals. As his wife told him, he never came home from Monday rehearsals in a bad mood.

We know that we help ourselves through music. But our greatest gift is in using music to help others. Think about these few examples – we have all heard these stories before –

- The quartet that went to the Assisted Living facility to do a “free” performance. What they saw were very old people that were often wheelchair bound, and not 100% there mentally. But, once the music started, that audience perked up. They would move their hands rhythmically, nod their heads, mouth the words, and sometimes even sing out. Your music touched that person in a very special, and personal way.
- The quartet that spent all day on Valentine’s Day delivering singing Valentine’s. Again, it doesn’t seem like a big deal to us. Two songs, a flower and a card. But then you look at the face of the person you are singing to. There is embarrassment, joy, love and a host of other emotions flowing in the face of that person. But then look at the other people in the area. Suddenly work stops and everyone in the work area comes over. Laughter, joy, love and a special enjoyment come to the entire workplace, all because you sang 2 songs...
- The Chorus that went out to the Memorial Day or 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration or other patriotic event and sang the National Anthem, or Oh Canada, or the Cohan Medley, or the Armed Services Medley or God Bless America. They touch that audience with the use of music, as the audience almost always sings along, either out loud or to themselves.
- How many choruses have done an annual show, or a sing-out and within a week or two, someone new comes into your rehearsal hall and said I saw you guys sing at ----- and I (or my wife) said – I need to do that.

As Bill Bailey learned in the Northland Chorus’ show – music is a fabric of our lives. It is so much a part of us that we would be much less than we are if we had never allowed music in our lives. Think also of how diminished our lives would be if we allowed music to leave our lives. We would be less than whole. We would not be the same person that we are today if we let music just leave our lives. We would not have the same impact on people as we do now if we were to just let music no longer be a part of our lives.

So, I ask you all to look inward. Recognize what music means to you. How it has impacted your life, and how you have, through music, impacted others’ lives. Let your voice ring out as often as you can. Never be afraid to sing in public or when you are alone. Music is that friend that is always there so you are never alone. Share your gift with others. That truly is what music is. A gift given to us, and enhanced by our use of that gift. There is no diminished amount of music. The more music you make, the more music you will have. Give it freely to yourself, and to everyone around you.

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](mailto: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