

**Pioneer District**  
**Chorus Director Development – Don Slamka**  
**RP3—September 2010**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

I will be learning my position as Director of Chorus Director Development this year. I will utilize the knowledge and resources of the Board, Management Team, and previous DCDDs as key tools in my learning.

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

1. Continue recognizing chorus directors at conventions and explore implementing a “years of service” award/recognition.

RP1 Will continue existing program of recognizing directors at each convention. Currently looking into JAD’s Director of the Year award.

RP2 No further action has been taken.

**RP3 No further action has been taken.**

2. Develop an *effective* chorus director guild (starting as an email group and growing into conference calls or face to face meetings) in the district and chair its meetings.

RP1 Joe Serwach offered assistance in setting up an email group. Follow up is needed in order to get this going.

RP2 Haven’t heard back from Joe re. an email list.

**RP3 Need to get a hold of Steve Sutherland in order to secure a password for the district directory in order to compile a list of current directors in the district. The BOD may wish to consider assigning passwords to new team members when positions are accepted.**

3. Explore the 21<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> concept and how chorus directors can benefit.

RP1 Doug Lynn offered assistance with a CACM program. Chuck Green and Okemos convention center have been secured for September 25<sup>th</sup>. The goal is to have participation from 60-75 members representing about 10 chapters. The date and facility are being shared with Music and Performance for a mini HEP complete with quartet coaching.

RP2 Doug Lynn has kept this program moving forward with a budget and gathering marketing materials.

**RP3 September 25<sup>th</sup>, an incredible showing at our first CACM workshop. There were 100 attendees representing roughly 18 chapters. Very useful, practical information and techniques were presented to chapters as a way to help realize our goals as chapters and a society. A one day workshop starting at 9:00 and ending to a lengthy standing ovation at 5:00.**

4. Learn about, communicate, promote, and coordinate all functions of chorus director recruitment and development programs in the district, including promotion of the program and its materials to non-Society musicians in the district.

RP1 Still in the learning phase, wishing there was a handbook.

RP2 No further action has been taken.

**RP3 Still learning. Spoke with Steve Tramack in Philadelphia about the CDWI and Out in Front programs.**

5. Obtain and maintain records on the CDWI, chorus director certification, and chorus director development programs in the district and recommend the certification of chorus directors from the district, when appropriate.

RP1 Have yet to start this process.

RP2 No further action has been taken.

**RP3 No further action has been taken.**

6. Provide easy access of materials via district web site and printed materials in order to support existing and future chorus directors.

RP1 I have collected many of the documents from the society web page for use on the Pioneer District web site. President Dunckel sent me a link to the Sunshine District's Chorus Director Resource page as a model. The layout is nice, but all of the links to the resources are broken. I think that when the society changed its website, files were relocated and existing links became useless. Therefore, I believe hosting this material ourselves will be most beneficial to our directors.

RP2 No further action has been taken.

**RP3 Need to contact Steve Sutherland in order to make this happen.**

**Pioneer District**

**George Doyle - Director of Membership**

**RP-3 UPDATE**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**I will continue to assist Chapters in any way possible to ensure the VP of Chapter Development implements, at a minimum, a three part plan that addresses new member recruitment, visitor treatment, and current member retention and appreciation. As a member of the Society Membership Committee I will ensure the Pioneer District is aware of and participates in Society initiatives for 2010. I will continue my efforts to be in contact with and maintain a dialogue with Chapter Development officers.**

**DISTRICT OBJECTIVES**

**1. Finish 2010 with a positive trend in membership. This will be measured by an increase in overall members or a marked decline in membership loss.**

RP-1. The most recent membership figures received from Society indicate a 5% reduction in membership within the Pioneer District. All Districts had a decline. The main source of decline is retention of current members, not recruiting new members. Retaining current members is the emphasis of all membership initiatives, task forces, committees, etc., within Society. I have coordinated to have our District's Man of Note recipients for 2009 recognized on the video screen at spring convention.

RP-2. Membership within Pioneer District has declined about 4% year to date. Society decline is about 5%. All Districts reflected a decline.

**RP-3. Membership Society-wide is slightly up. Pioneer District had a 1 % increase while Society grew at around 1.5 %.**

**2. I will communicate with each Chapter monthly to ensure everyone is aware of new information, programs and guidance that pertains to Chapter Development.**

RP-1. I have communicated with every chapter each month. Feedback is scarce. At President Dunckel's direction, I spoke personally to representatives of the Mt. Pleasant and Grand Rapids chapters (summary attached). I also sent two more letters of recognition to the Alpena and Lansing chapters as a result of information obtained during Leadership Academy in January. Even after a personal appeal from President Dunckel, I have received only one membership development plan from a chapter.

RP-2. I continued communicating with all chapter via a monthly email. I've tried to keep chapters aware of Society and District initiatives designed to aid recruiting and retention. I've encouraged all chapters to get involved with social media marketing and know what's available to them on the Society and District websites. I also sent a "kudos" email to the Pontiac-Waterford Chapter recognizing strong membership growth and leadership. My Chapter Contact Report for this quarter is attached.

**RP-3. My monthly emails to our Chapter Development VPs emphasized recruiting and retention as JOB ONE in Society. My mantra is to never miss an opportunity to be known in the community and to invite new men to try us out. I've promoted and encouraged attendance to CACM, subscription to the Pionet, acquiring and using the American Harmony documentary as a publicity tool, and continuing to use all the tools available at Society and District web sites. My quarterly Chapter Contact Report is attached.**

**3. I will be 100% effective in responding to requests for staff assistance from VPs of Chapter Development, Secretaries, or any other chapter officer/member.**

RP-1. I received requests for assistance from 3 chapters. Each issue was resolved quickly and satisfactorily.

RP-2. I assisted two chapters in resolving questions. One sought free music for guest nights and the other had questions concerning tax reporting, I communicated with the Flint Chapter President about concerns relating to chapter development. I offered examples and tools available to him and his VPCD to assist in building a good recruiting and retention program.

**RP-3. Hello, is there anybody out there? Assisted a couple chapters with membership issues. Most of these types of calls should be answered by their chapter secretaries. Hardly ever get any feedback. I did reach out to the Holland chapter after hearing they were in a rut and losing membership. Seems their aging membership is bored with the same old routine every week and they lack sufficient "spark plugs" to lead a revival. They are sending a cadre of folks to CACM which is a sign they haven't given up completely, although I sense some problem with the director whose buy-in is essential. I encouraged attendance to Leadership Academy as a battery charging experience. The Muskegon chapter has offered to sing with Holland at their Tulip Festival appearance (the big festival in Holland).**

**4. I will actively participate as a member of Society's Membership Committee and represent Pioneer District with timely input and response to Society initiatives.**

RP-1. Two initiatives that have emerged from Society's task force on membership growth are the Four on the Road youth outreach program and the TAG Team (Teams for Accelerated Growth) program for membership growth (summary of each is attached). While both of these initiatives are outstanding ideas, their effectiveness will depend on Society's ability to fund such programs. The Society Membership Committee, comprised of District chapter development officers, has maintained a running email exchange of ideas and local initiatives. One theme emerging above others is the increased use of social media marketing networking technologies such as Facebook, Craigslist, Twitter, etc., to reach the internet generation. A "webinar" internet meeting was held on Sunday, March 28, which provided District membership guys a lesson on using Facebook and Craigslist for recruiting purposes. There may be an informal committee get-together at the Philadelphia convention. I do not expect to attend. The first quarter Membership Committee report is attached.

RP-2. Attached is my input for the 2nd quarter membership committee report. Joe Serwach, PIO Secretary, has developed a district Facebook page, "Pioneer District Barbershoppers". The more people "like it" the more interaction the page gets among facebook "friends". I also took the opportunity at convention to bend Paul Wietlisbach's ear about opening convention competitions to the public more as a recruiting/publicity device.

**RP-3. I wasn't involved in anything significant in terms of membership committee activity. I will be unable to attend the Leadership Forum in Dallas in November as the dates conflict with the Muskegon Rockin'Barbershop music camp and show.**

## Pioneer District Events Coordinator- Jerry Ditto

2010 Goals and Objectives: Continue to explore sites for future conventions. Work with sites to improve and enhance the use of sound and lights to improve the venues. Stay at least five years out with contracts to achieve the best pricing and accommodations for the District. Train others to be involved with the decisions and attention to details needed for a successful convention.

Recent activity: I have replaced Tony Dugal as photographer for the Fall Convention at his request. Tony has done a great job for us over the past 6 or 7 years. He is fun to work with and enjoys the guys as well. At his recommendation I interviewed Andrew Isbell as a replacement at this short notice. He is excited to be doing this and has had some experience with large groups. I will try to make this transition as smooth as possible by attending some of the early pictures to “break the ice”. After the convention we will evaluate and discuss the future both with Andrew and the Board. Since the last meeting we have visited Muskegon and found it to be a wonderful possibility for 2014. The Fruenthal Theater is perfect for us! I hope to get a decision soon as to both Fall and Spring of 2014. Lansing, Muskegon and Grand Rapids have submitted bids for a convention.

Currently I have 2 openings for Host Chapters, Fall and Spring of 2013, Traverse City and Kalamazoo respectively.

Future Conventions:

**Fall Convention: October 15-17, 2010**  
**Location: Grand Rapids Crowne Plaza Hotel (Forest Hills FA Auditorium)**  
**Host Chapter: Grand Rapids Chapter**

**Spring Convention: April 15-17, 2011**  
**Location: Soaring Eagle Resort, Mt. Pleasant**  
**Host Chapter: Mountaintown Singers**

**Fall Convention: October 14-16, 2011**  
**Location: Kalamazoo Radisson Plaza Hotel**  
**Host Chapter: Hillsdale Chapter**

**Spring Convention: April 20-22, 2012**  
**Location: McCamly Place Hotel Battle Creek**  
**Host Chapter: Macomb County**

**Fall Convention: October 19-21, 2012**  
**Location: McCamly Plaza Hotel, Battle Creek**  
**Host Chapter: Battle Creek**

**Spring Convention: April 19-21, 2013**  
**Location: Grand Traverse Resort**  
**Host Chapter:???**

**Fall Convention: October 17-19, 2013**  
**Location: Kalamazoo Radisson Plaza Hotel**  
**Host Chapter:???**

**Pioneer District**  
**Director of Marketing**  
**RP1**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

I will continue to grow in my position as Director of Marketing.

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

1. Increase Pionet penetration.

**RP1. In process & Ongoing**

I have worked on that, but I think the biggest opportunity is going to present itself at convention.

I want to have the registration staff trained to ask if people are on the Pionet and collect those individuals email addresses/names for adding on to the Pionet distribution list.

It is also my personal goal to first get people re-energized about Pioneer and singing in general and then to slowly introduce new "membership driven" ideas to the current membership that will encourage (and reward) men for accomplishing these tasks. Rewards will be recognition only at this point. C'mon, we all do this because we love it and want to share it with others; not because we might get paid. Please make us a binding offer for the following deliveries.

Anyway, I look forward to sharing these ideas which I believe will allow us to move in the direction that we would like to move. Status quo is a thing of the past. Actually, allow me to rephrase that "status quo is a THINK of the past". In other words, we should all be encouraged to stop thinking "status quo". I am not talking change when it comes to the music because that is exactly what we are looking to preserve and hope to enjoy for decades to come. I feel that we need to continue to be willing to engage in discussions that will allow for change to the status quo when it comes to our marketing and reward systems. The next and most crucial step is to then to act on them. We need to be willing to make a mistake in the effort of trying something new and not taking ourselves too seriously when things don't work out and even if they do.

I could go on, but my premise has been established so I will leave it at that for now.

Pioneer District Chapter Support  
and Leadership Training Status Report (RP3)  
September, 2010

Leadership Academy 2010 was a success. An analysis of the surveys has been posted on the district website since the end of January. It was distributed to all of the staff at that time. The event was operated at break even on the financial end.

**LA 2011 will be held at the same venue on Saturday January 8, 2011. Planning is coming together but is behind compared to this time last year. (Harmony Explosion ate up a bunch of time for me.) It is unlikely**

**that there will be a LA marketing piece like last year distributed in Grand Rapids because not enough detail is in place. Something else will be circulated instead. I have been collaborating with Roger and Paul and have extended a request on the Pionet for ideas from chapters. No response to date.**

EVP Project – Chorus champion pins.

**Project Completed. (About 250 pins were purchased by choruses for past championships)**

Paul Ellinger has agreed to become the district VP for Marketing and PR.

YIH Projects

Two individuals have expressed interest in assuming the duties of the YIH VP for the district.

**David Gillingham has withdrawn his letter of interest in filling the YIH position.**

**Dan Winer had previously expressed interest in the position.**

**Joe McDonald continues to serve as the “acting” YIH director. This position should be filled at the next opportunity.**

Harmony camp at CMU. The camp dates are Tuesday, August 10<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2010. A head clinician will be secured this week. Details will be available by Spring convention. A marketing piece will be available there. Harmony Explosion 2010 was held.

**The report submitted to BHS for HF funding is attached as an addendum to this report. Final billing from CMU has not been received at this writing. I hope to have a report on the financial status of the event by the meetings in GR.**

**The Muskegon chapter harmony camp** will be held on November 6, 2010. Details for that event will be available early in May. Nels Carlson of the Muskegon chapter is managing that event.

A group of interested individuals will meet to discuss a proposed youth chorus within the district.

**I am so pleased to report that a district youth chorus is a reality. Under the leadership of Craig Johnson, Dan Winer and Ryan Collins and with the support of a number of others, Northern Rhapsody is born! Over the next few weeks the chorus will be working on a contest package for the youth chorus contest in Las Vegas. At this time it appears that about 30 young men will be on the risers. Jeff Rayburn of the Mt. Pleasant chapter is the director. He is supported by other Pioneer members. The chorus meets on alternate Sundays at CMU.**

### **Harmony Explosion Camp Report**

Date of Event: August 10-12, 2010

Location: Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant, MI

Sponsoring Chapter(s) or District: Mt. Pleasant Chapter for the Pioneer District

Number of Students: Male: 18 Female: N/A

Number of Music Educators: 0

Name(s) of Clinician(s): Ron Black

Name(s) of Teaching Quartet(s): Prestige

Was this a cosponsored event with Sweet Adeline's or Harmony Incorporated? (Circle one) No

Comments/Summary:

In some respects, this camp was a first time event. The Mt. Pleasant chapter offered to manage the camp when the Pioneer YIH VP relocated out of state about 6 weeks after the 2009 event in Interlochen. The time it took to secure the support of the Central Michigan University (CMU) School of Music and the transition by the university of its camps office to another department put the process behind schedule early. Subsequently the process of securing a lead clinician was time consuming. It was the middle of May before all of the details were in place which limited the traditional marketing of the event to high school educators to the last couple of weeks of the school year. Non-traditional methods of marketing were used along with a eleventh hour plea to last year's campers when the list of last year's campers became available about 3 weeks before the event. The low attendance turned out to be beneficial to the campers as is pointed out in their evaluations. The event itself was tremendously successful and the show to wrap up the event was quite special. It featured the "Harmony Explosion Chorus" performing four songs, three from the barbershop genre and Biebel's Ave Maria which featured three soloists and seven voice parts. The campers enjoyed hearing Resisting-a-Rest and Prestige as well as the MountainTown Singers of the Mt. Pleasant chapter. Ron Black was simply marvelous with the kids and Prestige won the hearts and minds of the campers and the audience.

The event was not a financial disaster as would be expected with the low turnout. The cost for the venue was dramatically less than the event in 2009. The campers paid \$199 for the three day event. All that sought financial support were granted it thanks to generous support from benefactors and chapters from the Pioneer District. The Mt. Pleasant chapter will be seeking permission from the district to run a Harmony Explosion camp in 2011. The connections have been secured across the CMU campus which will allow the event dates to be determined within the next month which will allow much more effective marketing for the 2011 event. Young ladies will be added this next time and there is a chance that the event will go to four days. The CMU School of Music operates its camps for 5 days and "sells out" most of the time at a much higher price than we would expect to charge.

In summary, the 2010 Harmony Explosion event was successful from the chapter's point of view. The district will take up the subject during the October convention. The campers were pleased with the product. Ron Black and Prestige had an enjoyable experience. We are looking forward to a bigger and better camp in 2011.