

# The Troub



Enriching lives through singing and serving local communities



## PIONEER DISTRICT NEWSLETTER

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### [A Message from Joe McDonald](#)

Pioneer District President

### Let's Grow Together

Lots      happening      —      Events,      budgeting,      fundraising...

Amid the frustrations of 2020 came an event that I choose to be the highlight of my year — the birth of Brady Christopher in July. He is my fifth grandchild and second grandson. Brady is sure loved by his three big sisters, his momma and daddy.

I'm reminded that life goes on despite the uncertainty and tumult going on around us. I definitely miss my barbershop activities, but I have been reminded that family takes priority. I've been guilty of getting this backwards in the past. I hope you have a highlight for 2020 and that you have used this odd year to revisit how you prioritize all that is valuable to you.



### **Pioneer Hall of Fame has two new inductees**

The two latest HOF inductees have been notified and updated that the ceremony for induction will be via Zoom Friday, November 13. My congratulations to Jamie Carey and Dale Hanson on their selection for the Pioneer Hall of Fame. Check out the story below in this edition.

### **District Board and House of Delegate Meeting**

- Speaking of the Pioneer Hall of Fame, highlights from the virtual Oct. 3 House of Delegates meeting include an exciting remake of the nomination process and presentation ceremony for this special recognition. The story below provides more information.
- The operations reports included basic financial information and the first draft of the

2021 budget. Your chapter communication agents have all the details and have been encouraged to share them with interested members.

- A proposal for a virtual fall event was endorsed by the HOD. Our “UnConventional” convention will be Friday and Saturday, Nov. 13 and 14.. See that story below, as well.
- I’m proud of all that your district board members are achieving this year, as the items in my update this month are showing. They’re working many hours to bring you all of these exciting new initiatives! Please take advantage of them.

### **Pionet to Shut Down**

Pionet became a useful communications tool for Pioneer in 1997 when Jim Styer launched the group and monitored it for several years. Since 2013, Matt Tipton has shepherded the service. Matt recently notified group members of Yahoo’s pending shut down of the service’s platform. You can read more in the story below. **Thank you, Matt, for your dedication to Pioneer!**

### **Mailchimp is the Platform for the Troub**

A few years back, the Pioneer board set up a Mailchimp account, which is used now for distributing The Troub via email. We understand these emails sometimes are blocked by filters on the receiving end. I would be interested in learning how many people you know who don’t get The Troub and would like to. We can go about getting that fixed. Drop me an email at [pioneerdistrictbhs@gmail.com](mailto:pioneerdistrictbhs@gmail.com) to alert us that someone wants to receive the Troub. We’ll check that they are in our nearly 1,000-member list and see what the issue is.

### **A Statement on Fundraising**

Our own Paul Ellinger has penned a statement that was thoroughly discussed and recently adopted by the District Presidents’ Council. It describes the process used by the council to explore bringing the Barbershop Harmony Society and Harmony Foundation International back to talks that could have salvaged the relationship between the two. While it did not gain the hoped-for result, it has yielded an open line of communication that someday should bear other fruit. Again, see the story below.

### **July 2021 in Cleveland**

You may have noticed an email from BHS recently on the topic of the Cleveland International Convention. If your group has always wanted to be a part of the biggest barbershop event of

any year, it can do so next July. [Take a look at the events and information!](#)

## SINGcerely!

Joe

McDonald

District

President

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

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## Save the Date! Pioneer District announces an Unconventional Fall Convention

*Join us Nov. 13,14 for virtual learning, connecting*

We barbershoppers really miss each other, right? And we're able to connect virtually, right?

Well then, let's go ahead and have a 2020 fall convention! We're calling it the *2020 Pioneer District Fall Un"Convention"al Virtual Event.*

Pioneer District board members Brandon Smith and Chris Berry are leading the way in orchestrating nearly **20 free learning and connecting opportunities** starting the evening of Friday, Nov. 13 and continuing through Saturday, Nov. 14. Some sessions include:

- How to Be An Effective Coach
- The Performance Sphere
- How To Teach Tags
- Discussion Circles on:
  - Conversation on Choosing Music
  - Safe Singing Practices with Covid-19
- The Judge's Corner with judges from each of the three categories

Pioneer members will receive a special email within the next two weeks with a final schedule and a link to register to participate — although the convention is free to all.

The weekend kicks off on Friday evening with a keynote address (stay tuned!). Following the keynote, we'll all celebrate the district's two new Hall of Fame members, Jamie Carey and Dale Hanson. (See story below.)

"For many of us, this year has been rather demoralizing. We've designed this *UnConventional Virtual Event* to be 'REmoralizing,'" said Smith, a member of Motor City Metro and the choir director at Bedford Junior High and High School.

"We can still connect virtually with our old friends and meet new ones. We can still talk barbershop and listen to barbershop. We can still learn and advance our skills," Smith said. "Let's make the most of what we **can** do and share some insights, stories and laughs in true Pioneer District fashion!"

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## Carey, Hanson to be inducted into Pioneer Hall of Fame, Nov. 13

*Ceremony set for opening session of district's virtual fall UnConventional Event*

The Pioneer District Hall of Fame will have a whole new energy this year when two members, Jamie Carey and Dale Hanson, are inducted the evening of Friday, Nov. 13.

Jamie directs the Great Lakes Chorus in Grand Rapids and Dale is a member of Mount Pleasant's MountainTown Singers. They'll be honored during the opening session of the district's UnConventional virtual learning and connecting weekend, Nov. 13 and 14.

Jamie has led the chorus to three district championships and seven international competitions. He has been the lead singer in six quartets. His first senior quartet, Montajj, was the Pioneer District senior champion and went to last year's International Senior Quartet Competition. He also has directed the Capital City Chordsmen in Lansing and developed the Cadillac Interlakes Chorus.

Hanson, a major force behind Bush League for nearly 50 years, started singing barbershop at the age of 12. He has sung with eight quartets, including The Barbersharpies, his junior high through college quartet, which regrouped 46 years later. He has a passion for the do-wop

music of the 50s and 60s, writing four-part acapella arrangements with a barbershop flair.

The Hall of Fame has been re-envisioned this year by a Pioneer District Board committee led by Aaron Pollard. The goal is to create an exciting ceremony that engages Pioneer members in celebrating \_\_\_\_\_ inductees.

“We want the Hall of Fame to be a much-anticipated annual event kicking off the fall convention,” said Pollard, a member of Motor City Metro.

“Barbershoppers talk about the amazing events this district used to have,” he said. “Our committee wants to mirror that energy and fun in honoring those who shape our barbershop experiences.”

The district board approved [an updated policy for the Hall of Fame](#) during its Oct. 3 meeting. Key highlights include:

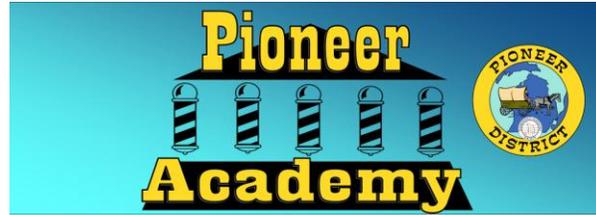
- Anyone can nominate individuals or quartets for induction.
- All people are eligible for consideration into the Hall of Fame.
- Candidates should have a minimum membership in the district of 10 years, although extenuating circumstances will be considered.
- Inductees go above and beyond in one or more of the following categories:
  - Administrative activities at the chapter, district or society level;
  - Musical activities in quartets, choruses, coaching, judging or arranging; and/or
  - Service activities at the chapter, district or society level.

Besides Pollard, Hall of Fame Committee members are Paul Ellinger, Brandon Smith and Sherry Knight.

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**Pioneer Academy underway, always available**



The Pioneer Academy has been launched! Two virtual sessions have been emailed out to Pioneer District members; the content covered using Zoom in chorus rehearsals. Created by our own District Board Member and Director of Education, Joelle Laginess, The Pioneer Academy will continue to provide your group relevant tips and resources that will allow for growth in singing and community.

Here are the first two sessions of the Pioneer Academy in case you missed them or want to view them again!

[Session One: Zoom Basics](#)  
[Session Two: Using Zoom Breakout Rooms](#)

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## Yahoo! Ending PioNet; Facebook group is best alternative

In a year of changes, Yahoo! has announced it will end the service that drives the PioNet on Dec. 15, just shy of the discussion group's 24th anniversary.

Matthew Tipton, PioNet administrator, encourages members instead to try out the Facebook group called ["PIO District Discussions."](#) Like PioNet, your membership in the Facebook group has to be approved, but your posts do not.

The PioNet was started in February 1997 by Jim Styer of the Battle Creek chapter. It was hosted by Humber College in Toronto until moving to Yahoo! In 2004.

PioNet membership grew steadily in the early years and peaked around 600 in 2006. Today, it hovers around 500, serving as a way for members near and far to communicate with a broad

audience and stay connected.

Important announcements from district leaders still will be sent to your email inbox.

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## Insights into Barbershop Harmony Society and Harmony Foundation International

Q&A from the District Presidents' Council



In the early stages of the Barbershop Harmony Society and Harmony Foundation International's redefined relationship, it was the hope of the national District Presidents' Council that the two organizations could work things out by focusing on common ground. The council recommended and mediated a series of dialogues with both groups that, while not generating the cohesion originally sought, did showcase a significant degree of continued alignment. Although the two groups are moving forward differently, both are committed to encouraging people to sing and engage together in harmony.

Both entities have visions, priorities and outreach. How these align with each chapter and member should be a local/personal decision. The District Presidents' Council will continue to shepherd ongoing dialogue with both groups, careful to protect an environment of encouragement and enjoyment across the barbershop spectrum.

### **How was the District Presidents' Council involved in the changes that occurred?**

Very early on, the District Presidents' Council was in conversation with the two groups and suggested and moderated meetings with them. We used this dialogue to listen and then took time to gather and review information from both organizations. Our goal has been to make a circumspective and unbiased assessment of the new environment.

**What should chapters do if some members want to support just one of the organizations, while others want to support both?**

If individuals or chapters choose to support one or both groups, that is, and should be, their choice. How to arrive at a decision is up to the individuals and chapters. The society and foundation are happy to provide information on how your support would be used.

**Should we give member information to HFI?**

Not at this point. However, you should feel free to invite representatives of the foundation and/or society to your chapter events and virtual meetings to learn more about each group, its priorities and how it will operate.

**Can we trust these organizations?**

We have had people donate to both organizations, with those contributions being followed through their respective processes. In every case, the donations have gone to exactly what they were promised and earmarked for.

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## **Get to know the Pioneer District president**

We hope you've enjoyed meeting your Pioneer District board members in the past several issues of The Troub. They've all expressed eagerness to meet YOU at future conventions, shows and Zoom meetings!

**Joe McDonald, Pioneer District president**



- Mt. Pleasant resident and member of the MountainTown Singers
- Self employed, residential remodeling and renovations
- Two-time Mount Pleasant Chapter Barbershopper of the Year; Pioneer District Chapter Support and Leadership Training director, executive vice president and president; founder of MountainTown Harmony Explosion summer camp; and co-founder of MountainTown Family Chorus. Six-time international chorus contest competitor.

**How long have you been on the Pioneer District Board?**

*Two times; 2007- 2014 and 2018 to present.*

**How long have you been involved with barbershop singing?**

*Since 2004.*

**How did you first get involved?**

*I was invited to a gathering that was the beginning of the MountainTown Singers in 2004.  
Favorite barbershop memory: Several memories, most connected to the Harmony Explosion camp.*

**Why you agreed to serve on the board (or what you plan to accomplish):**

*I agreed to serve on the board to put practices into place that will bring more people to barbershop singing and the barbershop lifestyle.*

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