

Greater Detroit Chapter, BHS
Notes from combined ZOOM Meeting of Music Team and Board of Directors, 12/14/20

Present: Steve Sutherland, Joe DeSantis, Dave Montera, Jim Kunz, John Marsh, Herb Hebner, Kevin Wolfe, Geoff D'Allemand, George Burkett, Ted Barbret, Carl Jones

Treasurer's Report

(Submitted by Mike Schulte, reported by Jim Kunz):

- Currently \$43,000 in the bank
- Have we contributed to Harmony Foundation (HFI)? Must check with Mike S. Dave M pointed out contribution of \$524 shown on Line 24 of '20 budget. Has it been submitted? Assuming "no," Jim K suggests we sit on that amount in light of the current legal dispute between BHS and HFI.
- Jim suggests we carry forward the '20 budget into '21. Each department head should approach the Board if/as the need for expenditures arises throughout the year.

Music Team Report

- Jim K summarized Team's recent ZOOM meeting with Artie Dolt. GDC is seriously considering adopting the "Artie Dolt method" for running GDC in the future:
 - No more themed annual shows that demand the learning of 10-12 new songs each year; this effort tends to dominate our time and energy at each Monday night meeting.
 - Our new focus would be on maintaining a longer-term "repertoire" of 10-15 songs that we would work on "perfecting" each Monday night. Each year we would work on 2-3 new songs which would be debuted at our annual show; we would decide on which—if any—of the new songs to make part of the repertoire; for each new song added to the repertoire, one existing repertoire song would be dropped, thus maintaining a more-or-less constant number of songs in the repertoire.
 - The annual show would come to look more like a concert than a themed show. Dolt explained that barbershop audiences, which tend to include an ongoing, loyal core of fans, will enjoy a mix of new tunes and older ones that they will remember fondly from previous shows.
 - Individual members will be responsible for learning words & notes of the repertoire songs on their own. The focus of each Monday's singing would be on constantly raising the quality level of our singing and presentation of our repertoire songs.
 - We will still participate in Spring and Fall district contests, choosing our contest songs from the repertoire based on how well we are singing each one. But contest preparation will be less the focus of our winter and summer Monday nights than they have been in the past.
 - We expect that the above approach will allow us to create a more "fun" experience on Monday nights for individual members, with more varied activities—tag singing, pickup quartetting, etc. etc.

- Joe D expressed skepticism about Dolt's method of recruiting new members, which he is reputed throughout the Society to be extraordinarily successful at. He told us that all he does is send an "invitation" to men that he and his current chorus members identify mainly by word of mouth. Jim and Dave feel that Dolt's magnetic personality and his 24/7 personal commitment to his chorus(es) are the keys to his success. Jim called it the "Pied Piper effect," and both he and Dave are less skeptical than Joe about Dolt's method.
- One of the keys to it all will be the successful maintenance of a balanced (uptunes/ballads, "traditional"/contemporary, etc.) repertoire of songs, which will be the Music Team's responsibility. Steve has produced an initial list of songs, (attached to these notes) which will certainly need to be culled before we will be able to move forward with the Dolt approach. Steve invites all GDC members to scrutinize the list and provide input to the music team on which songs they feel belong/don't belong on the list. He will put out a communication to all members asking for their feedback and setting a deadline for it. The Music Team will then begin working to create a "final" list of songs.

Timeline for restarting GDC activities

- Participants expressed varied opinions on how/when GDC can begin to meet again in the light of developments around the COVID pandemic. Opinions ranged from late spring to late summer/early fall. The timing of all restart activities including the ones below will depend on when pandemic restrictions are lifted.
- Joe expressed concern that we should not expect a "full house" of people on the first Monday night we hold a meeting. Our recent inability to generate enough interest to take on a singing gig at the Royal Oak Salvation Army suggests that people will have to overcome a now-ingrained sense of caution about gathering publicly again, regardless of when that "green light" comes on. We should expect a quite gradual return to our usual level of Monday-night attendance.
- Geoff expressed concern that members he has spoken with are worried about their readiness to start singing again. Part of their concern is the pandemic itself, but some are even more concerned that they have "lost" their voices from not singing for these many months. They will need lots of time to basically re-learn how to sing properly. The group felt that the "Dolt method" may come in handy to help guys through that process. Joe will draft a letter to the general membership explaining the Dolt method and how it should ease that process.
- George Burkett will begin preliminary planning for a GDC picnic in August '21.
- Geoff raised the question as to whether or not we will need to submit a report to ASCAP about our song usage during 2020. According to Dave M, we must submit such a report whether or not we did any public singing during the year. Joe will contact Craig Roney to look into the requirements and follow up on any reporting we must do.

- Geoff reported that the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce may have used a film clip of DOC in performance (at the Zoo? Last year's RO Symphony concert?) at its recent Christmas gala./

Notes submitted by Joe DeSantis 12/15/20.