



Recruiting Members in 2021 and Beyond – Bob Fichtner

Most barbershop choruses use a tried-and-true formula for recruiting new members. Ask most members how they got into barbershop and they will respond “Fred invited me to join.”

This past January, at the **LOL Virtual Leadership Academy**, the membership class was led by **Joe Cerutti** – director of the **Alexandria (DC-area) Harmonizers**. In particular, he mentioned two things their chorus does for member recruiting and retention.

One – he personally calls every member once a year to have a brief conversation about how they are feeling as to the direction of the chorus, what they like about the current state and if they would like to see anything change. So on that note, **Bryan** is ahead of the curve – way to go Bryan!

Two – the Washington DC area has a very transient population due to the large military and political presence; people move into and out of the area a lot. They turn over almost 40% of their membership every year!

In order to recruit new singers – not just members but singers – Joe worked to understand what singers are looking for and expect when looking for a new group to join. Most choral groups have a season that typically starts in the fall, runs through spring, and has the summer off. Most choral groups post notices for audition nights – usually 1-2 dates near the end of the season in spring and 1-2 dates in the fall just prior to the start of the new season. They have certain expectations when it comes to the audition itself – sometimes a music theory test, definitely voice range testing, pitch matching, sight singing, and for some groups, a prepared audition number. Finally, they expect to hear within a few days or so if they have passed their audition and when the first rehearsal is.

After years of declining membership, giving singers what they expect has allowed Joe to grow the total membership in **AH** and replace 40% of the roster every year.



Given their success, the Board and Bryan have agreed to use this blueprint for recruiting on a trial basis. We will be holding several audition nights in July and August on nights other than our normal Monday rehearsal night. We will post audition notices in every place we can think of – JSONline, Craigs List, Shepherd Express, Facebook, Instagram, etc. If you have an idea of where to post it – let Tom Weber or Bob Fichtner know. Want to post something on the bulletin board at the local grocery store? We can make that happen!

On the night of the auditions, candidates will receive information about the chorus, our style, how we memorize music (most choral groups don't), how we utilize choreography (most choral groups don't or very sparingly), dues, contests, our "season," and how we have a chapter meeting with chorus rehearsal and a performing chorus. If they pass their audition that night, they are admitted to the chapter and to chorus rehearsal, but they will have to pass a separate audition as

part of a quartet, to become a member of the performing chorus – same as in the past.



We'll send out additional information as the audition nights are finalized. Look for updates to the web site, our social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) and help spread the word!

Does this mean we will no longer have guest nights? No – we will still utilize guest nights as a recruiting tool. **Tom** and **Bob** are working with the P-Team to identify possible dates and will let everyone know when they are scheduled.

Does this mean you don't have to ask your friends/family/strangers where they do their singing? NO! If you are not comfortable making the ask and you KNOW the person is a good singer, pass their name and contact info (with their permission of course) to Tom, Bob, or Bryan and one of us can call them to extend a personal invitation to join us.

All Chapter Chorus – Dick Marcus



When we are at our District Contest on October 14-16, 2021, our "**Together Again!**" Convention and Contest at the MSP Airport Hilton in the Twin Cities, consider joining the **All Chapter Chorus**. The cost is \$10 (paid to Steve Zorn in cash there). We join with other choruses to sing two songs: Irving Berlin's always popular "**Blue Skies**," which our chorus has sung in the past; and "**Angel Eyes**," which is a melancholy Jazz Standard sung by Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald, and others ([Angel Eyes \(1946 song\) - Wikipedia](#)) To join, just send an email to Steve Zorn at zorn.stephen@gmail.com telling him your part and that you want to join in the fun of the All Chapter Chorus and he will send you music and listening tracts to your part. **All Chapter Rehearsal** at 3-4pm on Friday, October 15 at District. Join your brothers and sisters in song. It is great fun.



Wine Tasting on Thursday July 8 – Matt Nagel

MVE is having a virtual wine tasting on July 8th at 7:00PM CDT. This is an opportunity to have some fun, have a little wine, and maybe get to know a little more about our members, friends, and families. There's absolutely no pressure to participate. Some people aren't into wine, and that's ok. If you're coming, great! Invite your friends and family!

The best way to participate is to order a tasting flight before the 4th of July so you can have samples to taste with the others (I'm told shipping is 5 days). Each of the little bottles of wine in the flight contain a "standard" pour of wine you would receive at a nice restaurant. This is more than you would typically have of any one wine at most wine tastings, so one flight can serve two people for a tasting. Of course, you will need your own glasses (remember that in Italy they also drink wine in small "jelly jar" type glasses).



This tasting is through a company called One Hope. A portion of the sales of wine through this tasting comes to the MVE. A portion will also go to charitable or public benefit groups (such as funding education resources to prevent heart disease).

Other members and I have attended virtual tastings and had a good time which is why the chapter is having this event. That's the main reason to come, whether you're having wine or not.

Some details:

1. The tasting flight includes small bottles of **Brut, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, and Cabernet Sauvignon**. All of these are part of the Vintner line.
2. These are sent out in a nice box with a catalog of One Hope's wines.
3. The flight costs \$29 plus tax and \$10 shipping.
4. Anyone who purchases the flight for the evening, or even just to taste these base wines, will get a \$15 credit that can be used toward purchasing a 4+ bottle case within the event. You can go in with friends to come up with the four bottles - the shipment will be to one address only (packaging is great).

How do tasting flights work:

1. A participant orders a tasting flight under our event using this link: <https://onehopewine.com/tasting-flight-checkout?event=9587ee40-b733-4a5e-9502-3dcbdb7d4daa>
2. A \$15 credit is applied to their account and emailed to the participant.
3. The participant receives the tasting flight and we will sample them the night of the event.

4. The participant will return to shop at our event and the coupon will be automatically applied to their cart and activated when 4+ bottles are purchased.

For those who cannot attend the night of the event:

1. They can still purchase the tasting flight and use the credit as long as they stay within the event link in this email.
2. MVE will promote the event and the event link as well so anyone can purchase at any time until we close the event.

I hope to see you there! Thanks, Matt Nagel

In-person Option – Mike Lietke

Carol and I will gladly host folks on our patio for the tasting on July 8. The tasting is at 7, come on by at 6:30. Best that you arrive having eaten something, though we will likely have some snacks of some sort.

We just need to know how many are coming by, so let me know in the *Lietke Backyard Oasis* →

at: 3953 S. Camrose Ave, New Berlin, WI 53151

See you there or virtually! Thanks, Mike Lietke



Calendar for July:

Monday July 5 - **No Rehearsal** for 4th of July

Thursday July 8 – Virtual and In-person Wine Tasting at 7pm or 6:30 in person (see articles)

Monday July 12 - **No Rehearsal** for our Summer Break

Monday July 19 - In Person at 7pm at Elm Grove Lutheran or on Zoom

Monday July 26 - In Person at 7pm at Elm Grove Lutheran or on Zoom

Tuesday July 27 - **Board Meeting** on Zoom at 8pm





The Rhythm of Life: Some Background and Thoughts

– Dick Marcus

One of our new songs, ***The Rhythm of Life***, oddly mentions “common-law wife” and “go forth, Daddy, spread the picture on a wider screen.” I know that **Bryan Ziegler’s** earlier quartet, **District Champion 2009 Expedition**, loved to sing it. *But what is this song about?*

First, please watch the video by **Sammy Davis Jr.** singing it: <https://youtu.be/xKSA049xkiU> in **Sweet Charity** (the 1969 musical with Bob Fosse dances), based on a Neil Simon play. It will help you to comprehend this song.



Plot: **Charity Hope Valentine (Shirley McClaine)** works as a paid dancer along with her friends, Nickie (**Chita Rivera**) and Helene. She longs for love, but has bad luck with men, first seen when her married boyfriend, Charlie, pushes her off a bridge in Central Park and steals her life savings of \$427. Charity shares her disappointment and hopes with her co-workers Nickie and Helene at *The Fandango Ballroom* in the familiar song “*Hey, Big Spender*.”

Charity then meets famous movie star Vittorio Vitale (**Ricardo Montalbán**), just as he breaks up with his girlfriend Ursula. Charity goes to a nightclub, where the guests perform the “*Rich Man’s Frug*,” and later has dinner with Vittorio at his apartment. When Vittorio leaves the room momentarily, Charity celebrates what seems to be her good fortune with the popular song “*If They Could See Me Now*”. Right after, however, Ursula comes back to Vittorio, and Charity is forced to spend a humiliating night in a closet while Vittorio and Ursula make love and sleep together. Charity again returns to the Fandango, where she, Nickie, and Helene commiserate on the building’s rooftop with “*There’s Got to Be Something Better Than This*”.

Looking for a more respectable and rewarding line of work than a paid private dancer, Charity goes to an employment agency, but she is forced to admit that she has no special skills and has to leave when she admits her status. In the building’s elevator, though, Charity meets the shy Mr. Oscar Lindquist, and the two are attracted to each other when the elevator halts, trapping them. The two go out together several times, including a visit to an alternative church presided

over by a preacher named **Big Daddy** (played by **Sammy Davis Jr.**) and "worshipping" with the song "***The Rhythm of Life***". The scene is archetypical late-1960's with hippies, psychedelic colors, and flower-power.



Although Charity has not told her background to the respectable Mr. Oscar Lindquist, he proposes marriage. Charity's hopes are once again lifted, celebrated in the huge production number "*I'm a Brass Band*". Oscar meets Charity's friends at the Fandango when they throw a party for her. However, at the marriage license bureau, Oscar tells her that he has tried to accept her past but is unable to go through with the marriage.

Charity returns to the bridge in Central Park where she first appeared in the film and seems ready to throw herself off it, but a passing group of hippies sings about love and peace and then hands her a lovely flower, lifting her spirits.

My commentary on our song: *Big Daddy* is a charlatan from Haight-Ashbury San Francisco, where he, like bad TV Evangelists, offers things mainstream religion can't offer. He is really seeking money from a million pigeons through sexual excitement if you just decide to join his parade (or cult).

The song has enthusiasm and drive. Bryan talked about singing it extra fast. It has an enchanting quality, where we want to bring the audience on our quest to find joy and love in the *Rhythm of Life*. Cool Man. Dig it?