

A Five-Year Review

The vision for the Carolinas District was to create a culture that puts strengthening Chapters and increasing participation in the hobby as its most important goals. With July 2015 being the Fifth Anniversary of the establishment of The Carolinas District it is appropriate to take a quick look at the past five years and assess the success of the new District.

Leadership Academy: We define “Chapter leadership” broadly as thought leaders, Sparkplugs, former officers, current officers, Directors, assistant Directors, and men new to the hobby who are eager to get more involved. All of these individuals have important roles in shaping the culture and

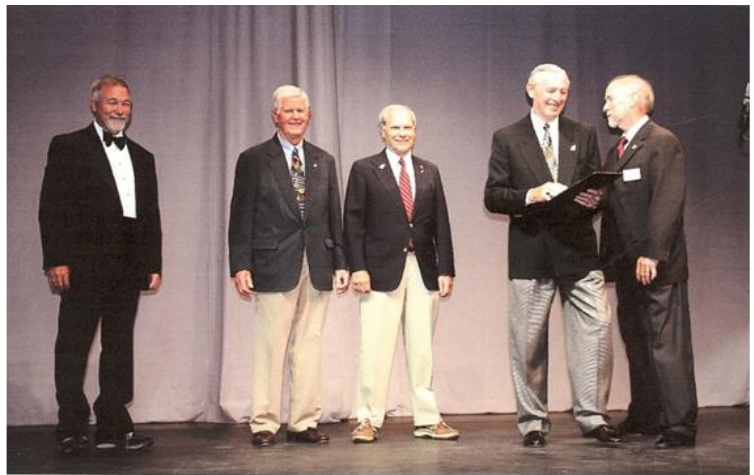
direction of the chapter – we want them at the Leadership Academy. With the broader scope for the attendees our Leadership Academy events have been very successful and have received recognition at the International level for our approach and high level of participation. This year (2015), Marty Monson, CEO of Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS), attended. He participated in the combined Chapter Presidents & Director’s Class and gave us very positive feedback on the experience.

House of Delegates: Our HOD is well established as “The supreme governing body of the district”, called for in District bylaws. From inception over 80% of the chapters have participated in every HOD meeting.

Chapter Support: Our outreach program has District leadership visiting every chapter every year. One of our very successful programs has been conducting Annual Chapter Planning meetings for the chapters. This began as a single learning module at an early festival. It generated significant interest therefore it became a course for training facilitators at our Leadership Academy. From those beginnings the District has been asked to conduct these meetings at a number of chapters every year, and we believe it has a good impact. Our own Chuck Greene conducted several *Compelling Attractive Chapter Meetings* seminars across the District 2010-2012. In 2014 we brought in Paul Ellinger for four *Supercharge Your Chapter* sessions (regionally) to help Chapters focus on gaining new members.

Chapter Growth: Within the first year of our existence the Savannah, GA Chapter petitioned to leave the Dixie District and join us. Their geography makes them a much better fit into the Carolinas District and they liked what we were doing. Over this 5 year span, several long-weakened chapters finally gave up their charters (Mooresville, Seneca, Rock Hill, West Jefferson and Anderson) However, we’ve chartered three new chapters (Mount Pleasant, SC; Brunswick County, NC; and Fayetteville, NC.) that never would have come into existence were it not for their access to the benefits of this new district.

Annual Conventions & Festivals: Our annual conventions have all been successful; some more successful financially than others. Our first convention in 2010 at Myrtle Beach had 900 registered attendees. Convention costs quickly surfaced as an issue. Representatives at the House of Delegates made it clear they did not want to



Carolinas District Charter Presentation July 3rd 2010 (L-R) Bill Biffle (BHS President), Bob Clark, Denny Evans, Bob “Squeak” Tilton, and Ed Watson (BHS CEO).

take their choruses to two contests a year, and the fixed cost of two double panels as required by BHS were high. The Carolinas therefore led an initiative to the BHS Contest and Judging Committee and Board of Directors to change the protocol to allow for the option of a single contest qualifying event. This was accomplished so we had the opportunity to implement our vision to replace the second contest with a *Festival* that is oriented towards a family vacation with some barbershop but not dominated by it. Our first two Festivals (in Charleston, SC in 2014 and Savannah, GA in 2015) were unqualified successes receiving rave reviews.

Financial Stability: We'd received no funds when the Carolinas split off from Dixie District. Consequently, our members raised over \$80,000 to begin operations. Today our treasury is well over \$100,000 in liquid assets.

Increasing Participation in the Hobby: One of our goals was to increase participation by choruses and quartets in competition. The results for 2010-2015:

- Total chapters competing one or more times: 17 a 23.5% increase over previous five years
- Average percentage of chapters competing each year: 46.8% a 32% increase over previous five years
- Total quartets competing one or more times: 68 a 23.6% increase over previous five years
- Average total number of quartets competing each year: 23 a 25.4% increase over previous five years

Summary of District Champions and International Competitors between July 2010 and July 2015.

- Crowned four different choruses as District Champion: Research Triangle Park (2010, 2013), Central Carolina (2011, 2015), Mount Pleasant (2012), and Winston-Salem (2014).
- Sent three different choruses to International Competition: Research Triangle Park (2011, 2012), Mount Pleasant (2013, 2014), Carolina Vocal Express (2015).
- *Savannah Storm* represented the District at the 2011 and 2013 International Youth Chorus Contest.
- Crowned six District Quartet Champions: *Let's Sing!* (2010), *17 Below* (2011), *1/2 Ton Pick-up* (2012), *Zero Hour* (2013), *WHAMMY!* (2014). [*Supersonic* November 2015].
- Sent six different quartets to the International Quartet Contest: *Lets Sing!* (2011, 2015), *17 Below* (2012), *1/2 Ton Pick-up* (2013), *Zero Hour* (2014, 2015). Qualified two quartets for the first year time in 2015.
- Crowned six District Seniors Quartet Champions: *Village Green* (2010), *BLackJack* (2011), *You Kids Get Off My Block!* (2012), *Harmony Grits* (2013), *The Hardly Boys* (2014), *Final Countdown* (2015).
- Sent four different quartets to the International Seniors Quartet Contest: *Village Green* (2011, 2012, 2013), *BLackJack* (2011, 2012, 2013), *You Kids Get Off My Block!* (2013), *Harmony Grits* (2015).
- *BLackJack* won a Fifth Place Bronze Medal at the 2011 International Seniors Quartet Contest.
- Crowned three Collegiate Quartet Champions that competed the same year at the International Collegiate Quartet Contest: *Bay Street Boys* (2012), *The Skinny* (2013), *Riverside Ringers* (2014). *Riverside Ringers* also competed at the 2015 International Collegiate Quartet Contest.
- Crowned six District Novice Quartets: *Easy Livin* (2010), *Sounds Like A Winner* (2011), *Aire* (2012), *Four Knights Standing* (2013), *Hazardous Moving Parts* (2014), *The Young Ones* (2015)

An interesting fact is that *Let's Sing!* is the only quartet to be District Champions in two district in the same year.