



# Dixie Town Crier

Dixie's monthly chapter newsletter  
dedicated to the original town crier,  
Chuck Witherspoon



August 2022 Volume 12, Issue 2

## They're back!!!



Congratulations to Nashville's Music City Chorus for taking the gold in the chorus competition at this year's International Convention in Charlotte NC. MCC brought the house down in the first 10 seconds with their intro and kept the audience captive for the remainder of their set. Together Again, an outstanding up tune that poked at some of the best choruses on the stage had the crowd laughing. Many references to the past performances made it feel like there hadn't been such a gap since the last convention. The ballad, The Circle of Life was a heartfelt reminder of the struggles and perseverance we all felt during this time. Since then, Music City had the interesting opportunity to perform with the WWE at SummerSlam this month. They were highlighted singing during the entrance to the ex-football player turned wrestler Pat McAfee.

**Music City Christmas Concert December 22, 2022 with Vocal Spectrum and David Phelps**



# More from International



**Sound of Tennessee**

**Premiere**



**Wildfire**



# More from International

Entourage



CityScope

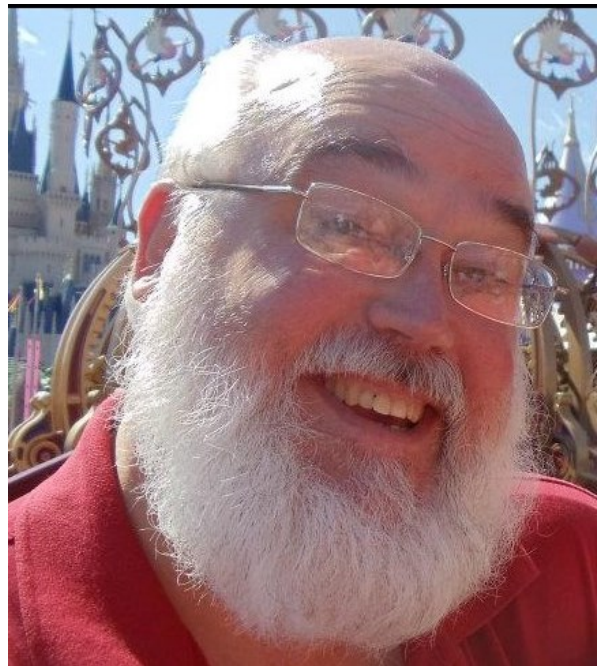
A promotional graphic for the Dixie District Fall Convention 2022. It features a collage of images: a Dixie District logo with "SPEARSOSA 48" and "19" and "48", the Oxford Performing Arts Center logo, a group photo of the Music City Chorus 2022 BHS International Champions, and a group of men in suits. The text at the bottom reads: "Dixie District Fall Convention 2022", "The Oxford Performing Arts Center", and "September 23-24, 2022 - Oxford, Alabama".

## Notes from the President

Fellow Dixie District members,

It's been a few months since my last message. Since then, we had our first Convention and Contest since fall 2019, with Wildfire qualifying for International in Louisville and Appalachian Express being crowned Dixie District Chorus Champions. Summer has been fun, with quartets and choruses singing our National Anthem at various sporting events and otherwise performing whenever possible. We had our International Convention in Charlotte, with the Music City Chorus ending a 64-year span since our last chorus championship, while Sound of Tennessee came in 12th! We were also well-represented by Premiere in the Next-Gen Varsity contest (7th), and Wildfire (17th), Entourage (27th), and cityscape (43rd) in the International Quartet contest. B-list represented us in the Quartet Festival and received a rating of Outstanding AND two standing ovations. Thanks to everyone!

We just finished a District Board of Directors meeting in person (WHOO HOO!) this past weekend, producing a budget and slate of officers for next year and plans for a District Senior Chorus to qualify for Midwinter in Daytona Beach. We also discussed upcoming events like Lakeside Harmony Weekend at Clemson next year, Leadership Academy this year, and a potential Top Gun school next year. We're also working on Youth Harmony events this year and next year.



Be sure you're fully engaged with your chapter family - there's plenty of opportunities to sing 'em and ring 'em coming up soon!

Chordially,

Paul Blazek

(Really Proud!) Dixie District President

## Make Your Plans For Leadership Academy! Bob Davenport, District VP, CSLT

Many of us thoroughly enjoyed the “barbershop reunion” in Charlotte last month! I am excited to announce that we are planning to have our first in-person Leadership Academy since 2020 on Saturday, November 12!

The Academy will return to Morris Hill Baptist Church in Chattanooga, TN. During the pandemic, the church has been hosting a local private school whose property was destroyed in 2020 by a tornado. As a result, the school helped wire each classroom in the church with audio-visual equipment that has helped facilitate their classroom instruction. This will be extremely advantageous to the Leadership Academy facilitators so they can show PowerPoint presentations, video clips, etc. I will say more about this in the next Town Crier.

Once again, we will offer training for the following chapter officer roles: Chapter Secretaries, Treasurers, Membership VPs, Music & Performance VPs, Marketing/PR VPs. We will also offer a Chorus Director Development class in which new and experienced directors will share their ideas, questions and expertise with each other. Additionally, we will once offer the Healthy Chapter Initiative class for chapter presidents, executive vice-presidents, board members at large, and any other chapter member who would be interested in eventually becoming a chapter leader. Incidentally, all of our classes will be open to female members or leaders within a Dixie chapter (or would perhaps be interested in becoming one in the future) or from a Harmony, Inc. chapter.

Furthermore, in response to feedback from previous CSLT surveys, we are offering a new class for program VPs (some chapters still have that office)/operations/chorus managers that I am calling the POCM class. I believe this class will be an important addition to the Academy curriculum.

I am extremely happy to announce that former Dixie and Marietta, GA member Bill Hickman, who now lives in Washington State, will be teaching the Healthy Chapter Initiative class. Bill has years of experience facilitating leadership seminars/workshops for corporations, nonprofits, barbershop leadership academies, etc. and is excited to return to Dixie in November!

I will share more information about the logistics, schedule, etc. in the next Town Crier, but I will go ahead and tell you that the registration fee for the Academy will be \$30/attendee.

District Secretary Russell Bell will also send out this notice, but let me also remind our chapters that District bylaws stipulate that chapter officer elections MUST be completed by mid-October. That is one reason why we have moved the Academy back to the fall.

Stay tuned to further communication concerning the opening of Academy registration, etc. In the meantime, I encourage all of our chapters to begin their election process and start making plans to send their officers to the 2023 Dixie District Leadership Academy on November 12th!



5-1-22

My Dear Sandy:

I have received the "Food Sets" from you and I want you to know that I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and that you are truly my hero! Also, I want you to tell the Big Chicken Barbershop Chorus that they are also our family's true heroes as well! Ukraine is greatly blessed to have Americans as their friends!

**We have received the Food and the First Aid Kit and you should know that we are surviving now where we would probably not be here now were you not to be of help to us! In addition, I have given a little food that you sent me to 2 different couples who live on my hallway, who were starving, who are elderly (80's+ in their age), and who are now OK.**

When I told them this food came from my dear friend in Marietta, America, and his choir group, and that they donated this to us out of the goodness of their heart, everyone had tears! I confess, Sandy, that I then did too! One old gentlemen said: "Tell them of our wish for blessing upon them and their families"!

Thank you again so much for all your help, Sandy. You, and your Chorus, have so much helped me and my family, and some older friends here, too!

Natalia

# DIRECT SUPPLY CHANNEL TO UKRAINE

## Donate Today!

Her name is Natalia, she is an International Attorney that lives in Kyiv, Ukraine and has two kids -- 25 yr old son Eugene and 23 year old daughter Alex. Though not trained to fight, Eugene is now fighting in the Ukrainian Army. Natalia is staying in an apartment in Kyiv -- possibly this building has not been hit because it is not as high a building as others in the vicinity. Natalia's mother is in poor health in an overcrowded hospital where she has not been able to visit in weeks.



Through this program we have now raised over \$1,000, but more is needed. Natalia has received 3 food kits and a first aid kit provided by the members and patrons of the Big Chicken Chorus. Natalia is sharing the food with other needing occupants of her apartment complex.

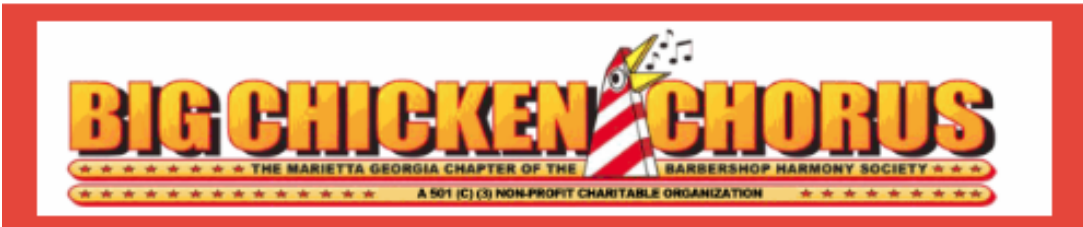


Please pray for their entire family's safety!

Natalia and others like her, including children, need food and medical supplies quickly.

The Big Chicken Chorus has established a Direct Channel to delivery food and medical supplies in 4-5 days to Natalia and her friends, neighbors and their children.

**More  
Information  
DONATE NOW**



## The Big Chicken Chorus proudly welcomes Jonathan Riviere

The Marietta, GA Chapter of the Barbershop Harmony Society proudly welcomes **Jonathan Riviere** as the Musical Director of **Big Chicken Chorus**. Jonathan is a 2017 graduate of **Florida State University**, holding a degree in Commercial Music with a focus in Music Business.

During his stay in Tallahassee, FL, Jonathan began his Choral Directing career as the Musical Director of **Gray Memorial United Methodist Church** in 2014. He also joined the **Tallahassee Chapter of BHS** and assumed the responsibility of Youth Membership Chair. During his time in Tallahassee, he brought 18 new members to the Chapter.

In 2017, following graduation from **FSU**, Jonathan became the Director of Music at **Lamb of God Episcopal / Lutheran Church** in Estero, FL and became the Musical Director of the **Gulf Coast Harmonizers** in Fort Meyers, FL. By 2019, the **Gulf Coast Harmonizers** had increased in size from 25 to 39 voices and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the highly competitive Sunshine District Chorus Contest.

A professional opportunity took Jonathan to New York City where he continued his Barbershop career as the Baritone Section Leader of the **Voices of Gotham**. The Voices of Gotham represented the Mid-Atlantic District at the 2019 International Convention in Salt Lake City and garnered an A-level score in the Chorus Contest. That was Jonathan's 3<sup>rd</sup> appearance in an International Contest, including appearances in 2016 and 2018 with the Miami, FL based **TNX**, representing the Sunshine District.



Jonathan relocated to the Atlanta area in 2022 where he is employed by **Gartner, Inc.** as an Account Executive. Jonathan and his recent bride, Madison, reside in Canton, GA where they expect to reside for the foreseeable future.

Jonathan says, "I find the afterglows to be just as productive as rehearsals when building a strong choral dynamic. I will be happy to volunteer time to coach any in-house quartets or VLQ's (Very Large Quartets). I have found that my choirs grow the most when people are proud to bring guests to rehearsal."

All **Big Chicken Chorus** rehearsals are open to visitors to join us in song or just to listen and observe. We meet on non-holiday Monday evenings 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM at **Towne View Baptist Church**, 950 Shiloh Road, Kennesaw, GA.

More information regarding the **Big Chicken Chorus** can be found at: [BigChickenChorus.org](http://BigChickenChorus.org).



## Appalachian Express – 2022 District Chorus Champions

The Appalachian Express Chorus is thrilled to be the 2022 Dixie District Chorus Champions. It is especially gratifying given our journey since getting back together after a year long Covid break of not singing together in person.

Like every chapter out there, we needed to find a way to stay connected when singing was discouraged. We found Zoom in April 2020 and for almost a year, connected every week with interesting subject matter and instructors, and even learned some new music.



Then in March 2021, we started meeting again in person (in two separate groups). Our guys were thrilled to see each other again, and when we finally assembled the ENTIRE chorus in May 2021, it was a magical evening! Everyone appreciated what we love to do a little bit more on that evening.

This was followed in July by some great shows at the Kingsport Funfest summer celebration, and then by a trip to Carolinas District in November to sing for evaluation only. We did great at that contest, and it really emphasized that even with the time off, you don't really forget how to make great music.

We worked hard in the spring, excited to be attending a DIX convention again. The chorus really had a lot of energy leading up to the convention, and we enjoyed several wonderful rehearsals where we were finding the special moments in the music. Special thanks to Gary Plaag for coming over on a couple occasions to help the chorus get performance ready.

# appalachian express chorus



## Appalachian Express Hosts Evening of Fellowship

Years ago, it was common practice for many chapters to travel on occasion to another chapter meeting in the district. These evenings would usually include chapter choruses or quartets performing for each other, everyone singing together known repertoire, along with tag singing and socializing. In June, the NE Tennessee Chapter invited other local chapters over to do that!

Members of the Smokeyland Sound Chorus (Knoxville, TN), Land O' the Sky Chorus (Asheville, NC), and the Hills Are Alive Women's Chorus (Bristol, VA) joined the Appalachian Express Chorus in Gray TN to spend time harmonizing with each other in a fun combined chorus, where we shared some common repertoire and learned some great tags. Individual quartets and choruses sang, and received tons of support and encouragement.



The Appalachian Express would like to thank the directors of each of the ensembles (John Oxendine, Kati Swinney, Dondra Warden, and Mark Kettner) for their leadership and participation in the massed chorus! As we get back to normal routines with our chapters, we need to remember that it's evenings like this that remind us why we sing barbershop. Connection and support with our fellow chapters will help us all thrive and build excitement for the future.

81. Midnight Rose

Change your ways lit - tle Mid - night, lit - tle Mid - night Rose.\_\_\_\_\_

Rose.\_\_\_\_\_

Ed Waesche, 1975  
Sung by the Bluegrass Student Union

# CRIMSON PRIDE CHORUS

## 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

### DIRECTOR WANTED!

The Crimson Pride Chorus of Tuscaloosa, AL, is an award-winning, internationally minded chorus seeking a Director for weekly rehearsals, performances, and competitions. The candidate will take over the reins from our retiring director within the next year. Interested?

**CONTACT [SEARCH@CRIMSONPRIDE.ORG](mailto:SEARCH@CRIMSONPRIDE.ORG).**



**Who we are:** The Crimson Pride Chorus is one of the original ten chapters founded in the Society's Dixie District. Tuscaloosa has since gained the position as a leading chapter in the BHS. Dedicated to musical excellence and fun, the Tuscaloosa Chapter has brought outstanding harmony and entertainment to the Tuscaloosa area and the entire Southeast for decades. Over the past 45 years our quartets have performed extensively throughout the U.S. in countless shows and competitions, even venturing into Canada and Japan, spreading the joy of barbershop harmony to tens of thousands.

The Crimson Pride Chorus has won the Dixie District Chorus Championship in 2016 and 2019. Under the direction of Druid Arts Award recipient, Ron Montgomery, and assisted by Tom Cain, David Williams, and Bobby Wooldridge, the Crimson Pride Chorus continues to grow and share its unique brand of harmony with fans everywhere.

**Who we want:** The perfect candidate will have a strong musical background in music theory and choral directing. The candidate will demonstrate a knowledge of A Capella singing preferably including the Barbershop Style but have a willingness to learn. The candidate will commit to weekly rehearsals, performances, competitions, and coaching sessions. The candidate will be an active member of the Music Committee. The candidate will work well with the board and the chorus in general. The candidate will show leadership in performance and showmanship.

**What we offer:** A chance to be a part of a chapter with a commitment to excellence and fun. We will cover any expenses for costumes, contest, membership fees, some travel when outside of normal rehearsal or performances. We will pay for any musical education, i.e. Harmony University, so the candidate can grow as a director and a member of the Barbershop Harmony Society. We will offer a competitive salary for a part time position.

## Director's Corner

As the director of your chapter, you are thought of as the “inspirational leader” of your chapter. Odds are, you are influential, exciting, knowledgeable, and exalted among your members. This comes both as a blessing and as a curse. As those inspirational leaders, our words and actions become very powerful. It only takes a few statements or conversations to make or break someone’s drive to be all they can be as a barbershopper. The more renowned we become, the greater the responsibility we share.

We are entering a new world where barbershoppers no longer need to be identified through stereotypical societal normalities. A time and place where barbershoppers are just barbershoppers; creed, sexuality, gender, and race no longer apply. With this ever-shifting landscape, this requires our directorship to course-adjust and re-evaluate our internal narrative.

As directors, our job is to inspire; not to judge. Because of the special relationships we forge with our chapter and chorus members, we must recognize the changing fabric and adjust our language (our habits, even) accordingly. This means re-evaluating our phrase dictionaries and sifting through our personal lexicon for words that might be polarised or suggestive against our integrity. This could include religious doctrine and other personally held beliefs against others in our community. It is our job to inspire. We cannot represent an inspirational role if we remain internally exclusive.

Recognizing where we have these language and/or behavioral gaps is important for our overall growth and support of our chapter members, as well as ourselves. Below are a few tips for wrestling that internal dialogue

First off, you should know what is required of you is very difficult and you will not be perfect; you will make mistakes and that is okay! Everyone misses the mark from time to time. The goal isn’t to be perfect, but instead to inspire a fully fostered culture where people are thinking about their words before they speak them. Humility goes a long way here.

Second, you should know it is not impossible! While it does take a lot of work to change our dialogue, it is very do-able given the right amount of effort is applied. For some of us, that level of effort is lower/higher than others. This is important to understand, as we all develop and grow at different rates.

Let’s talk specifics and a few examples before we get into the third tip. Growing up, there was a member of my chorus who identified as being a part of the LGBTQAI+ community. Unfortunately, this person was very shy about speaking up because they felt “out of place” among the other men in the chorus. Those men were what is referred to as “tone-deaf”, openly making jokes about “gays” and supporting a toxically masculine narrative. Surprisingly, as this person became more integrated in the functions of the chapter, they did not allow those comments and those thoughts to permeate their experience. Instead, they exemplified grace and returned nothing but good to those people that were openly speaking such hatred towards them. They became an influential member of our chapter and helped perpetuate the love, care, and connections which kept members returning each week.

For others in the same scenario, it could easily dissuade someone from returning again; we saw this with some of the members that were a different race than us after a few distasteful comments were muttered. A sad day indeed. As time moved on, our chapter shifted and changed. People grew and recognized that they shouldn’t hold such views about another person; we thrived and our membership grew for a time!

## Director's Corner cont.

This brings us to the third tip. We have all said something we aren't proud of at one point or another within our lifetime. The good news is, you don't have to feel bad and you don't owe anyone an apology, but recognition of the event is what is called for. This comes with the idea that we are all "doing the best we can with what we have at the moment". Sometimes that includes not having the internal tools or wisdom to recognize our past mistakes or to properly communicate our regret.

What matters is our choice moving forward. Perfection is not required. The recognition that you are trying to change is more valuable to your chapter than the illusion that you don't care. Try these on, for starters:

Refrain from identifying people by assuming their gender

- This is tough because we are taught at a young age to group people by the way they

Look vs asking them how they want to be identified

- Using "They" or calling them by name is the safest choice

Yes, this requires more effort to remember but the reward is two-fold

- Use their voice part if names are hard to remember

Remember to use barbershop terminology, not SATB (assumptive)

- Don't be afraid to stop and correct yourself when/if you get it wrong. It shows you are taking the initiative.

Respect your fellow chorus member, avoid distasteful jokes

- If it happens on the riser, have your chorus manager deal with it quickly and quietly (if possible) so as not to overly embarrass them

- There may be a point when the person should be embarrassed about what they say, make sure that person isn't you

Pick your music wisely

- This includes researching the origins of your music and making sure it's not viewed as tone-deaf to your future audience (any audience)

- This might include lyric changes that could change the theme of the song in a way you did not think about; when in doubt, ask for more opinions; when in doubt, find another song (there are hundreds of thousands of them!)

There are plenty of other ways to help our members feel included. This expands beyond the basic membership of the chapter. Don't forget, for every one person on the riser, there is likely another person at home supporting the rest of the family. How often do they get recognized beyond the ritualistic "thanks" at the end of a performance or contest achievement?

As you can see, there are a lot of different aspects to think about. The best part is that we are all doing this together and we can support one another through these times. We all want our choruses to grow. Growth happens when you foster your membership with these ideals. It's not about you, it's about them... ALL of them, including the ones not currently standing on your risers today. Reach out to them; refrain judgement; love one another.

~ DC Nash - VP Chorus Director Development

**TUSCALOOSA'S OWN!!**  
**CRIMSON PRIDE CHORUS**  
**50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

*Proudly Presents*

**LIVE AT THE  
BAMA THEATRE:  
A ROCKIN' RADIO SHOW**

**BAMA THEATRE**  
Tuscaloosa, AL

**Saturday, February 25, 2023**

**7:00 pm**

**Tickets: \$15.00 General Admission**

**To Order Tickets Visit**  
**[crimsonpride.org](http://crimsonpride.org)**

**For On-Line Sales Visit: [Eventbrite.com](http://Eventbrite.com)**



## THE DIXIE TOWN CRIER

An electronic publication of the Dixie District of the Barbershop Harmony Society

Paul Wietlisbach, President

Mike Brunson, VP of Marketing and Public Relations

From Jimmy Tompkins -

I am writing you to tell you that we are going to try and organize the SENIORS CHORUS again this year. I found out last week that they ARE having a competition in Daytona Beach, FL at the Mid-Winter Convention.

PLEASE REPLY ASAP if you are interested in participating with us this year.

What we know so far:

- We will need to sing for a score THIS FALL in Oxford, AL (Sep 23-25, REGISTRATION IS OPEN NOW)
- It will require that we learn TWO songs before the end of September. (We will sing "You Tell Me Your Dream" and "Have a Little Talk with Myself")
- Tracks and music will be provided
- We will have at least ONE weekend rehearsal prior to the weekend in September (Date TBD, location will most likely be in Chattanooga, TN)
- We will sing on FRIDAY NIGHT at our fall contest AFTER the quartets sing
- We will meet early Friday afternoon, in Oxford, for a final run through. Time TBD
- We will have at least ONE MORE weekend in retreat in mid to late January 2023

**Dixie District Fall Convention 2022**  
The Oxford Performing Arts Center  
September 23-24, 2022 - Oxford, Alabama



**Dixie District Fall 2022 Convention**  
**September 23-24, 2022 – Oxford, Alabama**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Member Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Chorus/Quartet: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Handicapped Services Needed (Request must be received prior to September 9, 2022)**

Description	How Many	Cost	Total
Early Bird Registration Member		\$50.00	
Early Bird Registration Guests		\$50.00	
Family* Registration		\$113.00	
Additional Family members		\$10.00	
If mailed after September 9 add \$10.00 per registration†		\$10.00	
		<b>Total Due</b>	

\*Family is defined as two adults and two or more "youth" from the same household

†This applies to the family registration as well (Not each member of the family).

**Make check/money order payable to "Dixie District BHS"**  
**PLEASE WEAR YOUR CHAPTER NAME TAG**  
**We will be using pre-printed tickets for entrance. No Name tags will be printed.**

Credit card payment complete the information below. (**MasterCard, Visa, American Express or Discover**)

Credit Card No. \_\_\_\_\_ exp(MM/YY) \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name as it appears on Card \_\_\_\_\_ CVV2 Code \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL COMPLETED FORM TO:  
 Russell Bell  
 2716 Braemore Gln SW  
 Powder Springs, GA 30127-1760  
 cell: (404) 863-8241

email to:  
 registration@dixiedistrict.org

\*Form must be Postmarked by  
 September 9, 2022 to receive early  
 bird registration rate.

Official Use only  
 Circle One - Mail - Online - Email Form Received on \_\_\_\_\_ Entered into Database \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ticket Numbers assigned \_\_\_\_\_