

**AREA 4 COUNCIL ZOOM CONFERENCE
February 21, 2021**

Area 4 Director Betty Gunterman called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM and welcomed participating Council Members. Present on the call were the following Council Members, Chapter Presidents, and Committee Chairmen:

Council Management

Betty Gunterman, Area 4 Director
Denise Struve, Secretary
Linda Bloch, Area 4 Treasurer/AC&C Treasurer
Maria “Ria” Bunte, ACJC

Not present:

Beth Montgomery, Membership
Linda Kersey, Associate Member Coordinator
Pam Ringo, Website/Facebook
Sandi Wright, Quartet Promotion

Voting Members of the Council (Chapters officially represented) in this meeting:

Bluegrass Harmony – Charlotte Moore
California Note Catchers – Ann Ash
Covered Bridge Harmony – Kathy Custis
Harmony Magic – Susan Spencer
Lake Ridge Legacy , Kelly Ramey
Misty River Music Makers – Barb Ries
St. Louis Chordinals – Ruth Farrell
St. Louis Vocal Project – Susie Slavney
Sound Celebration – Marianne Cooke

Not Present:

Village Vocal Chords – Jacquie Jensen
Wolf River Harmony – Leah Armstrong

Copies of this meeting’s Agenda and Treasury Reports were distributed via email prior to the meeting.

Welcome	Betty welcomed Council Members and led them in reciting the Harmony Creed.
Area 4 Director’s Report	Details:
September Meeting	✓ Minutes of the September 20, 2020 meeting were approved via email and posted to the website
Quartet Promotion Coordinator	✓ A big ‘thank you” to Sandi Wright, who has volunteered to take on the position of Area 4 Quartet Promotion Coordinator
Chapter Officers	✓ Betty reminded chapters to send President and Secretary information to her once officers are elected

Longevity Awards	Years of Membership certificates were “presented” at chapter Zoom rehearsals. Betty polled chapter Presidents to ask how we should inform the entire Area. Marianne Cooke suggested there be an email blast from the Area Director to members, listing certificate recipients and other significant news from chapter reports.
Education	Kathy Custis and Kathryn Dory
Membership	No report
Website	Updates of chapter information should be sent to Pam Ringo. Website address: www.hiarea4.com
Area 4 Financial Reports	Linda Bloch sent out the financial reports via email prior to the meeting. She pointed out that the only changes were those resulting from one chapter having received virtual coaching, and from purchase of the big screen Area 4 ad for IC&C. Motion by Kathy Custis, seconded by Susan Spencer, to approve the Area 4 Financials as presented. Motion carried.
AC&C 2022	Sara Stone reported that she spoke with the hotel and the school, and both have penciled us in for the dates of June 9-12, 2022.
OLD BUSINESS	
Area Dues	Nine of eleven chapters responded to an email vote conducted in January 2021 and indicated that they were ALL in favor of keeping our dues at \$6.00 , even though Harmony reduced our dues from \$65 to \$49 for the year 2021-22.
Operation/Policy Manual	Update in progress.
NEW BUSINESS	
Membership Questionnaire	A questionnaire from Kim Meechan, Director of Membership, was sent to chapter presidents along with the Council meeting materials. Betty asked that they complete it and return to her. As of the date of the meeting she still needed responses from three chapters and asked that those chapters return it by Wednesday, February 24. The purpose of the questionnaire is to gather information to help chapters that are not meeting.
Visitors Fee	The Director of Membership heard that some chapters are charging visitors a fee to attend their virtual rehearsals. She wondered why and how much? None of the Area 4 Chapter Presidents indicated that their chapters are doing this.
Question from Directors’ Roundtable	Area Directors wondered if there are any Area chapters that are not meeting virtually? Harmony would like to encourage members of those chapters to join other chapters’ rehearsals. Discussion followed regarding how often Area 4 chapters are meeting and if they have a date scheduled for when they hope to

	<p>resume live rehearsals. Misty River is not currently meeting weekly. Some chapters hope to meet outdoors once the weather is nicer. Sound Celebration has a committee working on a plan for resuming live rehearsals. Harmony Magic’s target date for resuming live rehearsals is April 29. Covered Bridge Harmony hopes to meet outdoors when temperatures reach about 50 degrees.</p>
“Chairman” Titles	<p>Harmony would like chapters to change the title of “Chairman” to “Chair” or “Coordinator” in an effort to be more inclusive. While there has been some resistance, Betty asked chapter Presidents to consider it.</p>
Virtual AC&C?	<p>Sara Stone asked if there is any interest in having a Virtual AC&C this year. Kathy Custis suggested that while HIVE classes have been a great way to keep educational opportunities available, there may be interest in a Virtual Moonglow on Saturday night to offer the opportunity to socialize. Susan Spencer offered to do video and audio editing for a Virtual Chorus. Sara and Kathy volunteered to investigate and come back to Betty with ideas/information by the first week in March.</p>
Next Meeting	<p>Sunday, June 13, 2021, 6 PM CT –Zoom Conference (If there is a Virtual AC&C, Council Meeting would probably take place before it begins.)</p>
Adjournment	<p>The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 PM.</p>

CHAPTER UPDATES

Presented as received...

Sound Celebration

Activities since September 2020:

- Weekly virtual rehearsals have been conducted regularly. Attendance averages 90%
- Our Director, Janice Westphal, has planned and conducted meaningful ZOOM rehearsals focusing on guest video warmups; tag singing; singing along to prerecorded chorus songs; breakout room sectionals and guest presenters.
- Music Team meets weekly to assist our director and has made recorded learning tracks
- Our theatrical coach has met with the chorus and sections to work on visual presentation of song lyrics
- A committee of members has developed tools to assist us with the story telling aspect of our songs
- For several months members met weekly with their section leader via ZOOM to sing and receive individual coaching
- Janice provides free ZOOM voice lessons to any member who requests them
- We had a virtual Christmas party, St. Patrick’s Day online event and plans for a St. Patrick’s Day “party”
- In December Board members called each member to elicit input on making our virtual rehearsals fun and effective. After collating this input, the chorus held a virtual Town Hall

meeting with breakout rooms and reported back to the whole group. Based on this feedback, we're now beginning to layout plans for the rest of 2021.

- Our Return to Rehearsals Committee met last summer to plan our fall 2020 outdoor rehearsal. They are reconvening now to develop plans for our gradual return to regular, live rehearsals.
- We will sing the National Anthem at a semi-pro baseball game in July.
- We had a joint rehearsal with Blue Grass Harmony
- In spite of the long layoff, we remain healthy and strong.

Submitted by

Marianne Cooke, President

Misty River Music Makers

Misty Rivers continues to meet by Zoom every other week but just socially for now. This holiday season we compiled 10 of our holiday songs into a package that we sent to retirement homes so they could have some holiday entertainment. The chorus members recorded their parts virtually and one of our members, Jen Offutt, blended them together. It was fun to be able to sing together even if it was only virtually.

We celebrated with our Zoom Holiday Party. Our members presented the entertainment. We had such a variety- skits, songs and poetry.

We are looking forward to meeting in person. We will wait until Illinois says it is safe. We hope that will be this fall.

In Harmony,
Barb

Covered Bridge Harmony

“Let’s concentrate on what we CAN do, not what we CAN’T do!”

This attitude helped Covered Bridge Harmony get through an “interesting” year. Sadly, we saw a decline in membership due to a variety of reasons, but the members who remained worked hard and supported each other through some difficult times. CBH learned more about ZOOM than we ever wanted to, but we had the opportunity to continue to meet (virtually). We purchased new learning tracks to help us rehearse, invited guest speakers and even had some virtual coaching sessions. We targeted September 2020 to cautiously start meeting in person. After a successful “socially distanced” yard sale, we were able to purchase “singers’ masks” for all of our members. We wore these when we met in person in a church parking lot from September through late November. In December we had an actual, live performance at Greencastle’s first ever Christmas in the Park. Even though it was cold and we were masked, it was so good to perform again. Covered Bridge Harmony is making plans for 2021 which include meeting virtually with our sisters in Harmony Magic, creating a virtual chorus project, warm weather outdoor rehearsals, performing in the park, and eventually seeing our Harmony, Inc. sisters in person.

Kathy Custis

Village Vocal Chords

The VVCs continue to meet weekly for virtual rehearsals via Zoom. While there are many down sides to this pandemic, which we surely don't need to enumerate here, the rainbow during these dark days is the ability for those, even those at great distances from us, to visit a rehearsal. While some come to just see friends or observe and/or participate in a rehearsal, others come to help us to learn and grow as barbershop singers. The former group involves Harmony friends from through-out our organization, the latter group, those who coach us for a portion of or an entire rehearsal.

In fact, at the request of some Harmony friends, we have just completed establishing a long distance membership status with the VVCs called our Extension Chords. This membership status now allows those who are too distant to attend in-person rehearsals regularly, to affiliate with the chorus. We intend to continue to offer Zoom attendance at our rehearsals going forward and to allow these long-distance members to join us in song not only at weekly rehearsals but in performance when they are able to meet the director's requirements to do so. We're excited about being able to open our doors wider to invite others to join us in song.

Our music team is always looking for ways to keep our rehearsals educational and interesting. In addition to occasional "theme" nights, this has included a feature called "Video Show & Tell". Members submit a one song music video, which need not be barbershop, that they would like to share with the chorus. Each week a member is assigned to introduce the video she has submitted and we watch it together. While we miss being part of a ringing chord at our rehearsals we're trying to make the best of it. We know that this too shall pass and we look forward to the day that we can see each other without a computer between us!

--Jacquie Jensen, VVC President

Harmony Magic

On March 4, Harmony Magic celebrates our 15th anniversary! We'll be celebrating with our sisters in song, Covered Bridge Harmony who are joining us for a night of fun and frivolity. J Besides continuing to learn music and connecting via Zoom each week, this winter Harmony Magic has completed 2 rounds of Virtual Choruses (where all the folks are individually recorded then put together with editing software). The first was for the holidays and the second for Valentines month. We decided to share them with the world free and simply asked for a donation. We had Tech Buddy days for those who didn't feel comfortable with the technology needed - a Tech Buddy met them in a room at a church, masked and with wipes and hand sanitizer to clean between the singers. The Tech Buddy handled all the playback/recording needed for the audio and video recordings so all the member needed to do was show up ready to sing, and with makeup/costume on. To house these and the recordings we snipped from the 2019 Holiday Show, we have set up a YouTube Channel and have had great fun letting our friends and family hear us far and wide. If interested in viewing, just go to <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7yoOC7ChFMd8tefRC6bNvg> or search in YouTube for Harmony Magic Chorus.

Looking ahead to 2021, we have a target date to return to outside, in-person rehearsals (with Zoom still available for those uncomfortable). We are all keeping our fingers crossed for April 29

to be a sunny and warm day! We're also hoping that we'll be able to do our show (was planned for 2020) in fall, 2021.

Susan Spencer

The California Note Catchers

We continue to meet weekly on Zoom under the direction of our pro tem director Katie Taylor. We have done a lot of education and have actually gained two new members since starting on zoom. We're working on the new gratis songs from HI, and looking forward to celebrating our 26th anniversary at our installation ceremony on Monday night March 15.
"Come for the music stay for the friendship! "

Anne Ash
President