**Chapter Development Report - August 2014**

**MEETING ATTENDANCE DATA**

**This report contains attendance data for four meetings: August 7th, 14th, 21st, and 28th.

Members:**

- Total Unique Members: 31[33]  (previous period: 36)

- Average Members per Meeting: 23[25]  (previous period: 27)

-- Average Tenors per Meeting: 3.0

-- Average Leads per Meeting: 7.5

-- Average Basses per Meeting: 7.0[8.75]

-- Average Baritones per Meeting: 5.5

- Full Attending Members: 12[13]  (previous period: 16)

**Guests:**

**-** Total Unique Guests: 6  (previous period:  6)

**Conclusions:**

I'm adding a breakdown of average attendance per section.  Section balance is a goal of the chapter, and this is probably the best objective data we have to know what our balance is like.

Our attendance is back down to where it was prior to the Sean Abel announcement.  We had two weeks of spiked attendance back in the previous CD Report, but our numbers are back to our June doldrums.

I'm becoming really concerned about this.  We need to do something to get more members.  Two ideas I have are that we could have a guest night of some sort and that we could potentially use the holiday chorus as a recruitment tool.  I'm breaking these two ideas up into their own major points in below discussions.  Are there any other good ideas we could implement?

**SEMI-PERMANENT GUESTS**

Greg LeBlanc and Bill Nelson are guests and not members.  I have them listed in brackets in the members information, because they're semi-permanent guests right now.  This is an issue that I need to address.

Greg and Bill illustrate the two types of people I think are likely to fall into this category.  Greg would like to become a member, but can't afford to pay the fees right now.  Bill isn't willing to commit to the chapter and pay the fees.  I think the current plan for people in Greg's position works:  wait several weeks to ensure they are committed to sticking with the chapter, and then look into assistance from other members of the chapter.

What should our stance be on semi-permanent guests that aren't willing to convert to becoming a member?  I don't want to completely force the issue and kick him out of all rehearsals.  It feels wrong to me and seems like it would be out of character for the chorus to do.  I also think having the semi-permanent guest tag along for a sing-out is probably a good thing in terms of selling the chapter to them.

I'm putting forward a suggestion:  semi-permanent guests are allowed to attend one sing-out (no conventions or shows) before becoming a member.  At that point, we need to convert them to a member before they are allowed to come to any further performances.  Do people think this is a good rule to instate?

**GUEST NIGHT AS AN ACQUISITION STRATEGY**

In the interest of report brevity, I'm keeping this short.

This is the most common idea thrown around for member acquisition.  I didn't like the guest night I attended with the movies about BHS - I couldn't care less about BHS as a first-night guest, I just want to sing!  Sean says the best guest night is as close to a normal night as possible.  But then isn't the best guest night just any old night?  Isn't that what we're doing already?  Do we just label a night a guest night and then do the same things we always do?

I'd like to discuss how to implement a guest night, and even if it's a viable strategy.  My goal is to come up with an actual executable plan for something we can do, preferably a few weeks before Cabaret.  (Use it for Marketing as well as Acquisition.)

**HOLIDAY CHORUS AS AN ACQUISITION STRATEGY**

Last year we had a few people from the Vocal Clinic attend the holiday chorus.  I think we could potentially advertise directly for the holiday chorus, using the chorus as both a retention strategy (sing-outs are good!) and an acquisition strategy.

Implementing this idea requires that I better understand exactly how the holiday chorus is going to work, that Sean signs off on having a bunch of random people in the holiday chorus (which is likely to bring the overall quality of the sound down), and that Marketing is able to successfully push to get new singers in for the chorus.  If we're going to implement this, we need to implement it now.

**CHORUS MANAGER / BOOKING MANAGER / SING-OUT ENTHUSIAST AS A RETENTION STRATEGY**

Last meeting we discussed the idea of the Chorus Manager.  Bert sent out a document detailing what the position entailed.  I have a slight alteration on this idea that I think we should implement.

The Chorus Manager is a manager.  Their job is to manage the minutia required to keep the chorus running in the short-term (ensure all the details for a specific performance are implemented correctly) and the long-term (ensure we have the right equipment, deal with the rehearsal hall).  They also maintain the chorus calendar.

I have a slightly different vision for what this person needs to do.  The primary goal of this position is to ensure the chapter has enough sing-outs.  I don't want to call it a "manager":  a manager is someone who receives input from the outside and keeps track of it.  We need someone to manage the sing-out schedule, but that's not far enough.  Instead of being a passive manager of sing-outs, I want this person to actively ensure that we have enough sing-outs.  They maintain relationships with previous sing-out locations and actively try to create opportunities for follow-up sing-outs.  They are also the contact for any new potential sing-out opportunities.  They discuss with the Music Team to determine good dates for sing-outs and then try to fill those dates with events.  They are the person who gets up in front of the chorus during announcements to make sure that everyone is aware of any upcoming sing-outs.  They are probably also the person that gets the membership to commit to attending sing-outs so we can be sure we'll have the attendance necessary to successfully perform.

The day-to-day manager stuff listed in the Chorus Manager isn't necessarily what I'm looking for in this position.  In my vision, that work is done by someone else.  Potentially the Program VP, since I think Bert is doing this right now anyways?  I feel like all the stuff I have listed as a part of the core vision of this position is enough work for any one person to tackle and don't want to force them to deal with anything else.

I wasn't able to come up with a concise idea for the title of this position while I was writing this, so the poor title stands for now.

What do people think about this idea?

**TAKING ATTENDANCE AS A RETENTION STRATEGY**

In the interest of brevity of this month's report, I'm going to touch this briefly.

I already take attendance.  A good retention strategy is to make sure to call everyone that doesn't show up for rehearsal.  There's no way I can do that myself.  I want to recruit one person from each section to take attendance and call everyone in their section.  I want to make this a new position and find people that aren't already doing something else for the chapter, partially because Dave K already does too much work for us, and I think it might help get a few more people invested.  I'm not sure if this is something that the section leads already do.  In the long-run, these four people would probably be my Chapter Development Team.  I've been calling them the "Assistant Vice President for [Tenor/Lead/Bass/Baritone] Development" in my head.  I've been considering specific candidates for these roles.

If there's still time to discuss things I'm bringing up at the board meeting by the time we get this far down, I'd like to discuss this.

**CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT SURVEY AS A RETENTION STRATEGY**

I'm considering putting together a survey to give to our membership that would help us pinpoint what we need to do to help keep members happy and keep them coming back to rehearsals.  This email got super long, so I'm not going to discuss this any further right now.  If we have time during the meeting, I'd be happy to discuss my thoughts.  If not, we can skip it for now.