



May 5, 2018

Illinois District President's Report HOD Meeting 5/19/2018

Earlier this year I sent out a State of the District Report that identified several issues I felt were most critical to re-engaging our membership. Those three items were, in my order of importance, Communication, Participation and Finances. While we have not had an event to measure whether or not that report by itself has encouraged participation, I am happy to report progress in the other two areas.

Communication

After my message regarding the importance of updating our website went out, I received several communications offering help. In following up with each of them, several offered suggestions of other software platforms that could be used and several offered their services as volunteers. The offers and suggestions were over a wide range of topics and it reinforced my belief that we need professional help to restore our site. The job is simply too big for volunteers to manage in a timely fashion. I believe that this method of communicating with our members is so important that we need to hire professionals. A web design company that does this kind of work for pay, operates on an identified schedule, with the understanding that deadlines must be met and results in an up and running, mobile friendly, current website to serve our members is the best and only viable solution. Without this, we will continue to limp along as we are now and that is not the way to reinvigorate our district.

Of the web design companies I interviewed, two offered products based on proprietary platforms that would not go with us should we decide to leave their firm. This lack of portability removed them from the list of possible solutions.

The company I settled on uses a Wordpress platform that is openly available and portable should we decide to leave the web design company at the end of our commitment. Wordpress is a program that many of our volunteer webmasters are familiar with and once the site is updated, we will be able to provide access to several volunteers (our members) to add content and update items.

The biggest problem with the professional solution would be paying for it.

As a result of the message I sent explaining the importance of updating the website, a member who wishes to remain anonymous wrote a \$5000 check to cover the bulk of the work. I have submitted a grant to IDEA for the remaining \$2500, if needed, to fulfill the contract.

When completed, the result will be an up to date, mobile friendly, well organized, website that is professional in appearance and easy to use. It will also be portable so should the company and the Illinois District part ways at some point, we can move the site to a new host.

This work will be done with donated funds that will not have a negative impact on the district budget.



Finances

As mentioned above, the redesign of the website will be a major expense but those costs will be covered with funds outside of the budget.

We have an opportunity once again, to raise funds through a district wide raffle of two exciting prizes. One, a professionally framed, autographed Kris Bryant Cubs Jersey. And to be certain we have something for our Cardinal loving members, a baseball bat autographed by Yadier Molina! The tickets are printed and some promo materials will be made available. Tickets are \$10 and each chapter will have tickets to sell during the next four months. The drawing will be at our Fall Convention and Competition and you need not be present to win so make certain to sell tickets to your friends outside of our hobby because these items are really nice.

We ordered 2000 tickets. That means if each member sells (or buys) 3 tickets, we will sell out and add \$20,000 to the District coffers.

As I explained in the State of the District message, shoring up our financials is the second most important problem to be addressed. This raffle gives us a fun way to improve our financial stability. That improvement will allow us to add programming such as a spring event, IDAH, Leadership training or some other opportunity to get together and sing without having to charge an outsized registration fee.

Each member selling just a few ten dollar tickets will make so many things possible!

Participation

While there has not been an event to actively participate in since I sent the original message, we have so many opportunities to gather in the next few weeks! Please participate in as many as you can.

JUNE

Coming up in June we have the Mega Event in Chicago benefitting the family of Randy Rogers. I'll be there and I hope to see you too.

JULY

As president it is my privilege to invite each of you to register and attend the International Convention and Competition in Orlando this summer where the Illinois District will have FIVE quartets (Four regular and one Youth) and 2 choruses representing us. What a fantastic showing for our district!

OCTOBER

The Illinois District Fall Convention and Competition in Bloomington, Illinois, October 5-7, 2018.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jim Waldorf, President

Illinois District