



Far Western District

Convention Honoree

Ron Hayes – 2013 FWD Fall Convention Honoree

If you need a minute with Ron Hayes, you will have to make an appointment. He is a very busy man these days. Ron, and his Sweet Adeline wife, Annie are in high gear, making final preparations for the Tucson area 8th Annual YIH festival. Beginning with “less than 30 kids” — all boys — in 2006, the festival is now limited by stage size to “a couple of hundred” male and female youth participants from all over Arizona. The festivals began after a visit to Arizona by then Society staff member Jim DeBusman (“Annie and I tagged along”). They were expanded to include young women at the request of the local music educators. I might also mention, we also arranged for Dr. Bob Johnson, from International, to do a high school workshop here in Tucson in 1976.



Ron works very closely with music educators, who nominate their best singers for the festival. In fact, for the past ten years, Ron and Annie have operated a joint Society/SAI exhibit at the Arizona Music Educators Association convention.

Additionally, they have arranged for Society and SAI medalist quartets to sing the U.S. National Anthem at the AMEA awards ceremony and for strolling quartets in the AMEA registration area. Ron has also arranged for Society music staff members such as Rick Spencer, Mike O'Neill, and, James Estes to make presentations at the convention.

Since retiring from a job with the city of Tucson in 1990, barbershop volunteering has been a full-time occupation for Ron and Annie, whom he met on a blind date while stationed in Japan with the Air Force. Until last October she managed to fit in a part-time work schedule as a medical technologist/microbiologist while acting as the Region 21

YWIH Chair for the past 12 years and working with Ron on the festival. This past April, in Pasadena, Annie was awarded the SAI Region 21 Hall of Fame Award for her work in promoting barbershop to the next generation of singers.

Ron also does youth workshops in Tucson area schools and hauls the risers for performances of Society and SAI chapters in Tucson. He has been on the Chapter Music team and nominating committee “for years” and was the Chapter Bulletin Editor for nearly 30 years (starting on an old Western Union typewriter), and chapter VP for PR. After joining the in 1970, Ron has volunteered for “some committee or other” Since becoming a barbershopper. He is presently the YIH VP for the Tucson Sunshine Chapter and the FWD Arizona Division YIH coordinator.

Born 78 years ago “in the vicinity of Boston, Massachusetts,” Ron’s family moved to Tucson in 1952 “in a 1939 school bus.” Except for seven years in the Air Force, Tucson has remained his home.

His real love is barbershop gospel — he never misses the gospel sing at the International convention, where he met and became good friends with Joe Liles. Each annual youth festival includes at least one eight-part arrangement — many supplied by Joe.

Loss of a kidney, a triple heart bypass and a few stents haven’t slowed Ron down at all. As he puts it “I’ve only lived three fourths of my life. I still have another quarter to go.” When things go wrong, his easy solution is: “Relax.” Asked about life, Ron says: “Enjoy today; plan for tomorrow; whatever happens ... happens.”

Truly exemplifying the power of one man to change things is Ron Hayes, just another Joe Barbershopper.

