

# Bob Cox

## BHS Ambassador





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Although social platforms and other written communication processes are in place, there exists a need for direct, face-to-face contact with our members to elevate into discussion the realities of where our organization stands today and its intent moving forward. There are currently major projects taking flight from the leadership, staff and volunteers of BHS.

In addition, our members need an outlet to speak and to ask any, and all questions. And when our members speak, they need to see that someone from our Society is empathically listening to them and actually embracing and feeling their concerns. And if the answer to their questions is not readily available, there is a promise issued to provide an answer quickly. The concern will not be lost in time. It takes special individuals to willingly give of themselves to this extent.

To reach to the highest level of meaningful dialogue with our members is to build a cultural affinity with the BHS throughout the organization. Our programs and our commitment to listening to our members, and the security that our members feel, and at of our gatherings that are so crucial to our existence.....combined with our love of singing....over time will create a cultural affinity.



# BHS Ambassador

We have set a personal and team goal to reach all chapters/choruses of our Society, either in person or electronically for sharing and learning starting this weekend.

Specific responsibilities to the Ambassador program include, but are not limited to:

- An awareness to the major points of the Strategic Plan currently in the works at BHS.
- Understanding that as the BHS organization grows and evolves, so too will the messaging grow and evolve that the Ambassador's needs to understand and present these topics in a positive and caring fashion.
- Active listening skills to gather specific questions and concerns of membership. the organization and bring those to the attention of Society Staff and Leadership, while creating an avenue for open communications and a follow-up response.



# BHS Ambassador

## Our Challenge

- It is imperative that we be visible at as many barbershop gatherings as possible. There is much to be said, and much to be said immediately.
- We have monthly meeting where we discuss current issues facing our organization from the top down to the local chapter and the individual member.
- At conventions and schools, we are asked to mingle and talk to the general membership, chapter and district leaders and meet as many attendees as possible. If no one pauses to speak to us, there is still a sincere message of connection between BHS and the membership.
- It is hoped that over time, the purple badge and shirt, comes to represent “safety” in speech, a place where the member can always enter into conversation on an equal level of “we’re all in this together.” It is also hoped that the member exits the conversation knowing that they are part of something much bigger than themselves. When the purple badge becomes sought after at our gatherings, we will be speaking to another example of cultural affinity.



# Problem Solving Principles

## Essential to Strategic Project Success

- ❑ **Face Reality:** Don't ignore the problem. Try to see it as it actually is. This is essential for solving problems.
- ❑ **Ask for Help:** None of us is as smart as all of us. People need help to solve problems. Working together to solve problems brings us closer together.
- ❑ **Don't Add to the Problem:** Simplify, reduce and fix the problem. Break it down into manageable parts and then solve one part at a time.
- ❑ **Create Momentum:** Most problems can be solved by the energy that momentum provides.
- ❑ **There is Always an Answer to a Problem:** Knowing that there is an answer provides focus on finding that solution.
- ❑ **There is Always a Lesson in Every Problem:** We only lose, if we didn't learn.
- ❑ **There is Always an Opportunity in Every Problem:** If you look at a problem correctly, there is always a solution.



# Membership

(Current Statistics compared to end of 2024)

Quartets: **939** (904)  
Male: 722 (722)  
Female: **4** (38)  
Mixed: **170** (143)

Chapters: 585 (592)  
Male: 425 (560)  
Female: 3 (3)  
Mixed: **157** (29)

Choruses: 673 (747)  
Male: 561 (580)  
Female: 15 (16)  
Mixed: **174** (152)

Average Chorus size: 28  
Active Membership: 15-18

21 Full-Time BHS Staff  
250 Volunteers

2015: 21,529  
2017: 20,446  
2019: 18,700  
2020: 15,167  
2021: 13,682  
2022: 13,445  
2023: 14,257  
2024: 14,090



# Talking Points

**Harmony Hall Sale:** There is currently interest in the building that could result in a finalized sale by the end of 2025.

**BHS & HFI:** In 2023 a business settlement was agreed upon and both parties are committed to working together to provide the best services to our member. This business settlement will be reviewed in 2025 based on collective experiences of the past two years.

**CEO:** In September 2023, an Interim CEO was selected to serve a two-year term to stabilize the operations of the Society. Job descriptions were revised, and a process is now in place to interview and hire a permanent CEO. Final interviews will be in Denver and a decision and announcement will be made after the convention.

**Strategic Plan:** In 2024 the Strategic Planning Committee restarted the strategic plan that was put on the back burner due to the pandemic. The previous plan has been updated, and a new 7-year plan is now being implemented to ensure progress to achieve strategic growth.

**Fiscal Responsibility:** Harmony Hall has been strategic in meeting budget issues and in 2024 came in nearly \$500K under budget.



# Talking Points

**Election of Society Officers:** 2024 an independent committee was formed to make recommendations on revisions to the selection and nomination process. The SBOD reviewed the recommendation and adopted the changes in San Antonio. Article in current issue of the Harmonizer.

**Brand & Taste:** A new Statement Regarding Acceptable Taste will be issued soon that clarifies expectations on what is acceptable to reflect positively on the BHS, not only on the contest stage, but in all operational aspects such as BHS chapter and chorus performances, materials, products, services and communications. The statement is a reflection of BHS's Mission, Vision, Code of Ethics, Core Values, and Statements of Affirmation. The most current issue of the Harmonizer contains this information.

**Governance:** Almost 20 years ago the Society adopted the Carver model, which provides clarity between governance (SBOD with policies and oversight) and Operations (CEO/Harmony Hall). The SBOD has identified gaps in our performance against this model and in 2025 will work to focusing more on governance and not operations. Operational policies and procedures will be directed by CEO and Staff.





# 2025 Updates

**Mid-Winter Attendance:** 1,500 Attendees, 1,365 Registrants, 427 Youth Attendees

**The Big Leap:** New dynamic and immersive experience aimed at helping non-profits arts chapters, evolve and thrive in today's rapidly changing environment and work in conjunction with other arts organizations. ***I strongly encourage your District, Chapter and Chorus leadership teams to attend these workshops as they are scheduled around the Society. More details will be out soon.***

**Un-Convention:** May 23-26 in Nashville – social events, games, stellar shows - featuring First Take, Clever Girls, Michigan Jake and more... Final International Quartet Prelims for Denver. This is NOT a replacement to District Prelims.

**Music Educator:** BHS is sponsoring four free professional development sessions for music educators was established a month ago. This quarterly series explores innovative ways to engage students in barbershop harmony and a cappella singing. Article in the current issue of the Harmonizer.

**2025 International Convention:** June 29 – July 6 in Denver. Registration is now open. Space is limited, so don't wait!

**2025 Harmony University:** Jul 27 – Aug 3 at Denver University. Registration is now open.

**BHS Annual Report:** Being distributed and available very soon - BHS Website & Harmonizer.



# Let's Keep in Contact

Your valued time is appreciated. Hopefully, this handout helps you better understand the role of a BHS Ambassador and gives you better understanding of what is happening at the Society level.

The lines of communications are open. I look forward to supporting and working with the District's Leadership Team, your Chapters/Choruses, and most importantly your members.

**FYI - We are actively recruiting new BHS Ambassadors, if you or someone you know might be interested in joining our team - let's talk.**

I'm as close as a phone call, email, or text - I promise I will get back to you!

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