



PAYING IT FORWARD

A talk with Lisbet Duponte about her recent estate gift to Sweet Adelines International

When Stockholm City Voices Chorus is onstage, audiences expect something special. The Nordic Light Region #32 chorus is known for beautiful harmony, innovative show packages, and stunning costumes. It took many singers and supporters to create such a legacy, and Lisbet Duponte has been one of them from the beginning. The founder of Stockholm City Voices, Lisbet wants to make sure young Sweet Adelines have the chance to pursue the music that has brought her so much joy. That is why she recently made an estate gift to Sweet Adelines International, earmarked for the Young Singers Fund.

How did you first find out about Sweet Adelines?

When I moved to Sweden in 1975 my partner, Håkan Åkerstedt had started the first men's chapter in Stockholm. He introduced me to Director Inger Lindstrand, who had started the first Sweet Adelines prospective chapter in Södertälje, just south of Stockholm, the Telge Chapter. I started singing in a quartet, the Beautiful Screamers, right away with Britt-Heléne Bonnedahl, who at the time was assistant director in Telge Chapter. She went on to become the director of Rönninge Chapter in 1983. [Bonnedahl retired from directing after Rönninge's win at the 2019 international competition in New Orleans, La. (USA).]

Ann Gooch (see p. 29 in this issue) came to Sweden to help us learn more about the art form, and in 1977 the Telge Chapter and Beautiful Screamers went to London for the international convention, where Telge was recognized as the first non-English speaking chapter in Sweet Adelines. Our quartet got to sing with the Bron's Tones, our idols, coached by Ann, and it was a highlight you can't even begin to imagine!

At the end of the convention Ann suggested I go home and start a chapter in Stockholm, and having no idea what I didn't know, I did it!

Do you have a favorite Sweet Adelines memory?

Getting the charter for Stockholm handed to me on stage at the Directors' Seminar in 1979 is one of many. Inger and Ann had secretly planned it with then-President Ruth Uglow, and I remember Inger telling me to put on a dress instead of shorts.

Thank goodness I did! Being asked to direct everyone in singing *Harmonize The World* was an unbelievable feeling, and I remember seeing the hundreds of directors passing tissues around to each other.

How did you decide to make your estate gift to Sweet Adelines, and what did the process involve?

Becoming a Sweet Adeline has literally changed my life! I was asked to do things I never would have dared on my own, and I achieved a self-confidence that had a profound influence on my personal life and eventually that of my kids. Being on the board of trustees of what was then the Young Singers Foundation got me in contact with all the kids and young people who benefitted from our grants and scholarship, and working to start the YSF Silent Auction made it a no-brainer for me.

When I made a will with my financial planner, I included a gift to the Young Singers Fund, and I informed Sweet Adelines International Director of Philanthropy Susan Smith, who provided the documents to sign.

What do you hope your gift will do for Sweet Adelines?

I have felt and witnessed personally what music and someone believing in you can do for your soul and your self-confidence, I want my money to give a young person that chance as early as possible in their life.

It is my way of paying forward to someone else what I have been so humbled and honored to receive. The leaders of The Young Singers Foundation in the 90s, especially Julie Kendrick and Bev Miller, were and are my role models as is Ann, and it is my hope that the money may get someone involved in music at an early age, thus steering them on a path to a productive and self-fulfilling life. 🎵

Estate gifts, like all donations to Sweet Adelines International, can be "unrestricted," which means funds can be used as needed, or designated to a specific area such as education, scholarship, or Young Singers Fund.

To make Sweet Adelines International part of your estate planning, consult with your financial planner and contact Sweet Adelines International Director of Philanthropy Susan Smith at philanthropy@sweetadelines.com or 1.918.388.8040.