

The

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Ditch Pipe

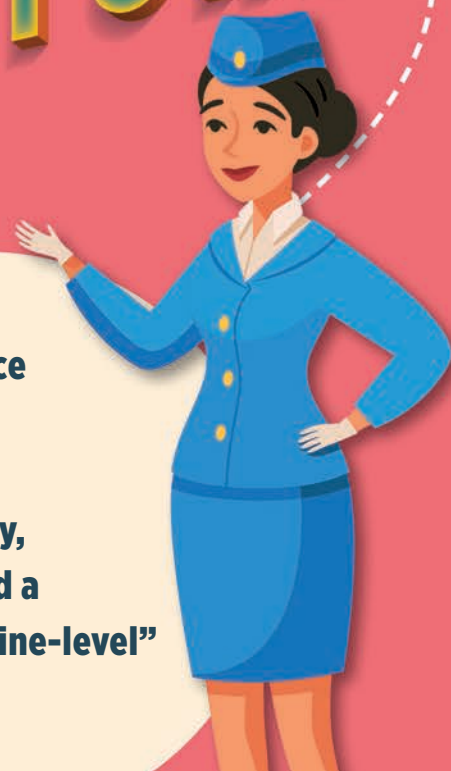
THE VOICE OF SWEET ADELINES INTERNATIONAL



TRAVEL IN TUNE



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learning, and a
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As coaches and educators, the late Darlene Rogers (pictured left) and Sharon Babb (pictured right) helped countless Sweet Adelines strengthen their voices and confidence using the craft and artistry of barbershop music. To honor their memory, Peggy Gram and Dale Syverson (co-creators of *Sing, Baby, Sing!* along with Darlene Rogers) have donated a **free audio recording (.mp3 file)** of *Sing, Baby, Sing!: Blue Ribbon Vocal Warmups, Edition #1*, to Sweet Adelines members.

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It's been awhile since we've been able to hop on a train, bus, or plane and visit each other in person, but Sweet Adelines will be "traveling" to each other's regions for education and fun with the upcoming launch of...

The Pitch Pipe

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Images from Travel in Tune. For more on this new program, see page 16 of this issue.



The Pitch Pipe is online in April... and beyond!

If you prefer to read all your issues of *The Pitch Pipe* online, log in to the members-only portal at www.SweetAdelines.com to access your account.

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Chief Executive Officer

Tamatha Goad
Editor-in-Chief

Kim Berrey
Managing Editor

Stacy Pratt
Associate Editor/Staff Writer

Ben Larscheid
Graphic Designer

Joey Bertsch
Staff Photographer

Kim Berrey
Advertising

1.918.622.1444 • communications@sweetadelines.com

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9110 S. Toledo Ave., Tulsa, OK 74137 U.S.A.

Telephone 1.918.622.1444 • Toll-free 1.800.992.7464

Fax 1.918.665.0894 • www.sweetadelines.com

Office hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (CT)

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Remember to use #SweetAdelines and #LifeOnAHighNote on social media. Headquarters uses the # to find your posts, photos and tweets to share across Sweet Adelines social media channels.



LESSONS FROM A STICKY NOTE

During a recent visit to a virtual chorus rehearsal, I was asked a question about how I prepared for becoming the President of our organization. My mind initially went to my formal training, education, and experiences in the work force, and then extended to my Sweet Adelines leadership experiences. I gave my answer to the chorus members that evening, but I hadn't quite answered it in my own mind, so I've continued to ponder it.

The truth is, there are opportunities for lessons to be learned all around. Education doesn't only mean school. Since becoming President, I've filled pages upon pages in notebooks with things I feel I need to remember. I've also started taking notes on those small pieces of paper with a sticky backing! I'm guessing there are between 30-40 sticky notes framing the perimeters of my computers and monitors in my office, competing for space and my attention on a daily basis. I add to them daily, rarely demoting one to the waste can, instead stapling one to another until they become like the tail of a kite.

While growing up, I liked attending school. That is where my prolific note-taking habit began. Following my university education, I took classes (and again more notes) to stay current with teaching music to children and to renew my teaching certificate. After several years of focusing on being a better teacher, I became a mother and stopped teaching in the classroom. My education as a parent came in many forms, from talking with friends and family to reading books on every topic from discipline to health care. The note-taking continued but this time in the form of lists and reminders to myself, and letters written home for sharing my thoughts.

When I joined Sweet Adelines in 1989, I stepped into a huge, new world of education centered around singing and performing, and eventually leadership. I felt as if all my musical educational paths had led me to Sweet Adelines International. More note-taking, more book reading, more classes, more handouts and networking continued over the years. I have stacks of handwritten and typed papers in my office which, when I try to discard them, only lure me into hours of re-reading and re-sorting to be used again in the future. My education is right there, written by my

own hand but imparted by others — coaches, educators, and Sweet Adelines I've met on risers and stages over the years. And, of course, the sticky note collection continues to grow.

The sticky notes signify my education over the past year. One of them says "Steady and Ready" — a bit of wisdom jotted down during a meeting. Another has a title of a book called *This is Your Brain on Music* which a friend gave me that I think might be a good thing for me to read now. One has a quote from a person I met recently who said, "This year is going to be epic!" I read it every day for inspiration. Others contain deadline reminders, names of people on task forces, witty quotes, definitions of legal terms, new activities for my chorus, performances to watch, and more. These notes might mean nothing to others, but they mean everything to me.

The education I've had in Sweet Adelines for the past 31 years, being a student and teacher simultaneously, has prepared me for the awesome responsibility of the presidency. The answer to how I've gotten here is "anything and everything." I frequently study the sticky note messages as if I am preparing for an exam, their meanings floating back to me when I'm not in my office. The notes help me recall not just wisdom but the people who shared it and the circumstances surrounding the insight. What we have shared over the years, from education to singing to friendship and work, has helped prepare me to serve as your President. I am grateful for your wisdom and inspiration. I look forward to our future together, knowing I will never run out of reasons to post a sticky note to remember something that might help me serve you better.

In song,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Bortolin".

Joan



AN OVERVIEW OF THE SWEET ADELINES INTERNATIONAL CHORUS TOOLKIT

Culture of Belonging:

We create harmony where every voice matters. We foster a culture that provides a joyful place to share our uniqueness within a global community united in song.

Diversity & Inclusion:

We celebrate our differences as essential to the rich harmony that unites us. As we recognize barbershop's African American origins and learn from our exclusionary past toward women of color, we reject discrimination and unwaveringly strive toward greater awareness, openness, and understanding of each other.

The Diversity and Inclusivity (D&I) Task Force was formed in 2016 with the mandate to “provide input for the SA long-term strategic planning process and develop short-term tools to support diverse and inclusive membership in Sweet Adelines International.” Among the initiatives brought forth by the D&I Task Force (whose work is now stewarded by the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion [DEI] Council) is the Chorus Toolkit.

The Song Assessment Tool (SAT), which is used by Sweet Adelines to make more informed and intentional choices when selecting songs for their repertoire, is part of the toolkit. Its release was accelerated to coincide with the June 2020 official announcement by the International Board of Directors (IBOD) that Sweet Adelines International denounces songs with racist lyrics, messages, and history and that there would be changes to competition rules to reinforce SA's commitment to creating a diverse and inclusive organization.

Now, more parts of the Chorus Toolkit are ready for release to choruses for use in developing their own DEI processes.

Conceived of and designed by Sweet Adelines members, the Chorus Toolkit addresses topics and situations specific to the needs of our organization. While the development of the toolkit was the mandate of the D&I Task Force, it was largely influenced by participants at a series of diversity focused events held at three successive international conventions, culminating in a generative workshop in which groups determined topics and themes for the initial draft. Sweet Adelines from a wide variety of backgrounds

volunteered their time, energy, and emotional labor for this important and ongoing, work.

The toolkit is designed for exploration, discovery, to support self-reflection as well as sharing in a safe environment that recognizes people are in different places on their journey toward inclusions and creating a culture of belonging. This resource aims to help choruses create sharing experiences that call everyone to work together to ensure that our chorus environments are inclusive and welcoming for all singers. Leaders at all levels are committed to this process, and the toolkit is meant to be a living document with continuing input from members.

The Chorus Toolkit includes resources, ideas, and guidelines to help chorus leaders start and incorporate healthy DEI principles into all aspects of their ensembles. It offers assistance in creating opportunities for reflective, genuine conversation and ideas for concrete actions choruses can take to become more welcoming to current and future members and audiences. By deliberately creating more inclusive spaces, Sweet Adelines will open doors to more voices, more ideas, more friends — more of all the things we love about being Sweet Adelines.

The Chorus Toolkit is one way Sweet Adelines International is taking practical steps to truly live our Guiding Principles and create an organization that helps contribute to a more harmonious future for all.

Watch your email for news about the upcoming release of the Chorus Toolkit. 



MOVING FORWARD WITH HOPE

By the time you read these words, we will be four months into 2021. A lot has changed since this time in 2020, when we were still adjusting to the shock of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through it all, Sweet Adelines have continued to adapt, to learn, even to sing. Sometimes it's hard to see how much you've accomplished while you're in the middle of it, so I thought I would recap the last year. Even I was surprised to see how much we have accomplished and how many ongoing resources have been created.

Our in-person 75th anniversary celebration had to become virtual, as did our international convention. From July 13-October 17, we celebrated our 75th anniversary with social media posts from our archives and quotes from members celebrating what they love about Sweet Adelines. Inspired by the fantastic virtual events put on by so many of our regions when in-person competitions were cancelled, we held a three-day Virtual International Convention that included daily warmups, education, 75th Anniversary festivities, chorus and quartet showcases and more. You can find the Sweet Adelines International Virtual Convention and 75th Anniversary Celebration archived on the SA YouTube channel. The educational portion of the convention is accessible exclusively to members. To access it, log in to the members-only section of the website and visit www.sweetadelines.com/2020-Virtual-Convention-Archives.

To coincide with our 75th anniversary, Sweet Adelines choruses around the world held Virtual Global Open House (VGOH) to welcome interested singers to our organization. To find out more about VGOH, read the article "Virtual Global Open House" from the January 2021 issue of *The Pitch Pipe*. For resources on planning your own VGOH, log in to the members-only section of the SA website and visit www.sweetadelines.com/virtual-global-open-house.

SA had begun to increase online education offerings prior to the pandemic, but necessity kicked it into high gear. Many videos and other resources were created and posted, and new ones continue to be added. Online education for voice, choreography, and more can be found in the public and members-only sections of the SA website. To find what you're looking for, log in and visit www.sweetadelines.com/education.

In February, *The Voice Of Harmony* Virtual Chorus premiered, combining the voices of Sweet Adelines from every region. To watch the inspiring performance and find out more about the project, see page 21 in this issue of *The Pitch Pipe*.

Also, Sweet Adelines International launched the app- and website-based virtual experience, Travel in Tune. Designed to

increase togetherness and showcase the talents of our regions, Travel in Tune continues to grow as more "destinations" are posted. To find out more, see page 16 in this issue of *The Pitch Pipe*.

One of the initiatives we are most proud of is the formation of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council. Created to continue the work of the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, the DEI Council includes two subcommittees: The Chorus Toolkit Subcommittee and the Song Assessment Tool (SAT) Subcommittee. Prior to the DEI Council beginning their work, Sweet Adelines International made the following actions regarding our guiding principle of diversity and inclusion:

- Presented a firm stance on rejecting songs with racist lyrics, messages or history and put it into action with the launch of the SAT
- Ongoing revision of organizational materials
- Created the safe@sweetadelines.com email account to respond directly to members, choruses, and regions with DEI concerns
- Ongoing work on DEI Chorus Toolkit to assist choruses in their own DEI initiatives
- Added and maintain DEI pages (both public and members-only) on the SA website

We look forward to seeing how Sweet Adelines will use these new initiatives, programs, and materials as we proceed into our future together. Keep hope that one day, we will sing next to each other again. In the meantime, we'll keep finding ways to keep each other #SweetAdelinesStrong.

Sincerely,

Tammy Talbot, CEO

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Quartet photos courtesy of Sweet Adelines International.

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*When My Baby Smiles At Me/Zing Went The Strings Of My Heart Medley**,
Elaine Gain, I04954

It's A Pity To Say Goodnight, Nancy Bergman, I04957

*Old Time Religion/Do Lord Medley**, Karen McCarville, I04960

May I Never Love Again, Renee Craig, I04961

Newly Published by Sweet Adelines:

*I Love A Piano**, Brian Beck, MS10037

* US public domain

To order, contact Sweet Adelines International Sales Department at sales@sweetadelines.com, visit www.SweetAdelines.com/Shop, or call 1.918.622.1444 ext. 112 or toll free at 1.877.545.5441. Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. CDT (2 p.m.-10:30 p.m. UTC)



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INTRODUCING IBOD MEMBER JULIE STARR

Curiosity, forward thinking, and glorious music



The first time recently-elected International Board of Directors (IBOD) member Julie Starr saw Pat LeVezu directing, she knew she'd found her calling.

"I watched her directing, and I said, 'Oh, that's what I want to do,'" says Julie. "A lot of directors kind of fall into the job or are pushed into the job, but I wanted it. I wanted to be the maestro of all of those voices and see how they

all come together so masterfully. Pat was just able to take all these fairly average voices and make them sound beautiful all together. I thought that was a real gift, and I wanted to learn how to do that."

With Pat's encouragement, Julie not only learned to direct but has now been Master Director of Bay Area Showcase Chorus for almost 20 years. In 2019, the chorus placed 14th in the world at International competition in New Orleans. Even after all this time, she is still passionate about the music that brought her here.

"Making glorious music is my favorite thing about being a Sweet Adeline," she says. "I'm so attuned to the sound that we make and the harmonies. When it clicks in, when it rings, there is nothing else like it. There are moments in performance when you're just transported. I love being able to facilitate that as a director and to

be part of it."

Just as Pat inspired and mentored her as a director, so has Julie shared her own ever-growing expertise. She previously served six years as a Regional Education Coordinator, and she is the current chair of the Director Certification Program Review Committee. She also serves on an international task force focused on online education.

"I'm very passionate about education, particularly education of directors, but education for all singers," she says. "I want to get the best education out there and available for the people who want it."

Education is one thing she hopes to focus on as a member of the IBOD, but she looks forward to all the rewards and challenges of her new leadership role, even though it begins at a particularly difficult time in history.

"I feel very honored to be elected to the Board at this time, even though it's a really tough time," says Julie. "The Board has to grapple with a lot of big, heavy decisions that impact everybody. I'll have an opportunity to help see the organization through into a new normal, and that's exciting to me. I'm a very forward-thinking person, and I love change. I'm always curious about what lies around the next corner."

She said she is also honored to be in such good company.

"Pat was a Past International President and on the Board, and she mentioned to me that one of the biggest rewards is getting to work with all of these very smart, down to earth people who have the best interests of the organization in mind," says Julie. "I really look forward to working with all the brilliant people on this Board to help make Sweet Adelines an even better place than it already is." ❧



"WELCOME, PROSPECTIVE VOCAL CONNECTION CHORUS!"

What happens when a director doesn't have a group to direct? She creates one. Our newest Sweet Adelines prospective chorus, Vocal Connection, formed in late 2020, and their momentum is taking the Phoenix, Arizona (USA) area by storm. They've already hosted a virtual open house, and 14 potential singers showed up. With a dynamic start like that, they'll be chartering in no time!

Leslie Dalton returned to the Phoenix area to care for her mother and found herself without a chorus. Patricia Glasser, a former quartet member with Leslie, moved to a nearby city, and both decided to start singing together. Leslie's background in directing and Patricia's background in choreography and chorus administration make them a formidable duo. After contemplating the choruses around them, they decided there was room for another chorus in their area. Longtime Sweet Adelines Mary Chilton and Carleen Thompson joined them, adding more expertise through their experiences in chorus and regional leadership. With over 87 combined years of Sweet Adelines experience, this determined band of singers knew something magical was in the works when, at their first planning meeting, they realized they were a true quartet, representing all four parts.

Forming a prospective chorus may seem daunting (although we promise it isn't!), especially during a pandemic. Upon further contemplation, though, the founders of Vocal Connection realized it's actually the perfect time.

Leslie says, "We've been able to spend a lot more time tackling the chartering process, which we may not have done if we were meeting in person and rehearsing. We thought because we couldn't have rehearsals in person, we could focus all our energies on planning."

And plan they did.

They started asking themselves questions such as, "What do we want to do? Why are we doing it? Who do we want to attract?" These questions helped them formulate their chorus identity and culture, and led them to the name "Vocal Connection."

Starting a chorus has been a positive experience for Vocal Connection.

"It has been exhilarating, exciting, daunting and even frustrating

at times, but the information supplied by Sweet Adelines International has been so thorough and helpful," says Leslie. "It has really given us a good roadmap of how to tackle all the tasks."

Help has come from International as well as the region, and Vocal Connection has also reached out to leaders in other choruses. The Sweet Adelines community has been vital to their success.

Vocal Connection has embraced virtual rehearsals, hosting their first rehearsal on January 25, 2021, with 14 guests in attendance. The pandemic "made us recognize online rehearsals can still be educational, effective, and fun. Because of the pandemic, individual responsibility is more important than ever to keep our vocal skills strong," says Leslie.

They also recognize the importance of offering virtual rehearsals.

Leslie says, "With everyone being so isolated, we felt it was the perfect gift to women in the area, giving them something to do that they can call their own. One night a week they can get away from reality, giving them an opportunity to enjoy a community with like-minded singers."

This isn't to say virtual rehearsals are easy — they've found Zoom rehearsals take more work than in-person rehearsals — but they're ready for the challenge.

They plan on producing their first virtual

chorus video in April, and they aim to learn seven new songs by November 2021 (including two competition songs). They also have an eye towards the future: They're working on finding a rehearsal location so they're ready to roll when in-person rehearsals can resume.

Leslie and her team have plenty of advice for someone interested in forming their own prospective chorus. They recommend "having a team that works well together, has a common vision, and is willing to jump in and do what needs to be done. Surround yourself with a team of people who have similar goals and also have the passion and drive to achieve them." As Leslie says, "If we can build and grow a successful chorus during a pandemic, we can do anything!"

Are you interested in forming a prospective chorus, or learning more about the process? Email member@sweetadelines.com and request a free introductory packet.



Vocal Connection Chorus founding members, left to right from top, Mary Chilton, Patricia Glasser, Leslie Dalton and Carleen Thompson.

REMEMBER THE FUN

Looking back to look forward

As Sweet Adelines continue to meet virtually and stay #SweetAdelinesStrong, we are all reminiscing about the fun and joy of being Sweet Adelines. Many Sweet Adelines traditions have been put on hold due to Covid-19, but we know the good times will return! Below are a few fun chorus traditions that we can't wait to resume. We look forward to the coming months when we can finally meet again!

1. OC Sound Chorus (#21)

OC Sound Chorus is a staple in their community.

"Every Tuesday, after rehearsal, we afterglow at a local restaurant. By then, it's 9:30-10 p.m., and we go to their back room, which is usually empty. We all sit together at one big table and then we eat, drink, sing, and be very merry! We are there pretty frequently until midnight or 1 a.m. just enjoying each other so much. We sing our chorus songs, we sing tags, we sing anything that pops into someone's head. Sometimes there are others in this back room, and they greatly enjoy the entertainment! As I reflect on these favorite memories, I see their common thread: we were spreading joy," says Eileen Thiessen, baritone.

2. Helena Xpress Singers Chorus (#13)

Helena Xpress Singers Chorus has a tradition for every season.

"Every season brings new opportunities to sing and gather together. A big picnic in the summer, bonfires in the winter, quartet retreat weekends, and plenty of afterglow dinners to nurture lasting friendships within our chorus. Zoom has not slowed this chorus down. We are family!" says Hanna Hollatz, Marketing Coordinator.

3. London Chorus (#2)

London Chorus makes some of their best memories during their holiday season.

President Cathy Maxwell says, "We choose our last rehearsal time to celebrate the season. We split into two or three small groups to entertain in the community and bring Christmas cheer to nursing or retirement homes, Salvation Army kettles, and local malls. Afterwards, we all meet at our rehearsal hall and finish the evening with our own sing-song. We form a circle, turn out the lights, and, holding candles, we enjoy the beautiful music before we say Merry Christmas and begin our holiday break."

4. Vocal Standard Chorus (#5)

Vocal Standard Chorus works hard and plays hard, too!

Vocal Standard Chorus holds a Retreat Weekend a few weekends before contest. Communications Chair Sheri Hart says, "We work extremely hard for two days to make sure everything is buttoned up, but then we have so much fun playing games and getting to know each other even better, which really may be the ultimate benefit of the weekend."

Vocal Standard also began a new tradition in 2019: matching tattoos. Sheri continues, "Last year in New Orleans was our first time on the International Stage together, and about two-thirds of the chorus got a matching tattoo! We're thinking this one may turn into another VS tradition."

5. Black Hills Showcase Chorus (#8)

Black Hills Showcase Chorus believes that participating in their local community is key to their 44-year longevity.

Jennifer Hauf, Marketing/Public Relations Chair, says, "We bring our unique national anthem, arranged by director Judy Vidal, to community events like Movie Under the Stars, first responder events, athletic events at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, Rapid City Rush hockey games, and more."

6. Waikato Rivertones Chorus (#35)

Waikato Rivertones Chorus are up for spontaneity!

One day in early 2020, a cruise ship made an unscheduled overnight stop at the Port of Tauranga, and the New Zealand Special Interest Tour Director Carole Brown, herself a Sweet Adeline, knew exactly who to call to provide entertainment: Waikato Rivertones Chorus pulled together 18 members ready to entertain, arranging carpools and a quick evening wardrobe. The chorus presented a one-hour program to the appreciative cruise audience. Renew Quartet sang an Irish lullaby, and the highlight of the evening was 11-year-old Kyra-Mae Wilson singing To Make You Feel My Love. Adrienne Windsor, Publicity and Promotions Coordinator, says, "The cruise ship passengers were thrilled with their impromptu evening's entertainment. We hope that before too long, we will be able to once again welcome visitors from other lands."



1



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As you can see, Sweet Adelines know how to have fun! Sweet Adelines choruses, quartets, and individual singers all have unique traditions that they look forward to enacting once more. While the past year has looked different, we stayed #SweetAdelinesStrong, and we are all looking forward to meeting again and creating new Sweet Adelines memories! 🎵

Social Media Tips for Sweet Adelines

Getting started with social media marketing for choruses and quartets



Many of us in the Marketing Coordinator, Social Media Manager, or Promotions role in our choruses are not trained or experienced in marketing. We are passionate members willing to learn who may or may not have some interest in marketing or some life experience that helps us understand the need for storytelling and selling. Aren't you glad to know you are not alone?

Even if you aren't a professional marketer, you can succeed at marketing your chorus or quartet on social media. Here are the basics!

Square one.

Start by ensuring that you have a Facebook business page. A business page is different than a personal page (or a group page), so make sure that you are setting up the correct one. Make sure your profile picture, cover photo, description, and contact information are all correct and represent your brand or group. Visitors to your page should be able to tell right away that your group is affiliated with Sweet Adelines International. An easy place to include your SA affiliation is in the "About" section of your profile.

For more on chorus identity and culture, see the following articles from *The Pitch Pipe*:

- **"Aligning Your Chorus Identity"**
(January 2020, p. 46)
- **"Identifying Chorus Culture"**
(July 2020, p. 26)
- **"Sweet Adelines Chorus Identity"**
(October 2020, p. 31)

To find archived issues of *The Pitch Pipe*, visit www.sweetadelines.com/pitchpipemagazine.

Find your voice.

Speaking of brand, if your chorus has not yet developed a cohesive brand, add that to your 2021 to-do list. A brand is who you are and how you want to be perceived, packed together to create a set of communication guidelines that represent you. It's your voice (personality), your tone (how you express your personality), your values...what makes you unique. Your logo and colours are a very small part of that!

Create a checklist.

Once you have your brand mapped out, make sure EVERYTHING aligns with your brand. I ask myself, "Does this represent who we are and where we are going?" Every post, every article should add to the story of who you are. So, create a checklist which might look like this:

Does this post/article/video...

- ☐ Represent us?
- ☐ Sound like us?
- ☐ Look like us?
- ☐ Feel like us?
- ☐ Have a purpose?
- ☐ Offer a reason to engage?
- ☐ Include visuals?
- ☐ Include details needed (ie. events)?
- ☐ Speak to the purpose (i.e. reasons to join)?

Futhur Questions...

- ☐ Is the URL/contact information correct?
- ☐ Did I spellcheck?
- ☐ Is it well thought out?
- ☐ Am I ok with the world seeing this?
- ☐ Did I use content-appropriate hashtags?
- ☐ Does everything align with the SA Mission Statement, Vision Statement, and Guiding Principles? (They can be found on the SA website.)

Post. Share. Post.

Listen, between you and me, reporting on your great rehearsal is only one reason to post, and honestly, after 10 months of virtual rehearsals I scroll past most of those posts without reading them. In the checklist on the left, we added "purpose"! Purpose can be anything from education to entertainment, but you do need to put thought into the purpose of every post. Post about things learned. Post about things heard. Post about your members.

When you first start out and/or if you are doing thorough article-style posts, make sure you have a second set of eyes read over your content. Ideally, this second set of eyes should be sensitive to diversity, equity, and inclusion issues and know your brand. Also, don't forget to share content that other groups post. If you see a post that speaks to you (while wearing your chorus or quartet hat, of course), ask yourself if there is any reason why you shouldn't share it on your page. (Remember that checklist!)

Deputize your ambassadors.

I cannot stress this enough. The members of your chorus are a part of the marketing team. They are your ambassadors. Ask them to share, share, share. Give them business cards they can keep on hand. Give them graphics they can share on social media. Ask them questions that give you content for your articles and posts.



Manage.

Learn the basics of Facebook management: how to post, how to tag, how to use hashtags, where to find comments, mentions, and reactions. Respond! If you ask for comments, make sure you respond to those comments with a like (at least). To learn more about managing your Facebook page and other social media, log in to the SA website and visit www.sweetadelines.com/resources/social-media.

Use the tools.


We aren't all graphic professionals, and we don't all have design software. If you do use design software, take time to make a reference sheet or find templates that give you the current optimal sizes for images on your social platform, then design to those specs. Here's my go-to resource: www.louisem.com/facebook-tips. If you don't have design tools, use an online program like www.canva.com that is full of starter layouts you can customize. A post with an image (even a not-great image) will out-perform a text-only post.

Measure.

Check your Facebook insights weekly. Look at how your posts performed. Reach measures how many people saw your post. Engagement metrics indicate interaction — how many people commented, liked, clicked, and shared. Find your posts with the highest engagement and ask yourself how you can replicate that but also make it better. Then try and try again, and soon you'll have an idea of what your audience reacts to and engages with.

Create a hashtag cheat sheet.

I remember when hashtags first became a thing and people were using them everywhere in strange and annoying ways. #rememberwhenpeoplewrotehashtagsentences? Well I have just recently learned about hashtags anew and afresh and how they have become a tool worth using. A friend of mine in the same region, who is a marketer by trade and training, encouraged me to create a hashtag cheat sheet for my chorus and then apply hashtags to all posts. I did create the cheat sheet and let me tell you, it continues to grow! We want to use hashtags that help our content get discovered and to be part of a larger conversation around relevant topics. Give it a try — go to a post and click on a hashtag to get a real-time feed of the posts and events using that hashtag.

It can be a bit intimidating to manage social media, but with these tips, you can reach your audience and have fun too! Decide what your first step should be, then do it. Doesn't that feel good? Now, what is the next step? See? You have already succeeded. Now go forth and succeed again and again. 

***Note:** Your country or your chorus may be better served by a different primary social media platform. Search online for "social media demographics by platform" for your area.*

***Stacey Rose** is the Marketing Coordinator for Lions Gate Chorus and Region #26. She is a freelance graphic designer and lives in the Greater Vancouver area of British Columbia, Canada.*

Our Brand. Our Voice.

Social Media Marketing Materials from Sweet Adelines International!

Log in to the Sweet Adelines International Website, click on "Resources," then on "Marketing Materials" to find...

- Social Media Guidelines for the "big four": Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube
- Customizable and Ready-to-Use cover images and ads
- Introduction to Sweet Adelines Social Media Guidelines
- Information and materials for public relations, event marketing, and more!

<https://sweetadelines.com/resources/marketing-materials>



ACROSS THE BORDERS: AN IMPROBABLE JOURNEY

The story of a virtual connection

When a most unlikely series of events develops into something remarkable, it's hard to deny the presence of fate at every turn.

In early 2020 when the pandemic forced people all over the world into lockdown, a women's community choir located in the U.K., Felixstowe Harmonies, began exchanging and sharing their thoughts and feelings about isolation and how the impact of being unable to sing was affecting their quality of life. Their words were a strong and uplifting message of solidarity, of friends wanting to reunite and about how singing has the power to lift hearts across the miles. Their thoughts and words ultimately became the lyrics of a song, *Across The Borders*, brilliantly written and composed by their Director, Chandra Grover.

I live in Region #13, in a small town in the northwest corner of Washington State in the U.S. I sing baritone with PrimeTime quartet and Song of Seattle Chorus. A decade ago, I befriended a woman named Liz Rastrick from Suffolk, U.K. — in an online Scrabble game of all places — and our friendship developed and grew into a comfortable ongoing exchange of life's details. In no time at all, she became well acquainted with my substantial Sweet Adelines life! Mind you, we have never met in person.

This current journey began when Liz, on a whim, sent me a recording that she heard, by chance, called *Across The Borders*. Well into isolation myself, the lyrics and haunting melody resonated with me, and I couldn't get it out of my mind. I eventually asked Liz for permission to contact Chandra to inquire if I could have the song arranged in the barbershop style. To my great joy and surprise, Chandra had been dabbling in arranging barbershop!

Thus began the amazing collaboration between Felixstowe Harmonies choir and PrimeTime quartet. The arrangement turned out to be brilliant and before long, we were discussing the idea of creating a virtual video with PrimeTime and Felixstowe Harmonies — no easy task, given we are 4,500 miles (7242.048 km) apart, have never met, and are all still in isolation! During our months of learning and tweaking and planning, the video project grew to include another of Chandra's U.K. community ensemble groups, Stellar Acappella, directed by Gaynor Schofield. It also included Song of Seattle Chorus (the home chorus of PrimeTime), directed by Paula Davis. By the time it all came together, our little virtual video project had grown to nearly 70 women from four different ensembles, oceans apart.

A woman of many talents, Chandra created and produced the video, and we are very proud to introduce the Kingdom of United Voices singing *Across The Borders*. (Yes, we decided we needed a name, so don't be surprised if you hear of future collaborations!)

We are so glad that fate — and barbershop music — brought us together! 🎵

You can find our video at Across the Borders on YouTube, which is also shared on the PrimeTime Quartet Facebook page.

Patti Burklund sings baritone with PrimeTime quartet and is a member of Song of Seattle Chorus. She is a Certified Judge in the Expression Category.

SEE YOU SOON ON... TRAVEL IN TUNE

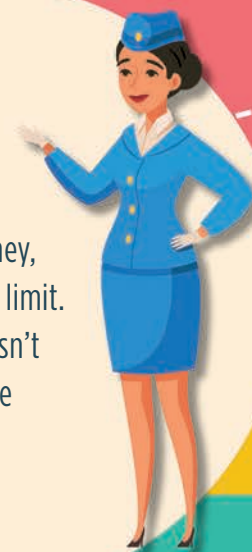


ALL ABOARD...

Travel in Tune is a virtual experience developed exclusively for Sweet Adelines members to sample the exceptional cultures, personalities, and educational programs of our regions. A different “destination” will be available approximately every other week for viewing. Destinations will be archived so you can visit on your own time or return to your favorites. Check out the passport stamps to find out which regions have been posted!

Attention, travelers:

with this virtual journey, the sky isn't even the limit. The limit literally doesn't exist... we hope you're excited about it, too!



TRAVEL TIPS



- **Wear comfortable shoes and clothes.** Physical warmups and other surprises (hint, hint) may come your way from time to time during your journey.



- **Traveling with friends, even from afar?** Traveling in Tune from an unusual location? Wherever you are, post a photo or your thoughts on social media using #SweetAdelines AND #TravelinTune. Sweet Adelines HQ will search for content to find and re-share across social media.



- **Make sure to check the “Travel Docs” section** for any education materials you may want to print or save along the way.



- **Need a little more help navigating the app or website?** Our flight attendant guides you step-by-step in the “How To...Travel in Tune” video at: www.sweetadelines.com/travel-in-tune/login



- **The food and beverage service on this journey is up to you!** So grab your favorite snacks, get comfortable, and settle in for the journey. Please note that crumbs in your seat are completely acceptable and even encouraged.



- **Can't get enough Travel in Tune?** Be sure to watch your email inbox and app notifications for information about monthly “special excursions.”



- **Applaud Sweet Adelines members** from all regions for all they've done to make your journey great!

TICKET

MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

Travel in Tune can be accessed by Sweet Adelines members two different ways...

- 1 Via the members-only section of the Sweet Adelines International website:
www.sweetadelines.com/travel-in-tune

- 2 Via mobile app “Yapp” on smartphones and tablets.



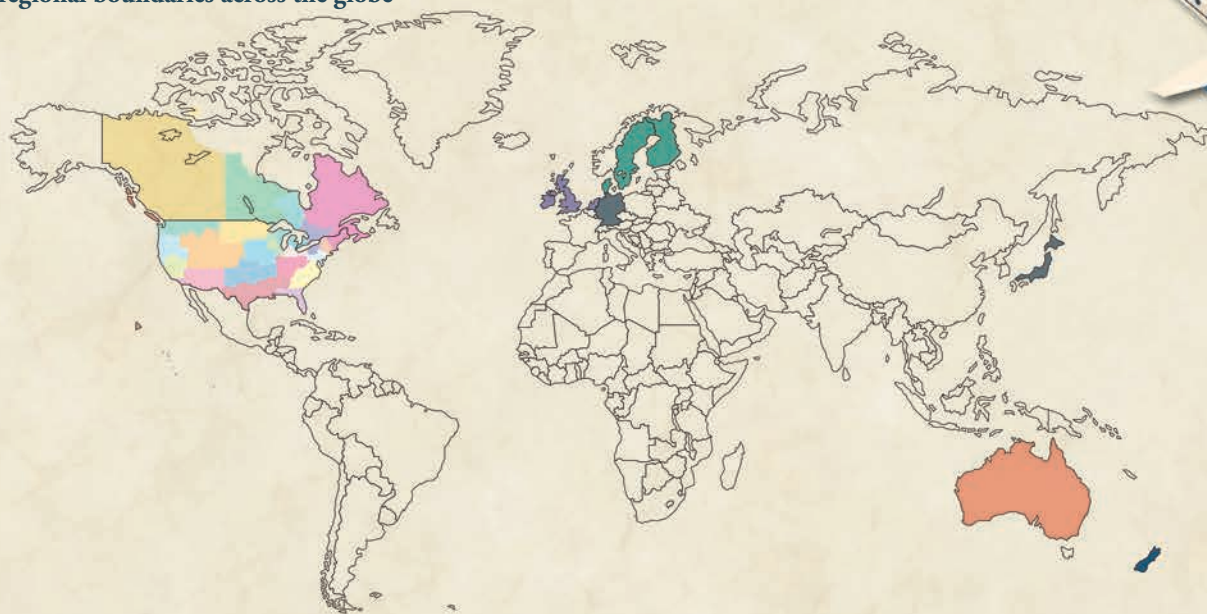
Detailed **instructions** for accessing Travel in Tune via web and mobile app are available on the Sweet Adelines website:

WWW.SWEETADELINES.COM/TRAVEL-IN-TUNE/LOGIN

(Please note: this webpage does not require member login to view.)

SWEET ADELINES REGIONAL MAP

This map shows Sweet Adelines regional boundaries across the globe



Until we can meet again in person, stay connected through this virtual travel adventure for learning, fun, and a little bit of the special Sweet Adelines spirit that always surrounds us when we are together. It won't be the same without you, so please climb aboard, set sail, walk, run — virtually, of course — to...Travel in Tune! 🎵

THE MASKED SINGER

Information and advice about singing in masks



It has now been over a year since the COVID-19 pandemic changed life for people all over the world. For many singers, a return to any kind of in-person rehearsal or performance remains impossible. Pandemic safety restrictions vary widely, and most ensemble singers who are able to gather in person do so with caution. Besides strictly enforced distancing, some ensembles, including barbershop quartets and choruses, have chosen to sing in masks.

Sweet Adelines International is part of a coalition of 125 performing arts organizations who support a study of aerosol transmission commissioned by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) and the College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA). The study is led by research teams at the University of Colorado and the University of Maryland (both in the U.S.). Most recent results (July 2020) focus on the distribution of respiratory aerosol (microscopic particles that can carry viruses) generated while playing wind instruments, singing, acting, speaking, and dancing.

According to a press release on the NFHS website, researchers

determined that “the amount of aerosol dispersed by singers varies on consonants, vowels, intensity and pitch” and that “singers wearing a well-fitted, three-layer, surgical-style mask have a reduced release of aerosol.” They also found that face shields alone are “only effective at close range to stop large droplets and do not prevent aerosol from being inhaled or released unless a mask is also worn.” More studies are underway by researchers in several countries to determine the safest ways for performers to return to practice rooms and stages.

The American Choral Directors Association’s “Resources for Choral Professionals During the Pandemic” includes an ongoing list of research as well as planning tools, webinars, and more. It can be found at <https://acda.org/resources-for-choral-professionals-during-a-pandemic/>.



SWEET ADELINES IN MASKS

The Woodlands Show Chorus of Region #10 is one Sweet Adelines chorus experimenting with masked singing. Master Director Betty Clipman and Associate Director Kerri Mauney have been running hybrid rehearsals — with some members attending in-person, masked and distanced, and some members attending virtually — for several months, as their local rules allow.

The Woodlands Show Chorus began rehearsing outdoors, masked and distanced, with only a few members at a time. Eventually, they were able to move indoors, to a large rehearsal room at an arts school with good ventilation. They used pool noodles to mark proper distancing, and Betty says they have room to exceed the distancing guidelines, which they do.

Kerri helped design and implement the system of microphones and cameras that make it possible for members attending virtually to participate fully. She says it's been worth the trial-and-error learning because hearing the actual sound of barbershop chords, even through a mask, is motivating for everyone. They discovered

that having one camera facing the director and a second one facing the chorus works best so people watching at home can see the director's hands.

"When you are wearing a mask and you are separated, you have to really focus in on what the people attending virtually see," says Kerri. "This way, they can hear the chorus singing, see Betty's hands, and hear her feedback, and it's actually working out really well. We have experimented with microphones to find what works because we have to remember that whatever they hear is also filtered through a mask."

Because she is directing, not singing, Betty uses a regular mask with a silicone bracket underneath that keeps it off her mouth. She says several members of the chorus use that combination. The brackets, which are made of silicone or plastic, can be bought online and fit under most cloth or paper (medical-style) masks. They are a less-expensive option, and she recommends that singers try several versions to find what works.

Kerri uses The Singer's Mask developed by Broadway Relief Project.

“One thing that I will say about The Singer’s Mask...it is NOT visually pleasing,” Kerri says, laughing. “You look like a duck. But for the purpose of singing, it is way more user-friendly than regular masks, even with brackets. The piece that goes over the nose area is a solid, bendable wire so it doesn’t move, so once you put it on, it stays in place no matter what you’re doing. There is plenty of room inside of it for the air to circulate. They are adjustable, and they are washable. The material is pretty thick, but it is breathable. The Singer’s Mask really does make singing a little more doable.”

Broadway Relief Project is a coalition of designers who usually make costumes for Broadway musicals. When the pandemic hit, the team was enlisted to help create over 2 million medical gowns for New York City’s public hospitals. In addition, the organization designed and continues to manufacture The Singer’s Mask which has now been used by over 100,000 singers worldwide, including several Sweet Adelines. It was one of the first masks specially designed for singers.

Betty and Kerri point out that there are now other masks similar in design to The Singer’s Mask, and there are even people making similar ones at home. They recommend doing research to find the one that is best for you, but they like supporting Broadway Relief Project because of the organization’s support for the arts.

GETTING USED TO THE NEW

While singing in masks takes getting used to, Betty and Kerri say it is worth it to be able to hear live barbershop chords again.

“Of course, it’s not the same as singing live, close to each other, no masks,” said Kerri. “But if this is what we have to do to be able to get closer to the normal barbershop that we’re used to, wearing a mask is what we do. Barbershop is a live sport, and wearing a mask gets us a little closer to the live experience.”

That’s not to say that the virtual rehearsals aren’t working.

“The Zoom is a lifesaver, but we found out that the chorus members became dependent on the recordings we use to rehearse, but now that we’ve sung together a few times, that’s gotten better,” says Betty. “We learned a brand new ballad AFTER we were locked down, and it sounds so good! It’s hard to believe we were never in the same room learning that together.”


Just as singers have to adjust to masks, so do directors.

“They don’t see my mouth, and it’s actually helping me because I can’t just show them the shape of my mouth or make the sounds I usually do when I’m directing,” says Betty. “When I’m directing now, I have to describe what I mean rather than show it. I’ll probably end up a better director because of this.”

Betty and Kerri agree that priorities have to change when rehearsals involve the required distancing and masks, but that has been a reminder of one of the big reasons we sing barbershop.

“Under normal circumstances, we would be talking about unifying a vowel sound or something like that,” says Kerri.

“Honestly right now, singing together and using your ears to do your best listening is the biggest thing we concentrate on: singing together, singing in tempo, singing with energy...not worrying as much about if the vowels are matching or if it’s forward or back. We are concentrating on singing unified, singing expressively, using our ears to work with the sound. Right now, it’s not as much about coming together and being absolutely perfect because we’re going to contest next week. It’s more about the togetherness and the relationship that we have and the relationship that singing makes.”

Masks are part of what make that togetherness possible for some Sweet Adelines, and masks designed for singing make it a little easier. For now, they are one option that many singers are considering as we move closer to the day we can all sing together again. 

FOUR TIPS FOR SINGING IN MASKS

1. Find the right mask. If you can afford a mask designed especially for singers, Betty and Kerri say it is a worthwhile investment. Otherwise, they suggest that you try several types of masks and brackets until you find the mask or mask/bracket combination that works for you.

2. Practice with the mask. If you are not used to wearing a mask for longer than a few minutes, acclimate to it by wearing it for increasing amounts of time. Also, practice singing in it so you have an idea of how it feels. Betty suggests wearing it to sing during Zoom rehearsals to get used to singing in it.

3. Hydrate. Don’t wait until rehearsal to drink water! It’s especially important to hydrate throughout the day of a masked rehearsal because you won’t be able to take drinks of water while wearing a mask, nor will you be allowed to pull down the mask to drink. Singing in a mask makes your mouth drier than usual, so Betty and Kerri recommend hydrating more than usual.

4. Breathe through your nose. “If you can do more nose breathing than mouth breathing, you will dry out less,” advises Kerri. “I argued with my voice teacher for years about that, but she was right...You really can take in as much air through your nose as you can through your mouth. You just have to get your body accustomed to it.”

DRAWN TOGETHER BY *The Voice Of Harmony*



1 Song
4 Parts
155 Sweet Adelines
Lots of Love!



In a time when Sweet Adelines had to be apart, we were drawn together by *The Voice Of Harmony*.

In 2019, SA re-instated the legendary Renee Craig's *The Voice Of Harmony* as an official organization song, revised by Master Arranger Joey Minshall. When pandemic restrictions kept most members from singing together, 155 Sweet Adelines from every region (including satellite region, Chapter-At-Large, and Member-At-Large!) answered the call to be part of *The Voice Of Harmony* Virtual Chorus.


The talented Jen Cooke, Master Director of Scenic City Chorus, helped make the virtual chorus performance happen. In addition to creating learning tracks for each voice part, she created a how-to video for members new to virtual performance and handled the video editing and production. She does this kind of work for many groups, and you can find more information about collaborating with her at www.virtualmusicnow.com.

Jen said working with *The Voice Of Harmony* Virtual Chorus was a special experience.

"For this project, the vocal performances were especially strong, which made it a pleasure to put together," she says. "When I listened to the finished product, I may or may not have teared up a bit."

Being a Sweet Adeline herself, Jen said the virtual chorus brought happy memories.

"While I was editing the video portion, I kept seeing familiar faces and remembering where and when I had first met that person," she says. "It was uplifting and emotional at the same time, and I loved feeling that connection."

To feel the connection for yourself, for the first or fiftieth time, watch *The Voice Of Harmony* Virtual Chorus performance at www.sweetadelines.com/education/the-voice-of-harmony-chorus. 

SINGING OUTDOORS



Whether it's a harvest festival, spring fete, summer celebration or winter carnival, opportunities to sing outdoors are a favorite for Sweet Adelines.

But singing outdoors can be a challenge. Venues are filled with distractions. Your audience may be seated on a rolling lawn of sound-absorbing grass or surrounding you in a concrete stadium bowl. Perhaps you're a strolling quartet of buskers, or an ensemble using the ocean as a backdrop as you perform on the boardwalk. Whatever the atmosphere, the keys, say the experts, are preparation, flexibility, and a sense of humor.

"If it isn't fun, if anyone is too serious about the performance, you can get yourself in trouble," says three-time quartet champion Kim Vaughn. "I think the most fun [performances] are ones where the little kids want to be a part of it, and I think you just allow them. Let them get up there. Have fun."

**THE EASIEST WAY TO HAVE FUN?
BE READY FOR ANYTHING.**

The first thing singers notice outside is the sound — or rather, the lack of it. With little help from the comfort of ceilings and walls indoors, sound outdoors goes up and out and...away. It may

feel like you're singing alone.

Kim warns that singers will have a hard time hearing each other and may be tempted to oversing to compensate.

"It's always best, in any environment, to sing your best voice at all times," cautions Kim. "You can't control the environment, and oversinging will not help."

For every member who tries to “save the ensemble,” there may be others who are intimidated by their surroundings and hardly make any sound at all.

“This is where we need our singers to be leaders, not leaners. We have to know that we can depend on everyone in the chorus to do exactly what they do in rehearsal,” Kim says. “We have to trust that everyone will do what they’re supposed to do, that we are trained to sing our best voice, [and] we will sing the song the best way we can, no matter the circumstances.”

To combat that sensation of singing by yourself, Kim recommends finding something solid for a backdrop. A wall, a structure, even a stand of trees will help focus the sound.

"The sound is going to dissipate immediately," she says. "It's just going to go everywhere all at once. If we can put ourselves with something solid behind us, even fabric, it's better than nothing at all."

If the mic won't present her ensemble at its best, Kim sometimes will reserve it for emcee work alone.

The number of mics may dictate standing position; for example, with four mics Kim might have the ensemble stand in sections. With three, she might place section leaders around them and cup groups of singers around each mic. She also suggests placing a quartet in front, between the chorus and a single mic, to get more sound.

KEEP THE PERFORMANCE UPBEAT AND MOVING.

"I would lean toward uptunes and midtempo songs," Kim says. "If you're going to do a ballad, [sing] a folk song or patriotic song, something very familiar to your audience, or a traditional song that everyone in your country knows. Then, people might just sing along with you. There is absolutely no reason not to do a singalong, as a matter of fact, it's a good idea."

And as for weather, well, Kim likes that narrow band of nice and nicer. "Weather extremes are really not very good for singers outside, and I would avoid them," she says.

Hydration, always essential for singers, becomes vital in hot and cold air alike, as both will dry voices out quickly.

ALWAYS, MAINTAIN YOUR SENSE OF FUN.

A balmy summer evening under the lights might draw clouds of insects. A slight delay for pounding rain on the roof might give audience and performers alike a laugh. When your fans trudge through snow to see your show, by all means thank them and sing something tropical to warm them up.

"[Outdoor performances] aren't my favorite because of all the variables, but they often are the most fun because you can't take it all so seriously and crowds are more apt to respond," says Harmony On The Sound Chorus Master Director Karen Sweeters. "[One time,] we were singing in an outdoor pavilion. It was a great place, and we had a wonderful audience. We were on stage and could see this big storm coming in. The singing got faster...and faster...it was pretty hilarious."

Kim echoes Karen's levity.

"Don't take it too seriously, except for the singing. Sing well."

In these days of ubiquitous cell phone cameras, remember anyone could be recording and you never know when something will go viral.

"Maintain your sense of humor. Roll with it," says Kim. "I happen to believe that the best membership drive in the world is singing out and singing well, often. People are walking by and they want to be a part of it. Sing out. Sing well." 🎵

Maggie Ryan sings bass with Greater Harrisburg Chorus (#19). She is a long-time contributor to The Pitch Pipe and served on the Editorial Review Board for 13 years.

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TO GET THE FEEL OF SINGING OUTDOORS AT A REHEARSAL:

"Get as far away from each other as you can in rehearsal, gradually. Stand in your normal position and then take a step away, and then do it again, and again until you have taken as much room as possible so that everyone still sings the same way. If it's possible, go outside, [or] into a bigger lobby, a bigger space and take up all the space." — Kim Vaughn

11

COVID AND OUTDOOR SINGING:

First and foremost, follow your national and local guidelines.

Harmony On The Sound Chorus [#1] held six parking lot rehearsals with director Karen Sweeters often leading from the flat bed of a truck. "We've had about six, and we are checking the weather for some nice winter days to see if we can sneak one or two in," she says. "Honestly, our singing outside fed the soul more than the ears! It was great to hear voices, to see each other, to direct and be directed — to see how well we knew (or didn't know) our newest songs. I had about 20 singers at each event. [We saw] many of the same singers, and yet we had people who dropped in, so we did have a variety. The core group of 12 was very dedicated. We also streamed on Facebook to our members who didn't feel comfortable singing with us (so they) could live through us and sing along." — Karen Sweeters





SECURING OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE SINGERS

Diane (Dysert) and Mark Becken's gift to Sweet Adelines International

Diane (Dysert) Becken has experienced a lot of Sweet Adelines life in her singing career. Currently a Member-At-Large, she has sung with nine different Sweet Adelines choruses and a few quartets around the United States. Now, she and her husband, Mark, have included Sweet Adelines International in their estate planning in order to ensure that other singers can discover the many opportunities and deep friendships that kept her singing for many years.

Diane has always been a musician. In school, she was a self-professed “band geek” and sang in a community chorus with her mother while growing up in Indianapolis, Indiana (USA). In 1985, Diane had graduated from college and was dating a member of a men’s barbershop chorus. The local Sweet Adelines chorus met on the same night as his rehearsal, so she decided to give it a try.

“The first night I went, I was hooked!” she says. “The relationship with the guy didn’t last, but my relationship with barbershop has! I was voice-placed as a baritone, but the sound was too new to me and I had trouble holding my part, so I sang lead for the first year. After that, I’ve mostly been a baritone but have done some chorus and quartet stints as a tenor as well. My personality is a quartet lead, but I don’t have the pipes for it!”

Diane says one of the things she loves most about Sweet Adelines is how singers are able to “learn, grow, and play upon their strengths, whether musical or administrative.” She has served on management teams and in other administrative roles, given personal vocal instruction (PVIs), and even helped design a costume, but she says the visual aspect of performing is her passion.

“I absolutely love developing and coaching choreography, performing on front rows, helping others perfect their presentation, and being a part of the final product that pulls in an audience emotionally!” she says. “It’s this ability to find and build upon what is especially meaningful to an individual member that makes this organization particularly special to me.”

Through her barbershop community, Diane met her non-singing husband, Mark. She said the friendships and connections of Sweet Adelines made a big difference in her life.

“Since I moved around so much for my career, SA was invaluable to me for creating instant connections to a new area,” she says. “I always knew that I would have a community who shared a common interest, would welcome me as a part of the SA family, and would help me get settled in my new area.”

Diane and Mark, who she says has been “hugely supportive” of her Sweet Adelines career, said the process of donating to SA was easy.

“It’s surprisingly easy to do,” said Diane. “You definitely don’t have to have a big estate to consider a gift like this, and it was important to us to leave our estate to organizations that have special meaning for us. Just make your wishes known. Ours are listed in our will, and the staff at SA have been given instructions about the area of the organization that we’d most like to support.”

As a nonprofit organization, Sweet Adelines International relies on a variety of revenue streams, including philanthropic donations, to maintain the programs, events, and services it provides to members. In the U.S., where Sweet Adelines was founded and is still headquartered, “nonprofit” is a designation given to several types of organizations that serve the public and are therefore exempt from paying taxes. All revenue is used to maintain the work of the organization. To find out more about donating to Sweet Adelines International, contact Director of Philanthropy Susan Smith at philanthropy@sweetadelines.com or visit www.sweetadelines.com/Give.



Harmony Roundup is a place to share your adventures and achievements!

Let us know what your chorus or quartet has been doing in your community. Email your submissions and photos to communications@sweetadelines.com.

Where We Sang

Mission Valley Chorus (#12) continued their virtual Author Chats program with Elizabeth Letts (*Finding Dorothy*), Bill Zarchy, husband of Mission Valley member Susan Zarchy, (*Finding George Washington*), and Georgie Blalock (*The Other Windsor Girl: A Novel of Princess Margaret, Royal Rebel*). In March, Katy Stevens, tenor of **Twist of Fate (#14)**, portrayed Marmee in The Heritage Players (Baltimore, Maryland, USA) cast of *Little Women: The Broadway Musical* virtual performance. **Cranberry Shores Chorus (#1)** created a virtual performance that was used as part of two virtual (paid!) gigs, one for the New England Tufts Alumni Club and the other for the Alzheimer's Support Group of Cape Cod. **Farmington Valley Chorus (#1)** recorded a virtual performance that opened the annual televised Simsbury Celebrates Festival, which included other musical acts, gingerbread houses, and a firetruck parade. **Merrimack Valley Chorus (#1)** worked with a local public access television station to produce a holiday performance complete with costumes and emcees for distribution at nursing homes and other living centers. It was also televised on the public access station. **Royal River Chorus (#1)** contributed a virtual performance to the town of Yarmouth, Maine (USA) for their annual (this year, virtual) tree lighting ceremony during the holiday season. **Just 4 (Kicks) (#15)** performed as part of the virtual Friends of Music Concert, a celebration of local music and benefit for the local school music programs. **Eastside Harmony Chorus (#16)** performed as part of their town's virtual Cookies & Cocoa holiday event.

How We Sang

In December, (Pros.) **Blue Sky Harmony (#34)** won first prize in their category, "Choruses, multiple voices per part," in the Barbershoptags.com International Tags Competition. **Sounds**

of Superior Chorus (#6) was named Best Choral Group in *The Walleye Magazine's* 2020 Best of Thunder Bay issue. **Oregon Spirit Chorus (#12)** was voted the winner of the Best Live Music category in the *Salem Statesman Journal's* 2020 Best of the Mid-Valley issue. **Coastline Show Chorus (#1)** received a grant from the Champlin Foundation (a philanthropic organization in Rhode Island, USA) and were able to buy three sets of risers.

Why We Sang

In December, **The Jersey Girls (#19)** and **Jersey Sound Chorus (#19)** collected and donated sealed, non-perishable holiday treats for Operation Yellow Ribbon, which supports military members serving overseas. **Shades of Harmony Chorus (#19)** teamed up with **Voices Carry (#19)** bass Wendy Alexander's employer to collect donated toys and gifts for local children through the Toys for Tots program. In October, **Circular Keys Chorus (#34)** participated in an initiative with the organization Way Ahead to raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing. The finished product was a virtual performance of *The Secret Of Christmas* by Sammy Cahn and James VanHeusen. During the holiday season, **Heart of Maryland Chorus (#19)** joined other community organizations in donating a beautifully decorated tree to a local assisted living facility. **Harmony on the Sound Chorus (#1)** collected and donated food for two local organizations, Family & Children's Agency and The Thomas Merton Center. As part of their holiday videogram project, **One Voice Chorus (#4)** collected over \$500 USD for a local food bank, Gleaners Food Bank. **Ignite UK Chorus (#31)** walked 1,527.14 miles (2,457.694 km) in their walkathon, raising £3,283.97 (plus £681.10 Gift Aid) for Cancer Research.



Sounds of Superior Chorus (#6) collected \$1,485 USD in donations for Shelter House (a local shelter for people experiencing homelessness) along with socks, gloves, hats, scarves, jackets and food as well as \$245 USD for the Regional Food Distribution Association



Recently-retired Rhythm of the Rockies (#26) Master Director Mary Hager received The Dr. Paul Tamblyn Music Educator Scholarship from Sing Canada Harmony. It is awarded to a choral director who has made a significant impact on the development, promotion and improvement of choral directing and performance in Canada, with preference given to those involved with a cappella choral groups. Chorus member Fran Thorson made a surprise (distanced) visit to present Mary with the award. In addition to the national recognition that comes with the award, Mary received a \$1,000 (CAN) prize, which she donated back to Sing Canada Harmony. Mary said, "Teaching and learning have been lifelong passions for me but I credit Sweet Adelines International and, in particular, **Rhythm of the Rockies**, for giving me the opportunity to teach and lead and the support to continue learning and growing. It was their desire to keep getting better that kept me on my toes and always looking for new tools to help us reach that next level."



Harbor City Music Company Chorus (HCMC) wrote in the **Region #19** newsletter, *Barbershop Beat*, "Harbor City was home for the holidays, but Flat Michael has been busy traveling around helping HCMC members with a bunch of tough and also fun activities. He went to NYC, shoveled snow, trained dogs, baked, sewed, made and drank coffee, and ended the year at a rip-roaring New Year's Eve party. He's our kind of a guy." "Flat Michael" was a cardboard cut-out of a photo of HCMC Master 700 Director Michael Gellert, which was sent through the mail to different Sweet Adelines. More photos of his adventures can be found on HCMC social media channels.



Jessie Leov (ZEAL, Christchurch City Chorus #35) was selected as the 2020 SOUNZ Community Commission | Te Tono Mahinga ā-Hapori a SOUNZ winner. Jessie is creating a work which will be accessible to, and can be performed by, the majority of women's community choirs in New Zealand. The project includes collaboration with **Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus (#35)**.

In a press release from the program, Jessie says, "I'm very grateful to have been selected for the SOUNZ Community Commission this year. I'm looking forward to collaborating with the Nelson Bays Harmony Chorus to compose a piece for a cappella SSAA choir. This vibrant women's chorus sings a range of different styles of vocal music, has singers of all backgrounds and skill levels, and is open to being explorative both creatively and musically. I'm excited to work with the chorus throughout the creative process to create a new choral work that really resonates with this group."

The SOUNZ Community Commission | Te Tono Mahinga ā-Hapori a SOUNZ brings together New Zealand professional composers and community groups to create and perform a new work. It was established in 1999 and has resulted in works for diverse groups such as a community group for young people with learning disabilities, community choirs, experimental sound artists, youth orchestras, and children's theatre.

Keep the Faith!

*A message of hope from
Master Director
of A Cappella West Chorus*



I'm the director of A Cappella West, an 80+ voiced chorus based in Perth, Western Australia. My chorus is in the enviable position of having come through lockdown and out the other side. We have no community cases of COVID and are now rehearsing face to face (with extra distancing and hygiene measures, without risers) and performing to 60% capacity audiences inside, unrestricted outside.

This is what we learned in the process.

What We Did in Isolation

Like many of you, our chorus met over Zoom to replace our regular weekly rehearsal. We did virtual projects that enabled us to "hear" ourselves sing together. Since it was impossible to work on ensemble skills, we focused on individual skills that would benefit the chorus in the long term. We also reassured our members that it's ok to accept that things are different and that our capacity to engage may not be the same. Whatever each member could give was enough.

Recognize the Good Stuff

Towards the end of lockdown, we brainstormed what we loved and didn't love about Zoom rehearsals. The things we didn't like

were the same across the different breakout groups, but the list of positives was longer and more varied. Here are some of the good things that came out of those breakouts:

- Time saved on travel
- Get to wear PJs
- Can eat and drink and sit when we want
- Can see faces more than when we are on the risers
- Easier to learn at our own pace — less pressure to get things right instantly
- Liked seeing the technical stuff on screen and having rehearsals as videos
- Can practice the techniques we don't always have enough time for in a live rehearsal

*Isolation forces us to develop our
independent singing abilities.
How is this impacting you?
Now and in the future?*



Singing by yourself stinks, but it is worthwhile.

This was a resounding theme from the chorus. Members weren't used to listening to themselves sing alone, but isolation is a situation where you hear yourself and only yourself week after week! There are no other voices to support you, so you must rely only on your own voice. The initial cringe factor fades until you are able to be objective and constructive with your listening. Believe me — you are improving! Another worthwhile aspect is that singers can't "follow" or lean on others, so we learned the music more thoroughly and were more independent singers. This is also true if you are putting choreography into your songs — you have to know your stuff!

With no performances, we finally had the time to do all those vocal exercises we'd been given by our voice teachers! Why not write up a personal six-week plan and tick off the boxes each time you do your homework? If six weeks is too much, try starting with two.

Acknowledge the Bad Stuff

There are negatives, but Zoom is 100% (or infinitely!) better than nothing at all. Members missed the social camaraderie and the support of other voices. We missed the energy of the group.

With family members in the house, singing at home sometimes doesn't give the opportunity to sing out, so members indicated they were not singing "fully" as much. However, this may also prevent oversinging, improve phonation techniques, and encourage more in-pitch singing.

Good Things Will Come

What happened at our first face-to-face rehearsal? We were socially distanced at about two yards/meters between singers in each direction, and it felt weird to not hug when we were so happy to see each other. Personal space will have changed for you after all this! We sang our "new" songs (that we had learned during isolation) cold. Lo and behold, there were no "train wrecks" and we finished in key! This was the first time we had ever sung these songs together, but since we had only been singing with the in-key learning tracks, we had thoroughly internalized the 'doh' and the tick track tempo. The physical spacing does feel strange — you can hear yourself a lot more than when we are closer on the risers, which is actually better for free sound. Despite our doubts, our singers had learned the music much more thoroughly than they realized. In fact, those songs are now our best repertoire songs, and I'm trying to work out how to ensure this learning process continues without Zoom!



To My Fellow Directors

I suspect many of you felt as I did during those first six weeks online: way out of your comfort zone and stressed out about keeping your people together, being “enough” when you couldn’t even hear them! And very alone. With time, we learned how to feel the pace of the rehearsal again, how to accept the help of our teams in a new way, started to think about how to give new direction, and a sense of purpose while singing in isolation. We have more tools now. Necessity is the mother of invention! And most importantly, chorus culture is our most valuable asset and the measure of our success in the absence of contest. We’ve heard it before, but now is the time to focus on it. The survival of your chorus depends on it. Yes, we joined to sing together, and we will again, if we can only bind ourselves together with unified purpose and compassion.

When you can sing together once more it will be joyful and strange. There will be skill loss, but also skill gain. Remember that the trauma is still there, and the grief for the loss of time, members, lives, will take even more time to process. Be gentle in your recovery. Although ACW did not endure lockdown for that long, we had our own grief, having lost our beloved co-director and founder, Lindsey Dyer, in October 2019 to breast cancer. Still grieving, COVID hit and distracted us with different fears and trauma, but when we emerged from isolation that grief was still there. I can only imagine what you have endured in COVID. Don’t expect that weight to evaporate immediately; that’s not natural. Just remember that it takes time to heal, especially when the injury has gone on for so long. Acknowledge that, in yourself and with your members, and you will be able to move forward again. Compassion is key — for you and your chorus family.

Our Discoveries

1. Trust that you ARE learning and developing skills. Focus on that.
2. Challenge yourself to get off paper in a certain length of time.
3. Learning to sing with the ease of speaking is more valuable in the long term than “Blastissimo!”

Looking on the Bright Side

Think how easy it will be to sing when buoyed by a sea of voices! How joyful! Think of how much more attuned your ears will be to those beautiful harmonies after much time spent singing against a learning track or against ‘doh’.

Embrace your voice. Reassure yourself that YES, your voice is enough. You are a singer, and your voice is valued in your chorus. As is your spirit. As you would for a friend, look for your successes and celebrate them! Experiment with your sound. Form an e-quartet or simply swap recordings with a friend so you can “duet” at home. There are so many ways to grow your musicianship. And share your successes with your chorus!

Ensemble skills will come back quickly when you return. For now, take comfort in knowing you are becoming that independent singer your director has been looking for. 🌸

Joanne Oosterhoff serves on the Region #34 Regional Faculty and is a member of the International Director Certification Program Review Committee. She sang tenor with Region #34 Champion Quartets Hi-Jinx and Enchant and is Master Director of A Cappella West Chorus.

THE BEST RETENTION STRATEGY... THE ENTIRE JOURNEY!

Membership retention is the process of holding people together through meaningful connection. Retaining members is not just a one-time activity. It has to be kept in mind throughout the entire member life cycle. We build relationships from day one. The very best strategy for retention is the entire journey of each member.

In the past year, we have searched, we have created, we have stretched and we have served to the best of our ability. Many things will change in our world after the pandemic is over, yet our extended efforts will continue. We have proven that we are holding people together through MEANINGFUL CONNECTION. Our leaders need to be proud and know that we are grateful for all of their efforts.

As we continue our retention journey, let's be sure to always listen to our members' suggestions and give them good resources. Consider gathering feedback on the following questions:

- **What are three things we should continue doing?**
- **What are some things we should discontinue doing?**
- **Why do you stay?**
- **Would you recommend this chorus/organization to a friend?**

These are not new discussion questions, but they are important ones to revisit often. Collecting information from new and current members will ensure that you are on the right track. As leaders, we must continually listen and adjust our chorus cultures to reflect the needs and the desires of our members. THE RETENTION JOURNEY IS ONGOING.

We know the most powerful reasons people join us are the educational and social aspects of our organization. The sense of connection in this incredibly wired but humanly disconnected world is so needed. Our members want a sense of shared purpose. Let's keep encouraging a thriving, connected family of like-minded individuals. Let's engage yet not bombard. Let's make sure that members stay motivated and see results. Let's remind them of the wonderful benefits of our organization. Let's figure out what our members are doing right. Let's recognize achievements and reward long-time members. Let's stay true to the promise we made when they walked in the door that first time! Each and every valued member of our choruses has a responsibility in the retention effort. WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER!!

Molly Huffman is a member of Capital City Chorus and (Chartered) One Voice Chorus (both #4) and serves on the Membership Retention Committee.

Retention Tools That Work!

1. Survey Says...Collect and utilize feedback from your members.

Conduct a survey with existing members to find out what they value and what ideas they have, and implement those ideas and activities.

2. Be flexible.

Sometimes life gets in the way and members may need to take a break from your chorus; try to be flexible and welcome them back when they're ready.

3. What do we offer?

Sometimes members forget all the resources and value that you provide. Make a list of all you offer, and find ways to highlight those things to your members.

4. Variety is the spice of life!

Mix up your rehearsals and give your singers something new to look forward to each week. Be it silly themes or interesting breakout rooms, mix things up.

5. Balance.

Some members prefer education; others favor socialization. You offer both! Get a good balance of fun and education to cater to both preferences.

6. Memories.

Remind your members of the fun times you have as a chorus.

7. Check in.

Your singers join you for a few hours a week and have a lot more going on than you're aware. Reach out and see how they're doing during the time they aren't ringing a chord.

8. Community, community, community.

Your chorus is a team. Work together and remind each other that you're stronger together than apart.

9. Recognition.

We all want recognition! Each chorus member brings something wholly unique to the chorus; recognize and celebrate that.

Looking for Your Other Half: Finding the PERFECT Director!



Advice for choruses in search of a director

A great director is someone who makes you feel like you are moving forward. Maybe you had that, but they retired. Maybe you are a new chorus looking for a leader. There are many reasons a chorus finds itself in search of a director. Here are a few questions to ask yourself as you prepare to find your new director.

Start here: Who are we?

Embarking on a director search is a good time to refresh the chorus culture and anchor your chorus core values and vision. Reconnect with your passion for what we do without limitations! What are the true goals of the chorus, and what are the members willing to do to reach these goals? What are your values and how do they contribute to the decision-making and operation of the chorus? Be honest and realistic in this analysis. There are different and varied goals for all choruses. However, the goals set will definitely shape the music program a director and music team would develop. Any music program should present some challenges to the abilities of the singers and provide ways in which the chorus members can grow as singers and performers.

Core Values, Vision, and Mission Statement should reflect the entire chorus, especially without a director, so you can attract your best match. Culture should be by design.

We should always “look at ourselves” as directors, whenever the chorus isn’t giving what we think we are asking for. Chorus members should do the same thing.

For more on chorus identity and culture, see the following articles from *The Pitch Pipe*:

“Aligning Your Chorus Identity” (January 2020, p. 46)

“Identifying Chorus Culture” (July 2020, p. 26)

“Sweet Adelines Chorus Identity” (October 2020, p. 31)

To find archived issues of *The Pitch Pipe*, visit www.sweetadelines.com/pitchpipemagazine.

What can the director expect from the chorus?

You have much to offer! What is in place to support a director in administering a music program? Consider the following questions:

Do you have a functional music team? Is there a music team member who is responsible for each element of the music program so that nothing falls through the cracks? Do the members work well together? Do they meet regularly, not just to plan events, but to monitor the development of the music program?

Are assistant directors in place? Identify people to develop as assistant directors. Having good assistant directors allows greater flexibility in accepting performance opportunities. The key for the development of assistant directors is to give them training opportunities, time in front of the chorus, and consistent feedback so they can refine their skills.

Are effective section leaders in place? Identify people to develop as section leaders. Section leaders can be the “extended eyes and ears” of the director. Their roles can encompass many tasks and are essential to the education of the members, as well as provide needed support to the director.

Is the administrative team (Management Team / Board of Directors) in complete support of the music program? Ensure that the administrative team is aligned with the musical team before bringing in candidates to interview for the directing position. This collaboration is essential for maintaining harmony and unity within the chorus.

Is there an active membership team? The membership and director’s teams must work together. The membership team brings new members in — the directing team keeps them by providing a fine music program.

What kind of financial support can we offer a director?

How much is the chorus willing and able to pay a director? The chorus might think that people should be willing to direct without any fee. After all, it is just a hobby. However, being a good director requires a lot of time outside the chorus rehearsal, planning an appropriate program that advances the chorus toward its stated goals, preparing to teach new music, polishing songs so they are entertaining to the audience and interesting to the singers, developing assistant directors, preparing for contests, and myriad other things. The director deserves some consideration and compensation for this investment of time on the chorus' behalf. Here are some financial factors to consider when searching for a new director:

- **Dues** Will the chorus pay the International, Regional, and Chapter dues of the director?
- **Costumes** Will the chorus provide the costumes for the director?
- **Contest expenses** To what extent will the chorus pay expenses for the director when attending contests?
- **Education expenses** To what extent will the chorus provide funds for the director to attend classes and other educational events, such as International Education Symposiums, regional functions, and educational workshops?

What can the chorus expect from the director?

The previous material has been aimed at what the director might expect from the chorus, but what should the chorus be able to expect from a director? Here are a few things the chorus can and should expect from a director:

Thorough preparation, both short term and long term. The director must be prepared for each chorus rehearsal. The director (along with the music team) should also have a vision for the development of the chorus members as well as their development as performers.

Working closely with music leadership team. The chorus can expect the director to work together with the music team to select music that will allow the chorus to represent both Sweet Adelines and the chorus well when performing. The music selected should fill the requirements of an entertaining performance package for the audience as well as the singer.

A plan for musical growth for the chapter and its individual members. The director and the music team should analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the chapter and develop an education program which address the weaknesses and enhances the strengths.

Opportunities to enjoy music and your hobby. You want to sing a variety of music. Chorus members like to leave each chorus rehearsal with the feeling that they have enjoyed themselves and that something was accomplished.

Work closely with the administrative team. The director and the administrative team must work together to make sure all goals are continually aligned.

Musical knowledge and instincts. The chorus can expect that the new director has good skills in this area and will want to learn all they can to be the best director they can be.

Leadership and people skills. While the director must have confidence in her/his own abilities, they should be willing to accept input from the music team and others. The director needs to be approachable and willing to take direction from others when appropriate.

Motivational skills. The chorus can expect the director to enable and support an environment where singers are motivated to achieve their best.

Willingness to continue to learn. The chorus can expect the director to be interested in further developing their skills. They should want to attend training classes and seminars that will increase their knowledge in every aspect.

Teaching/communication skills. The most successful directors are good teachers and communicators. They also utilize others on their team to assist with teaching and leadership development and serve as communication role models.

The Search

Identifying the characteristics and components of who the chorus is and what it has to offer a director will help determine the best match with a potential director. Now, where will you look, and how will you make the initial approach?

Look within the chapter and the community. Existing hand and arm waving skills, while desirable, are not as essential as some of the other skills identified earlier. A potential director can develop their directing skills by utilizing training opportunities. Consider the following possible sources while searching for your future director:

- A person within the chorus who has the qualities identified in the previous section.
- Past directors or assistant directors. Some directors and assistant directors leave the hobby for lots of good reasons, such as job-related challenges or family responsibilities. There might be someone who is now ready to return to the hobby.
- Section leaders who might be ready to advance to directing.
- Assistant, Associate or Certified Directors in neighboring choruses.
- Non-Sweet Adeline barbershop choruses in the area.
- College vocal music departments may introduce you to instructors who may be a good match; however, you should also consider the possibility of a graduate student or even an upper-class voice major.

Continues next page...

- Vocal music teachers at schools. They may have the ability to learn about and adapt to the barbershop style. Additionally, teachers are accustomed to continually furthering their education and enhancing their skills.
- Teachers of instrumental music may have had some training in vocal music and can be professional musicians as well. If there is any interest generated, there would need to be exposure to the rubato-style directing used in barbershop. However, these skills can be learned if the desire is there and it is a good match for the chorus.
- Church choir and community chorus directors can be fine musicians and experienced directors, and they are used to working with adult professional singers.
- Your Regional Management Team may have ideas for potential candidates within the region. Contact your Education or Director Coordinator to brainstorm possibilities.

Initial contact with prospective directors

It is essential that you determine the right approach for the initial meeting for any and all potential candidates. If the candidate is already a Sweet Adeline or is very involved in the barbershop community, background information may not be all that important. For candidates new to barbershop, it will be important

to provide context and introductory information in order to make the best impression.

There are many different approaches to take for initial contact. You will likely want to conduct an interview to establish whether there is a match of interests and expectations. You may want to ask a short-list of candidates to plan and run a chorus rehearsal so members have an opportunity to be part of the selection process. You may want to ask others for help in evaluating potential directors for the chorus. As the discussion proceeds, you will engage more deeply in a conversation about what the position entails and your mutual expectations. Even if you don't find a fit, you may well come out of the experience with some new leads.

Summary

In conclusion, the steps to follow when searching for a new director are varied and many. With an open mind, and talented and creative people in the search process, this can be a journey filled with information-gathering, fact-finding and win-win solutions, along with FUN for all. Good luck! 🍀

Harriette Walters is Master Director 700 of Greater Nassau Chorus (#15) and a member of Sweet Adelines International Faculty.

Additional information on searching for a director can be found in the first section of the Sweet Adelines Chapter Guide. "Chapter Guidelines for Conducting a Music Director Search" from LiveWire Online Newsletter (April 10, 2017) was also used as a resource for this article.

Yikes! No Chorus Director!

An event most likely to cause wringing of hands and fretful thinking is the loss of your chorus director. What will you do while you're waiting to find a new director? Put those hands and thoughts to work! Here are a few tips for choruses who find themselves between directors:

- Put together a schedule of what will take place at each rehearsal for the next few weeks. Renew the schedule as needed.
- Use in-chorus musical leadership to run rehearsals, but schedule guest directors. These guest directors are not necessarily candidates for the musical leadership of your chorus. If possible, have the guest director teach a new song.
- Use this time for planning together, addressing issues, and brainstorming new ideas, not only for the musical direction of the chorus, but also for other activities that would encourage excitement.
- Beware of the temptation to sell, rather than buy. By all means, "promote" your chorus to potential candidates, but keep in mind the qualities your chorus needs in a chorus director.
- Implement a membership campaign. What? Without a director? Yes! New singers will have a chance to be in on the "ground floor." And visitors, even if they're not interested in joining, may provide valuable leads to your next director.
- Members, guests, candidates: all should come away glad they attended your rehearsals.

Need help finding a new director?
Email member@sweetadelines.com.

Julie Kendrick is Past Sweet Adelines International President and a member of Melodeers Chorus (#3).



WHAT WE NEED TO GO FORWARD

*Why Chris Temperante donates to
Sweet Adelines International*

Chris Temperante was surprised *The Pitch Pipe* would want to write her profile.

“I don’t think this is a very large amount of money to be giving,” she said of her donation to Sweet Adelines International. “Like a lot of people, I imagine that donors must always be giving a huge amount, hundreds of thousands of dollars.”

Like most Sweet Adelines, Chris gives what she can, whether that’s money, her bass voice, or her leadership as head of the City of Lakes Chorus (#6) Music Team. For Chris, giving back to the organization that has brought her such creative fulfillment is important. Chris grew up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania (USA), the daughter of a dedicated Sweet Adeline.

“Friday night was Sweet Adeline night, and my dad made hamburgers,” she says. “I always remember that.”

She also remembers singing with her mother.

“My earliest memories are of singing with her,” she recalls. “She would be learning her part out of the folios they had back then, and I’d be singing lead. So I really have a warm spot for Sweet Adelines.”

Tragically, her mother died when Chris was only 16 years old. Her memories led her to join her own Sweet Adelines chorus in Minnesota (USA) when she finished college, but she left after a year to complete her master’s degree and raise a family. Several years later, she found herself able to once again become a Sweet Adeline. She sang with Vallee de Croix Chorus (#6) for several years until she moved to City of Lakes Chorus (#6), her home now for over ten years. Chris said she was astonished at the change in Sweet Adelines when she returned.

“In my mother’s day, it was straw hats, navy blue skirts and blazers,” she said. “At my first international convention in San Antonio, I was in a chorus with 4-Star Collection, who later

became International champions in 1997. Ambiance was singing, and it was just incredible.”

It’s gotten even more incredible, Chris says, and she wants to be part of the bright future she sees for Sweet Adelines.

“I’ve always thought it’s more about where we’re going than where we’ve been, and choruses like [2020 International Champion] Rönninge Show Chorus are taking us in a great direction. When you see Rönninge, you know what the future is,” she says. “They’re singing out of their own joy, out of who they are, and I think we are all striving to be more of who we are.”

Chris cherishes the artistic freedom, opportunities to learn, and especially, the singing and competing. She understands that all require leadership and, yes, resources.

“I’m just so impressed with the way the organization has gone in the last few years,” says Chris. “I want things done well, and I just want to see it all continue. There are a whole ton of things that need to be done, and I’m not the person who knows what those things are, so I give to the general fund so the people who do know have what they need to go forward.”

Her Sweet Adeline mother would be proud. 🎵

*To find out more about donating to
Sweet Adelines International, contact
Director of Philanthropy Susan Smith at
philanthropy@sweetadelines.com or visit
www.sweetadelines.com/Give.*



GOING THE DISTANCE

Tips for long distance quartets

Most quartets choose their members at least partly based on geography. It's much simpler to meet for rehearsal if you're all within an easy drive of one another. My quartet, 2018 International Champion Quartet, Lustre, is fortunate that, for almost all of our 15-year history, we haven't lived more than an hour apart. Then the pandemic hit, and suddenly all quartets were effectively "long-distance" quartets, whether you actually live near each other or not.

Quartets have been through this before, though. Some quartets form with members in different cities or different states. 2003 International Champion Quartet, Swinglish Mix didn't start out on opposite sides of the Atlantic Ocean, but "life" intervened! The quartet includes members from both Sweden and the United States. They planned their rehearsals by email and met up for shows. Describing the experience, they said, "Each of us came to those weekends having done her homework, so each rehearsal was a productive stride forward. We saw each moment to be together as a gift and soaked it all in."

Swinglish Mix stayed together — and thrived — during their challenging times, and you can too. Here are some tips to keep your quartet going strong until we're able to gather safely again.

It's one thing to say, "We should get together somehow!" and another thing to make it happen. It is possible, even these days, for you to actually see your quartet members. It just takes a little effort, a little flexibility, and a little creativity.

Get technical. There's no way around it: A quartet meetup these days is probably going to require some sort of technology. Grab your smartphone, or your computer and webcam, and

choose your favorite video-calling platform. Zoom, Google Duo, FaceTime, Facebook Messenger...It doesn't matter which one you choose, as long as everybody in the quartet can use it.

Get really technical. If you want to actually sing together — live, in real time — that will take some more investment. Programs like Jamulus, JamKazam, and Sonobus do work, but they benefit from good hardware (microphones, headsets, sound cards) and high-speed internet. If it's something you want to try, look for forums and groups online to help you get up and running.

Get outside. An outdoor meetup might be possible, depending on your community's restrictions and guidelines and each quartet member's comfort level. You may still have to keep your mask on and maintain social distancing, but some time on adjacent park benches can go a long way to nurturing your connection to your quartet mates.

After you've got your tech set up, what can you do with it? Nothing is as rewarding as in-person rehearsals, but there are ways to bridge the gaps.

Spend time as friends. Have you ever had a quartet rehearsal where it took you an hour to actually start singing because you were having too much fun chatting? Well, now you have an excuse to chat as long as you like! Schedule time for a hangout to check in with each other. Putting time into your quartet relationship now will help keep you in a good place for when we're able to get together again.

Learn a new song. We are all used to learning music on our own and putting it together in rehearsal. You can still do that! Get high-quality learning tracks, put on your headphones, and get singing. There are even ways to collaborate while you learn. Titanium (2020 Second Place International Quartet Medalists) wanted to expand their repertoire while separated. They explained, “Bandlab is a useful tool if you don’t have actual learning tracks or if you’re trying to develop your own interpretation of a song. It doesn’t replace rehearsal, but it was helpful for learning new music when we couldn’t be together.”

Learn a new skill. Now Or Never is a quartet of good friends from Silver Spring, Maryland (Region #19). They thought they were learning to use the A Cappella app just to make videos with each other, but it turned out to be so much more! They discovered that “although we know you are supposed to be aware of what the other parts are doing, we weren’t always diligent about it. With the app you have to know!” They also realized how valuable the visual feedback could be — there’s nothing like seeing yourself on video in real time to know how much you’re communicating visually.

Make a “virtual quartet” video. These are more accessible than you might think, especially the “music video”-style projects

that overlay images on an audio recording. Many computers come with video-creation software these days (iMovie, Windows Photos) that make it easy to choose graphics to go with an audio track. You could even use Zoom to lip sync to your track, and record that.

Make new friends. When we’re all online, someone halfway around the world can be as close to you as your next-door neighbor. Many quartets have taken this opportunity to hold virtual “meetups” with friends from all over. You could join a scheduled event, start your own, or just reach out to your Regional quartet friends for a happy hour (or coffee break, depending on the time zone!).

If all of this still seems overwhelming, remember one last thing: Be kind to yourself. None of what we’re doing right now is easy. Take breaks when you need them, and remember how much joy, fun, and music you’ve shared with your quartet. Hang in there! It will all be there on the other side! 🌟

Kate Towne is tenor of 2018 International Champion Quartet, Lustre.



The Chord Pipers are (left to right) Jean Loughridge (tenor), Cecilia (Taylor) Gove (lead), Opal Hicks (baritone), and Luise Smith (bass). Photo courtesy of Seattle Shores Chorus.

LONG DISTANCE QUARTETS FROM SA HISTORY

Sweet Adelines have a long history of long-distance quartetting, even in the days before the internet!

From the April 1956 issue of *The Pitch Pipe*

A very interesting and unique item comes from the Chord Pipers who are, apparently, performing now via conference telephone. The lead and baritone were attending a brunch around Christmas time when a guest decided to call relatives in Council Bluffs, Milwaukee and Detroit to wish them a Merry Christmas by way of a song from the Chord Pipers. So the tenor and bass were rung in on their own home phones, and the four proceeded to sing “Silent Night” beautifully. The whole operation involved six telephones and several very harried long-distance conference call operators.

From the August 1955 issue of *The Pitch Pipe*:

Here’s something different. A “mail” quartette, four females from Region No. 7 who call themselves the REGIONETTES, practice via the mail by a tape recorder. Each one tapes her part and mails it on and on. Their theme song is “Let’s Get Together Again.” Annabelle Zumwalt of Tulsa sings lead; Vi Kirchel of Springfield, Missouri is the tenor; Mae Thames of Kansas City is the bari; and Marge Nelson of Wichita is the bass.

Accolades

As of October 8, 2020 - March 5, 2021

DIRECTOR CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Approved Director

Krista Chmiel, Vermillion Valley Show, #3

Sarah Shapiro, Harborlites, #21

Advanced to Certified Director

Pamela McCombs, OC Sound, #21

Beatriz Molero, Vocal Motion, #26

Rhonda Williams, Royal River, #1

Julie Wallace, Southern Company, #9

ARRANGER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Beginner Arranger Level Achieved

Liz Hah, Wollongong Harmony, #34

IN MEMORY

— January 5, 2021 through February 17, 2021

Patti Albert, Harmony Central, #5

Beverly Turbak, Melodeers, #3

Phyllis Stunkard, Tulsa Metro Sound, #25

Jackie Icenhower, 4-States Fusion, #25

Yvette Jasper, Magic City, #26

Mary Alice Myers, Chapter-At-Large, #12

Joyce Richwood, Bay Area Showcase, #12

Tammy Skiles, Pratt, #25

Laurie Coligan, Vienna-Falls, #14

Rita Taylor, Chapter-at-Large, #26

Patricia DeVeney, Chapter-at-Large, #17

Patricia Bright, Cape Shore, #19

Karina Roe, Lace City, #31

Dee Ann Gaskins, Wichita, #25

Susan Hogue, Pacific Empire, #12

Carol Rhoads, Show Me Sound, #5

Brenda Cunningham, A Cappella Bay Show, #9

Sandy Greenlief, Grand Olympics, #13

Peggy Hart, Rhythm of the Rockies, #26

Ara Dammer, Tri City Sound, #2

Carol Schoening, 1970 Queen of Harmony, Rarities

Karyn Hucklebridge, Dunedin Harmony, #35

Lynn Weiner, Liberty Oak, #15

Jodi Stitt, Sound Cascade, #6

The Pitch Pipe needs you!

Have you had a meaningful, funny, or interesting experience during virtual rehearsal? Have you spent time reflecting on what barbershop singing or Sweet Adelines means to you? Have you received or witnessed a kindness from your Sweet Adelines family that you'd like to share?

We'd love to read it - and possibly print it in *The Pitch Pipe*!

Send your submissions to communications@sweetadelines.com with
"Attn: Stacy Pratt" in the subject line.



A few general guidelines:

- Tell a story (beginning, middle, end).
- Keep your submission between 500-700 words in length.
- Send your submission as a Word document.
- Send photos. (High resolution is great, but send what you have!)
- Include a 1-2 sentence bio telling your chorus/quartet affiliation, voice part, etc.
- All submissions are subject to editing, and not all submissions will be printed in *The Pitch Pipe*. (Some may be used for other SA media.) You will be notified about the status of your submission.

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