



International President Joan Boutilier July/August 2021 Update – This n’ That

Hi everyone,

I hope this message finds you and yours well.

There are several updates which the International Board of Directors would like to share, and some questions from you we’d like to address. Consider this a message about a little bit of “this and a little bit of that.”

I’ll begin by highlighting some of the work which you, members of Sweet Adelines, have been doing.

The Travel in Tune project continues to showcase how brilliantly creative our regions are, while giving us each a virtual journey to various parts of the world and the Sweet Adelines organization. We want you to know that these virtual tours to places of the world near and far have a couple things in common — they demonstrate how dedicated we are to education and how proud we are of our respective homes. The Travel in Tune education and regional videos are outstanding and if you haven’t already tuned in, I encourage you to do so!

During the pandemic, our chorus directors have experienced a whole new world, and they, like all their singers, have missed the usual in-person chorus rehearsals. Thanks to our volunteer led Director Resource Task Force, directors have access to a toolkit of resources for assisting in planning rehearsals and supporting and engaging you, their members, in fun virtual rehearsals. I’d like to thank the task force for their efficient work in putting together links for things like vocal and physical warmups, marketing materials from our Sweet Adelines website, and now, a very timely link to lots of resources for returning to live rehearsals. And to all the chorus directors out there, you have the Board’s gratitude and admiration for being Sweet Adelines Strong. You stepped up to keep members engaged and singing during this difficult time and it is seen and appreciated!

Made possible by our Education Direction Committee, our Arranger Certification Program is going strong and we have 95 members currently enrolled in the program. If you are interested in learning how to arrange music for barbershop, visit www.sweetadelines.com/arranger-certification-program. We also have scholarships available for this program. The applications can be found online and are due by October 15th.

The long awaited first release of the Chorus Toolkit is coming very soon and presents information and suggestions to choruses who wish to discover and explore the journey toward achieving their own Diversity, Equity, and Inclusivity goals. Work groups formed of members of Sweet Adelines will be available to support all members in understanding and applying the components of the toolkit in a ways that work best for them. Again, on behalf of the Board of Directors, thank you to the many members of our organization who spent countless hours dedicated to this important endeavor.

Also rolling out at the same time as the Chorus Toolkit is the Member Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct was requested by many of our members and choruses, and like the Chorus Toolkit, supports our Guiding Principle of creating a Culture of Belonging.

As I announced earlier this year, we now have a Director Affiliate Membership category. This membership option is available to all active directors not previously eligible for membership. It pleases me to announce that as of June 30 we have 25 Directors in this membership category.

Now, I would like to move on to a few updates on international events.

Previously, the Board of Directors had announced the cancellation of the in-person International Convention and Competition which was originally to be held in St. Louis, Missouri this October. Although we received a great deal of positive feedback about the Virtual Convention we held last October, we have made the decision to not hold a second Virtual Convention this year.

It was an extremely difficult decision but after listening to feedback from you, our members, hearing about and experiencing Zoom fatigue ourselves, and looking at how

to best use our resources to prepare for when we can all be together again, it made sense to focus our attention on making 2022 a year for all Sweet Adelines to remember.

We have a lot of exciting things planned for 2022 – regionals...oh, I can't wait to hear everyone sing together again; IES for some in person education during the day and lounging by the pool in the evening; Rising Star...the opportunity to hear some of the best young voices; Diamond Division...I am so excited about adding this event to our line-up; and last but not least, our International Convention and Competition in Phoenix, Arizona, September 2022. There is a lot going on next year and if you can't already tell, I am so excited for it!

Although we have a lot coming up in 2022, I realize that some of you are concerned in particular about our regional competitions. The main thing to know, at this point in time, is that we are doing whatever we can to plan for them to happen. It is still too far out for us to provide you with detailed plans but various groups including the Judge Specialists Committee, headquarters staff, and Regional Management Teams will be working together taking into consideration the various challenges each geographical area is facing with the pandemic. We recognize that we may not be able to have a "one size fits all" structure or experience, but are focused on offering a competition experience to each region. We are constantly monitoring COVID-19 and its variants, and are aware of international border restrictions, and travel challenges; we are preparing alternate competition methods if needed. In the meantime, please stay optimistic and get excited about 2022!

I opened up by saying that this message had a little bit of "this" and a little bit of "that." While we had hoped to have more definitive information about some things for you by now, we have some wonderful things going on and much to look forward to. The Board of Directors and I hope that this update helped inform you, remind you of how abundant and important our members' work and commitment are, and offer some inspiration for bright days ahead. It's an honor to be your president. Please stay well and Sweet Adelines Strong.