

Why Charter? Why Join?

Interesting question. Why become a Sweet Adelines' member? Why charter with Sweet Adelines? What are the benefits of membership?

One opinion expressed was that, "If a group wants to meet, eat cookies and sing a few songs, then there is little benefit to [Sweet Adelines International] membership. However, if you were to ask one of the long-time members, ladies who have 20 or 30 years invested in Sweet Adelines, it is highly probable that you will be infected with an alarming amount of enthusiasm and passion for the organization, and the benefits of joining will be obvious.

Sweet Adelines, to many of our members, is so much more than a "hobby". In fact, calling it a "hobby" is verging on insult. No, being a Sweet Adelines is much more a "lifestyle" than a hobby. It is a learning, growing, challenging, fascinating... all encompassing experience.

So... how do I put all of that down on paper? Well, it's tough.

The question is not easily answered with a stark list of facts. Obviously there is emotion involved here, as Kathy Carmody, International Board of Directors, so eloquently put it, "*Together we make musical memories and a unique worldwide circle of friends who share in the challenge and the joy.*"

Membership of Sweet Adelines International provides superb, unmatched *vocal education; affiliation* with this almost 30,000-strong international organization; the support and knowledge such an organization has to offer; *discounts* on products and music arrangements; *special music arrangements* only available to members; subscription to the *Pitch Pipe* and other publications; and the "intangibles" such as increased self-esteem, friendship and emotional support.

Let's see if we can break this down, so that the as-yet non-member might understand what they are about to benefit from joining the organization.

Education

The main purpose of Sweet Adelines International is education of members in the art of singing four-part harmony, barbershop style. If you want to *improve your singing* and *learn a cappella harmony barbershop style*, Sweet Adelines International offers *the most comprehensive* and highest quality education available anywhere in the world. You simply cannot find this quality of education anywhere else.

The International Education Symposium is the ultimate educational experience for singers. It is a fantastic, awe-inspiring annual event, to which members get reduced registration rates.

"The fulfillment of challenge and achievement in learning is basic to adult life," says Kathy Carmody, "Chartered choruses offer their members and directors the opportunity to participate in our many educational programs: faculty, judging, the director's

certification program, regional leadership, chorus management, music staffs, arranging... to name but a few. ”

Some of the subjects you can learn include:

- Singing
- Choreography
- Stage direction
- Costuming
- Stage Makeup
- Judging
- Faculty
- Director's Certification
- Leadership
- Chorus Management
- Arranging

Affiliation

Chartered choruses and members, benefit from affiliation with the prestigious international organization, Sweet Adelines International, which is the largest organization in the world preserving and educating women in Barbershop harmony. For an a cappella chorus to say they are affiliated with Sweet Adelines International means audiences know they are about to experience a *quality performance*. As Moderator for the International Faculty Coordinators and Associate Director of Vermillion Valley Show Chorus, Marge Zimmerman, states, “When you are a member of a Sweet Adelines International chorus, others know you have the benefit of that education. They have high expectations for what they know they are going to see, hear and experience. There is prestige in knowing you are a link in that impressive chain. There is pride in being able to tell others that you are a member of such a wonderful organization.”

Support

Chartering affords choruses the support of their fellow members, almost 30,000 strong; support and guidance from various leadership teams; and support and assistance from staff at international headquarters. How much more can we achieve as a team, as opposed to one group alone?

Competitions

Competitions represent exciting opportunities to travel and perform. Chartering and membership entitles *participation in competitions*, at regional and international levels. *Judges give detailed feedback* on performances, which can be used as a learning tool to improve performance of the group.

Arrangements

Members have access to an *exclusive library of outstanding, up-to-date arrangements* by internationally recognized arrangers at discounted prices. Members also have the option of contacting the arrangers directly with *specific requests on arrangements*. This resource is unique to members of Sweet Adelines International.

Discounts

Members get discounts on International Sales, International Convention registrations, musical arrangements, and the International Education Symposium.

Publications

Each member gets a subscription to the *Pitch Pipe*, and various relevant newsletters.

Not For Profit

You have the knowledge that you are ensuring the *preservation and promotion of barbershop four-part harmony*. Sweet Adelines is a non-profit organization, which supports *educational programs in schools and colleges* through their Young Women in Harmony program, and also raises funds for the Young Singers Foundation, which offers *music scholarships and grants*.

Preservation

Barbershop harmony is an *art form indigenous to the United States of America*. For the benefit of future generations, we should preserve and promote this unique musical art form before it is lost forever.

Intangibles

After all that, there are some elements of membership, which come as a result of the education and the experience. Some of these are almost intangible, such as the emotional and *personal growth*, increased self-confidence and improved interpersonal skills. "Learning all of those "extras", such as poise, composure, and esteem building..." , says Zimmerman. *Priceless!*