



Director Education Coordinators Mission Statement

We believe that happy, healthy choruses are the heart of Sweet Adelines International and that the director IS Sweet Adelines in the eyes of its members. Since director education and support is paramount to the success and future of the organization, the mission of the Director Education Coordinators is to design educational programs and strategies to develop, nurture, cultivate, recognize, and applaud excellence in directing.

June 2011

Greetings, Chorus Directors and Prospective Chapter Directors!

AVOID THE DOLDRUMS

Does your chorus suffer from the doldrums? Chorus schedules, plans, and energy cycle up and down. Some of us are feverishly preparing for the International Contest in Houston. For the rest of us, the months after competition can be a difficult time to keep chorus members engaged. I am writing this partly as a reminder to myself that something positive can come from every rehearsal, especially if I focus on the wonderful friends who are on the risers that particular week, rather than lamenting those who are not there.

First of all, we (or maybe this should read "I"!) need to accept that for one reason or another, not all of our members are able to be at every rehearsal. So we work with who's there. Those people are ready to learn and grow, so let's make the best of our time together. How can we make the most of each rehearsal?

As directors, many of us will be attending the Directors' Seminar in July. We are using this time to learn about our craft. Perhaps we can do the same with our choruses. We have the perfect opportunity to do those things that we never seem to have time for when we are in the throes of preparing for contest. There are a multitude of learning opportunities and activities that we can provide. Here are a few ideas:

- Have section seminars. Bring in singers to work with each section and the specific challenges that go with it. Or maybe YOU can be the faculty for each seminar.
- Provide small group opportunities. Singers will have the opportunity to develop their independent singing skills.
- Learn about the judging categories. Divide the chorus into four groups and have each group study one of the categories. They can then apply what they have learned by evaluating recorded chorus performances.

- Develop and rehearse good singing habits on non-contest songs. Choose one or two skills on which to focus during a rehearsal.
- Have a chorus Sing-Off. Break into groups, learn a new song, and then present the songs to friends and family members. If the chorus wants to add the songs to their repertoire, a core of singers will already know the song.
- Learn a new song. Choose something fun and easy; incorporate those newly developed vocal skills in the new song.
- Take a road trip. If you're close enough, attend a neighboring chorus' rehearsal. Observing another chorus and another director can be an eye opening experience.

Surely many of you have wonderful ideas for keeping your chorus engaged and moving forward in our less busy months. Please share your ideas on the [Sweet Adelines Front Line Directors Facebook page](#). No doubt, we'd all be interested. Above all, we need to make our rehearsals an event that our singers *want* to attend. Mix it up. Be a little unpredictable. Be creative, and have some fun!

Hope to see you all at the Directors' Seminar next month!

Yours in harmony,

Mary Rhea

Director Education Coordinators

Master Director, O.K. City Chapter

Baritone, ZING!, 2010 International Quartet Champions

Approved Sound Judge