

## **Minutes: Region 15 Regional Management Team Retreat Feb. 2, 2008**

The meeting started at 12:30 p.m. at the Pennsylvania home of Lisbet Kline, outgoing Membership Coordinator and incoming Education Coordinator. Present were Johanna Herudek (who left at about 1:15 after a discussion of Standing Rules changes); Peggy DiSunno (Team Coordinator), Harriette Walters (Education Coordinator), Christine Klepeis (Marketing Coordinator), Jeannie Allen (Finance Coordinator), Carole Argulewicz (Director Coordinator), Carol Schultheis (Events Coordinator). Dolly Power (incoming Membership Coordinator) and Dana Dunlevy (incoming Marketing Coordinator) were also present. Heather Collins (Communications Coordinator) arrived at approximately 1:15 p.m.

### **Review of Regional Bylaws and Standing Rules**

As mentioned above, Johanna attended the meeting to review suggested changes to the Regional Bylaws and Standing Rules. The following changes were reviewed and adopted during the meeting:

- The Mission Statement on Page 1 of the Regional Standing Rules was changed to match the Mission Statement as used on the Web site and in the Taglines regional newsletter. The wording is as follows:
  - Greater New York Region 15 is part of Sweet Adelines International, a worldwide organization of women singers dedicated to advancing four-part a cappella music through the original American art form of barbershop harmony by providing opportunities for education, performance and personal growth.
- On page 5 of the Standing Rules, the discussion of the Regional Nominating Committee (Section 3) was revised to be in sync with the new regional by-laws set up by Sweet Adelines International.
- In the Regional Standing Rules section related to Awards on page 9, it was noted that the Rise and Shine award has been omitted. On Page 10, the wording of the Dody O'Brien Most Improved Chorus Award was reworded so that future Sweet Adelines might understand who Dodie was and to cite her contributions to Region 15.
- Per recent changes at the International level, the descriptions for the Chapter Membership Coordinator, Marketing Coordinator and the Communications Coordinator were revised. The entire document was updated to reflect the recent name changes and revisions in the job descriptions.
- Under Section VIII, Chapter Responsibilities, Johanna added language to the Standing Rules stating that all regional quartets must be approved by the chorus director when performing in public.
- In Addendum 2, covering Regional Reimbursement Guidelines, all references to the phrase "not to exceed 44.5 cents per mile" were removed. The phrase was also removed throughout the document.

Johanna concluded her review by agreeing to make all corrections and e-mail them to members of the RMT. The revised Bylaws and Standing Rules will be posted on the regional Web site at the earliest possibility opportunity. Hard copies will be mailed to each chorus.

### **Accountabilities Review**

All accountabilities from the team's previous meeting were reviewed. Any additional follow-up was noted. Chris agreed to document any accountabilities resulting from the retreat discussion.

### **Regional Chapter Review**

Lisbet provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.

- A brief update of each regional chapter and their current priorities was led by Lisbet.

## TRAX and Future Education Events Discussion

- Lisbet led a discussion of plans for TRAX 2008. Of the now 709 members in the region, about 300 go to TRAX each year. Her big question: How do we improve on that and thus encourage musical growth in the region. Without dramatically overspending and depleting the regional budget.
  - Heather suggested that perhaps part of the TRAX attendance “problem” is that there isn’t enough communication early enough of details, including the classes and the direction of the sessions. The team plans to address this by disseminating schedules earlier in the future.
  - The team discussed whether or not we should team up with other nearby regions (such as Region 19 or Region 16) to coordinate area schools that could attract a larger number of attendees. It was agreed that after the International Education Symposium is discontinued (the final session is this coming summer), we will talk to other nearby regions about this idea. It was agreed the RMT needs to examine the focus on any international education events in any given year and try to fill in gaps or dovetail with those themes. This will not be possible until there is a clearer schedule of the International plans. Both Lisbet and Carole support the idea of intraregional events.
  - Dates were discussed for TRAX 2009: Those dates were Sept. 11 and 12. The team also discussed the idea of changing the dates to encourage more attendance, but for the time being, this is the timeframe that will be scheduled for the future.
- Heather will look into the feasibility of running a survey among the regional membership about education needs.
- The team discussed the idea of scheduling a regional Quartet School in 2009.
- The format and structure of the education team under Lisbet Kline was discussed:
  - Discussed Quartet Coordinator: Agreed that we need a communicator, someone who can help organize a quartet seminar, someone who is organized about it. Need someone with passion.
  - Discussed changing YWIH Coordinator..
  - Discussed establishing a “LAW School” Coordinator, someone who could help coordinator different level of training for directors. This will be coordinated in conjunction with the Director Certification.
  - Discussed establishing a PVI Chair, someone to coordinate ongoing voice instruction for regional members.
  - The RMT discussed changing all regional songs to embrace the music being sung at International events. The RMT recommends that music be changed gradually starting with the songs that were adopted at last year’s TRAX session. The older material will be scrapped as new songs are adopted. The team also discussed changing the format of the Mass Sing at regional convention. Carol S. will encourage the idea of including Mass Sing songs in future Saturday night “Show of Champions.” (First year this would be possible is 2009.) Peggy suggested that certain directors be invited and encouraged to lead specific songs. Action item: Lisbet will look into the feasibility of this shift as well as the cost of mechanical licenses. She will also appoint a Regional Songs Coordinator.
- The idea of videotaping certain classes from TRAX and other events in order to post the content on the Internet was discussed briefly. However, this idea was tabled.
- Lisbet will look into the idea of appointing a seminar assistant.
- Seminar Programs: Lisbet would like to institute the creation of seminar programs for all education events that would like each class in more detail.
- It was confirmed that Judy Douglas is now the regional Young Singers Foundation Chair.
- Lisbet plans to create evaluation forms to hand out at TRAX and other educational events. Lisbet and Heather will discuss how to include this as part of an incentive raffle or drawing, similar to the one for TRAX 2007.

- Lisbet noted that there was not yet a location for TRAX 2008, because of logistics issues with the Sheraton, which is where the event is normally held. Unfortunately, we are not in a position to move the date because we have locked in the faculty, Jean Barford, and it would also create regional scheduling problems. Lisbet requested that the facility be booked by no later than the end of February so that information can be distributed to the region by June. The tentative registration deadline will be Aug. 1 for events and room.

## **Finance and Treasurer's Report Discussion**

- Jeannie provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.
- Jeannie reviewed the structure of the existing budget, how the proposals are set up and how various expenses are allocated. (For example, where can TRAX expenses be assessed underneath education expenses.) Individual team members suggested their budgets by the 2008-2009 team term, and the final budget will be shared with region after it is approved.
- It was determined that the budget for the COMACT award (which has been included under Membership) will be moved under Marketing in the future.
- The RMT discussed "typical expenses" for an event such as TRAX. Faculty fees, for example, can range from \$600 to \$1,000. Lisbet and Harriette will put together a process document with guidelines for future Education Coordinators in Region 15.
- Carole underscored the idea of planning intra-regional events as a way of addressing the education needs of the region without spending more money. It was again agreed that once the RMT knows what International is going to do for the future education events, it can plan this sort of thing. She is speaking with contacts in Region 1 and Region 16.

### **➤ TREASURER'S REPORT**

- The balance on hand as of Jan. 31, 2008 was \$77,363.14. However, a large portion of this money is from the recent Regional Assessment and will go toward contest expenses.
- Chapter at Large: As of the meeting date, approximately 25 members had responded regarding the regional assessment, but the rest had not. Dolly agreed to look into why.
- All choruses will be reminded that they need to submit their requests for coaching reimbursements in a timely fashion.

### **➤ FUND-RAISING IDEAS**

- The team reviewed the idea for an Affinity Membership program with Commerce Bank, which was brought to the RMT by Jeannie. The region will receive a referral fee for each new account created. This discussion was tabled with no clear action idea.
- Peggy brought the idea of possible raffles that could be used to raise money
- Heather suggested looking into corporate sponsorships to help defray certain conference expenses. Dana and Dolly agreed to look into this further.
- Grant possibilities were again raised, but the multi-state nature of the region continues to make this difficult to pull off. Chris agreed to talk to her friend about grant possibilities.

### **➤ DISTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONALLY FUNDED VISIT MONEY:**

We have made eight visits so far, funded by International, for administrative or coaching needs. The rest will happen before May 1. Targeted choruses are Heart of New Jersey, Brooklyn, Golden Apple, Harmony Celebration, and Twin County.

## **Future Leadership Training**

- Harriette provided an update on International's focus on developing leadership skills. Our Region has been mentioned at the International level as taking a leadership role on leadership, which is great.
- Harriette discussed setting a date for a joint leadership workshop bringing together the Regional Management Team and the Regional Conventional Committee. The meeting is for the purpose of helping both teams identify and develop future regional leaders. This date was tentatively set during the TRAX weekend in September 2008.

- **LEADERSHIP MENTORING:** Harriette encouraged the development of the regional leadership database, which has been started by Heather. The RMT was encouraged to think of people who could be invited to participate in leadership training for September, as well as individuals that they can pull onto their teams.



### **Communications Coordinator Discussion**

- Heather provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.
- Heather led a discussion about the recent changes to the Taglines newsletter format. The print edition was dropped, moving instead to a monthly edition and saving the region close to \$1,500. The team discussed ways to encourage chorus news items that focused on subjects of an educational nature.
- The recent redesign of the regional Web site was discussed. It was suggested that Heather should send out a communication guiding regional members on how to navigate the new site. There was a discussion of whether or not advertising could be added, but this was tabled. It was decided, however, that ads will be accepted for electronic Taglines at a rate of \$25 per item.
- **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**
  - There was a discussion of potential candidates for the terms open from 2009 to 2011. The positions coming up for nominations and selections are Team Coordinator, Finance Coordinator, Director Coordinator and Communications Coordinator. The following individuals were discussed as potential candidates. Arlene Gunther, Sandy Robinson and Christine Krowles.
  - Heather also provided an update about who is on the nominating committee, which now includes Kathleen Wright, Cari Salvadori and Heather Collins
  - Other members being approached about leadership positions include Edyth Duff, Carol Mason, Hilda Blevins, Carol Auletta, Teresa Heuser and Betty Coben.
- **REGIONAL DIRECTORY:** The Regional Directory will be transformed into a PDF format that can be placed on the Web site and printed at will by any member of Region 15. It will be placed under the Members Only section so that no one outside the region can gain access to names or addresses. The directory will no longer be available as a booklet.

### **Education Coordinator Update**

- Harriette provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.
- Harriette led a discussion of the Regional Leadership tune-up scheduled for the Director's Workshop weekend in early June. That meeting will start Sunday morning and should include music teams and management teams. No location has been decided yet. She also discussed continuing to add mini workshops throughout the year and at events such as TRAX. It was agreed that an item should be included in Taglines encouraging individuals to attend. The deadline for the location was set as the end of February. Locations under consideration include St. Josephat in Glen Cove, N.Y. (on Long Island), Mount St. Alphonsius in Sloatsburg, N.Y., and the Woodbridge Hilton in N.J.
- There was a discussion about the Young Women In Harmony being organized for the regional contest this spring. Harriette was to write a letter to the group that is going to sing at contest.
- It was agreed that musical leaders should be added to the Regional Leadership database. Heather will send the fields for the database to the team so that we can ensure everything pertinent is being included.
- There was a follow-up discussion about this year's candidates for the annual MENC from Region 15. Aside from Laurie Woolever from Evergreen, who has been encouraged to apply, there was a discussion about encouraging Patty Danner of Hickory Tree to apply.

### **Director Coordinator Update**

- Carole provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.

- In her capacity as Quartet Coordinator, Carole reported that there are 36 quartets registered in region. She is still looking for someone to handle this role.
- There was a discussion of changes for the focus of the Directors's Workshop. Lorraine Barrows has been contracted instead of Michael Hayden. Carole is developing the class schedule.
  - She is looking into future faculty possibilities for Directors' Workshops, especially those who are based on east coast. She will focus more attention to who's available in the nearby regions.
  - Future Director's Workshops – There has been some pushback on the June dates. For 2009, she may consider changing this. Also in 2009, Carole is looking into whether to offer, instead, a music leaders or quartet weekend, if there is a Director's Workshop being offered on the international level. She is looking at May as a possibility for a regional education event of some kind. Dates under consideration: May 15-17, 2009
- Carole is speaking with Education and Director Coordinators in Region 15 and Region 1 to develop ideas about how the regions can coordinate educational events.
- Update on the DCP Program: Teri Hein, Jeanne Elmuccio and June Pierson were mentioned as active participants. Katie Blackwood has been officially certified. She will be presented with her certificate during the director's workshop. Carole is looking into who should hold this role after Mary DiLeo steps down in May.
- Carole will send out a reminder to all choruses encouraging them to use their coaching funds.
- She is looking into setting up a master coaching list for the Web site. This could reside under the members section. The advantage of this would be that other groups (quartets and choruses) might be able to piggyback and share expenses.
  - Carole will ask all the directors about whether they would be willing to share coaching information on the Web site.

### **Membership Coordinator Update**

- As an addendum to her earlier discussion, Lisbet said she is reaching out to regional Membership Coordinators encouraging them to share best practices about how to welcome and orient new members after Diva programs and membership drives are over.
- The membership team has begun systematic outreach to the Chapter At Large members of Region 15.

### **Marketing Coordinator Update**

- Chris provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.
- Chris presented a cookbook idea as a possible region fundraising idea. However, there was concern over whether would conflict with existing chorus fundraisers. It was agreed that each chorus would need to have an incentive in place in order to participate. The discussion was tabled with no formal action taken.
  - The cookbook discussion sparked a conversation about the possibility of having a coaching session raffled off by the region. Again, no formal action was taken.
- There was a philosophical discussion about the differences between Public Relations vs. Marketing. Ideas about how to get the word out about the Region, not just the choruses.
  - One specific action item: It was agreed that Chris should look into outreach within schools in the Philadelphia area, encouraging them to attend the contest, especially the Young Women in Harmony performance after the Quartet Competition on Friday night.
- COMACT Update: In the future, Dana (incoming coordinator) will handle the organization of this award. The awards timeframe has been updated to coincide with the fiscal year and the award will be given out during the Fall TRAX meeting each year.

### **Team Coordinator Update**

- Peggy provided an update of her activities via written report distributed before the meeting.

- There was a brief review of the Strategic Plan for the region. None of the members had any immediate suggestions. It was agreed that Heather will update the content and formatting and place the plan on the Web site for members to read.
- Future team meetings were discussed and set. These meetings are open to Region 15 members, with prior notice suggested:
  - May 10, 2008 – Baldwin, N.Y. from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Bring lunch)
  - Sept. 8, 2008 – Conference call from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.
  - Nov. 14, 15, 16, 2008 – In region training and RMT meeting
  - Jan. 10, 2009 – RMT retreat and meeting
- There was also a discussion of Road Show dates. The first person listed for each visit is responsible for coordinating the timing with the chorus management or board and for submitting a report to the RMT afterwards. The RMT will bring a copy of the Strategic Plan to share with the choruses that they visit. The roadshow dates are:
  - April 17, 2008 – **Twin County** (Peg, Lisbet and Chris)
  - May 15, 2008 – **Island Hills** (Peg, Lisbet)
  - May 27, 2008 – **Song of the Valley** (Lisbet, Carole, Peg)
  - June 10, 2007 – **Greater Nassau** (Peg, Lisbet, Heather)
  - July 7, 2008 – **Jersey Harmony** (Lisbet, Dolly)
  - July 8, 2008 – **Golden Apple** (Heather, Dana)
  - July 21, 2008 – **Brooklyn** (Carole A., Dolly)
  - July 30, 2008 – **Liberty Oak** (Lisbet, Dana)
  - July 30, 2008 – **Heart of New Jersey** (Lisbet, Dana)
  - Aug. 26, 2008 – **Evergreen** (Carole A., Dolly, Jeannie)
  - Jan. 14, 2009 – **Hickory Tree** (Heather, Carol S.)
  - April 22, 2009 – **Harmony Celebration** (Heather, Lisbet)
  - April 22, 2009 – **Metro Rhythm** (Dolly, Dana)
  - Heart of Long Island will call us if they require an appointment
  - Peg will spend RMT time with Long Island Sound one Wednesday in the spring or summer.

The meeting was adjourned over dinner at approximately 8 p.m. Some of the team members left shortly thereafter, some stayed overnight to continue orienting the new members, Dana and Dolly.

**Respectfully Submitted,**  
  
**Heather Collins**  
**Communications Coordinator**  
**Region 15**